

Homesteading in Pilot Ridge Country

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Introduction

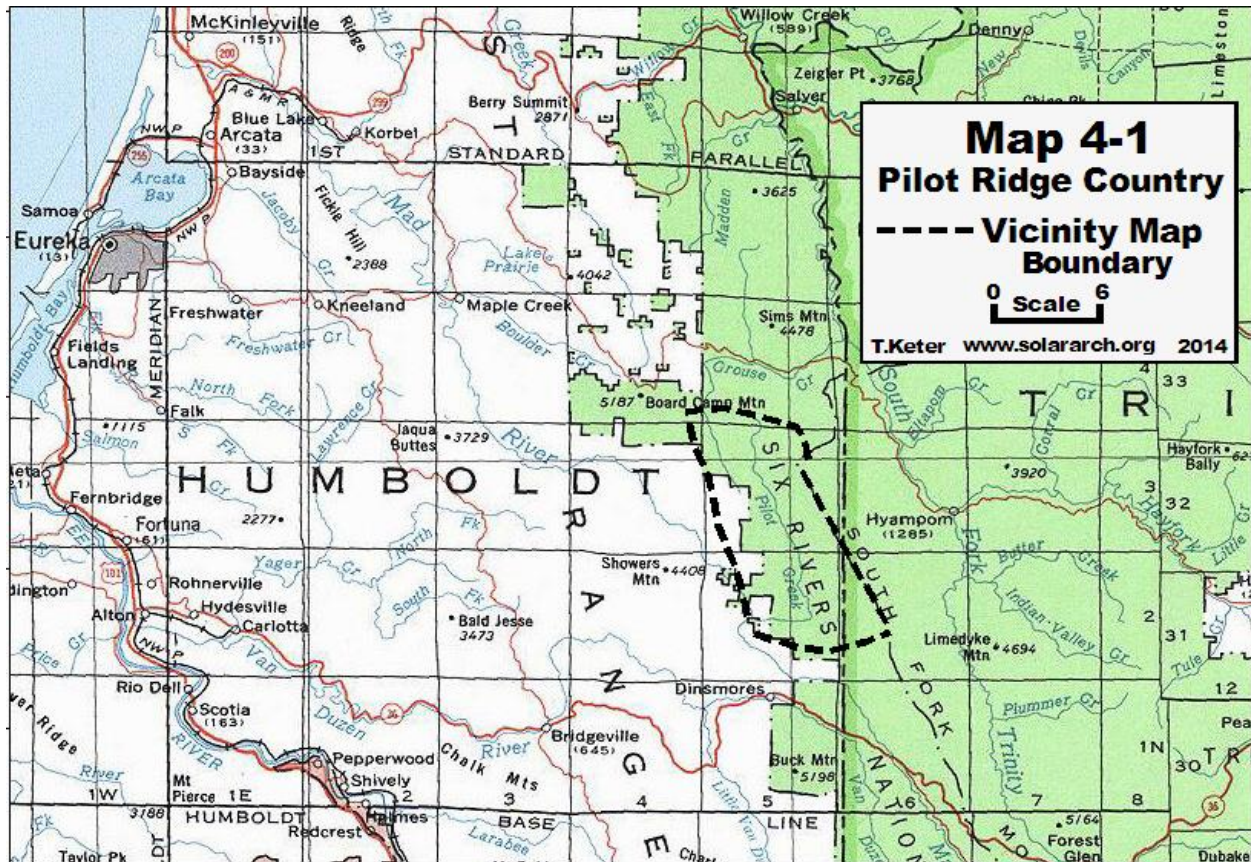
This is one in a series of papers documenting the cultural, socio-economic, and environmental history of the southeastern Bald Hills region of northwestern California centered on the Mad River Ranger District of the Six Rivers National Forest. This portion of the study focuses on the intensive homesteading activity that took place during the late 19th century and the first two decades of the 20th century in what I have termed "Pilot Ridge country." During this brief era numerous homesteads were established in this, still today, relatively remote region centered on the Pilot Creek watershed located directly to the west of the crest of South Fork Mountain in eastern Humboldt and western Trinity Counties (Map 4-1, Image 4-1).

The history of the homestead era in Pilot Ridge country is based on historic maps, Forest Service administrative and cultural resources files, and environmental and historical data collected over the last 35 years by the author while undertaking archaeological surveys and excavations, recording prehistoric and historical sites, and conducting interviews with lifetime residents of the area and long-time Forest Service employees of the Mad River Ranger district. Map 4-2 provides the location of many of the homesteads and identifies the major geographical features discussed in this section. Map 4-3 displays the numerous historic trails that crisscrossed Pilot Ridge country during the historic era on a USGS 7.5' map. This map is taken from a contextual overview--*Historic Trails of Pilot Ridge Country* (Keter 2013) that provides a detailed description of each of the historic trails in the area.

Refer to Appendix 1 for a discussion of the problems in accurately mapping homestead parcels on contemporary USGS maps. Appendix 2 has a USGS 7.5' map showing the parcels of land in Pilot Ridge country claimed under the Homestead Act and various other federal laws that provided for the settlement and ownership of public domain lands. Also, two tables are included listing each private parcel in the area and relevant information related to its acquisition. Appendix 3 provides information on the environment derived from

interviews with individuals who were familiar with the area during the homestead era. Appendix 4 contains homesteading information about the Bug Creek watershed. This watershed lies directly to the west of the northern portion of Pilot Ridge and the western boundary of Six Rivers National Forest. Although beyond the scope of this paper, due to its proximity to Pilot Ridge country, I am providing information on this area recorded in interviews with Isabel Stapp Peterson who was raised on a homestead in the lower Bug Creek watershed.

Finally, Appendix 5 provides a brief overview and biographical background information on the Stapp and Peterson families. Over the last 50 years individuals have been interviewed from three generations of the Stapp family, including Oscar Stapp who first homesteaded in Pilot Ridge country in 1918. Also interviewed were his son Marvin Stapp and his wife Isabel Marie Peterson Stapp both of whom grew up living on their families' homesteads. I am greatly indebted to and want to thank their daughter Rowetta Stapp Miller for all of the information that she provided me on the Stapp and Peterson families and their experiences living in Pilot Ridge country.



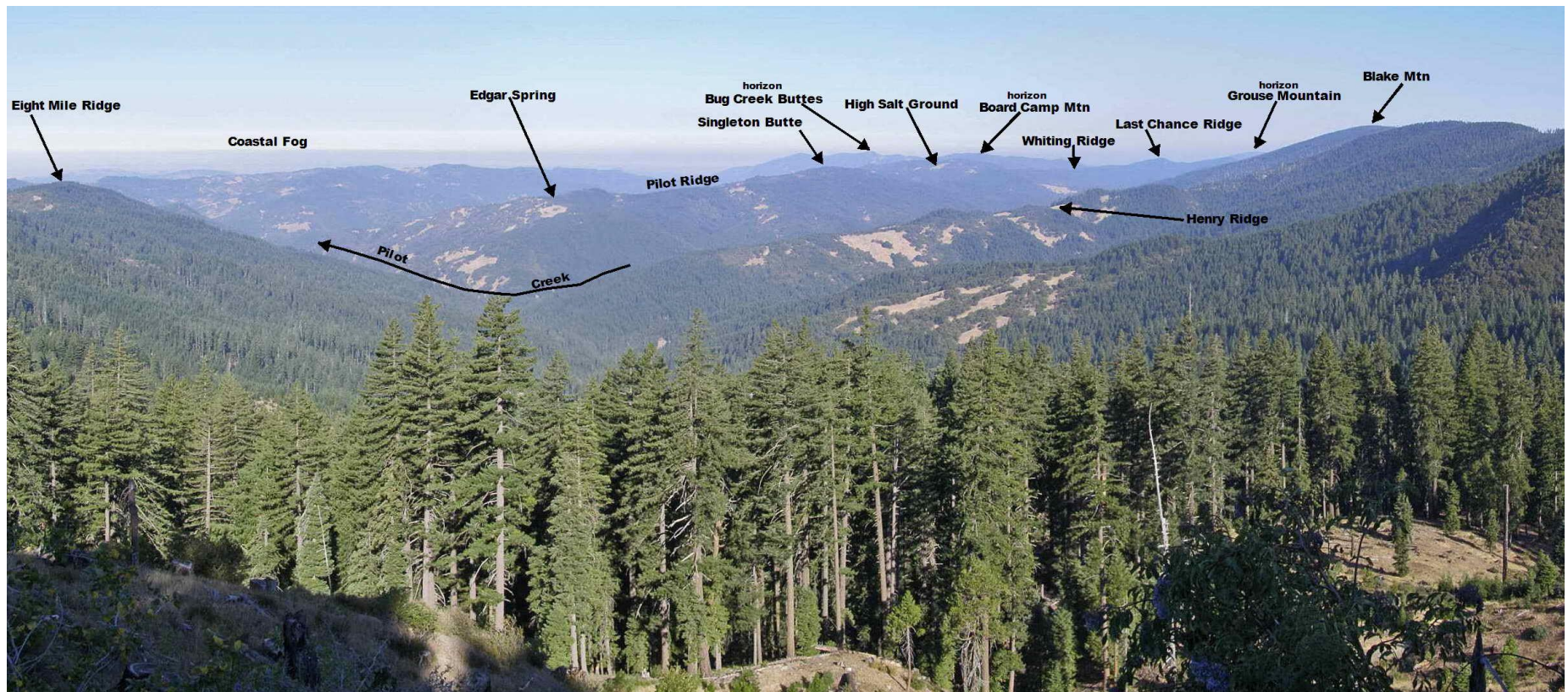


Image 4-1

View northwest near the junction of Eight Mile Ridge and South Fork Mountain (forested ridge north to Blake Mountain at right in photo) to the Pilot Creek Watershed. The line of clouds at the horizon to the far left is fog on the coast. Note that only a few openings of grasslands and oak woodlands remain.

(Photograph: T. Keter 2008)

Background

There has been a long history of human occupation in Pilot Ridge country. During the 1980s as a result of numerous archaeological surveys and excavations archaeologists documented the existence of over 120 prehistoric sites situated along the crest of Pilot Ridge and the series of interconnecting ridges that forms the headwaters divide of the Grouse Creek/Pilot Creek watersheds--Whiting Ridge and Last Chance Ridge, and the northern crest of South Fork Mountain (the divide between the Pilot Creek/Mad River watershed and the South Fork Trinity River watershed) south to Eight Mile Ridge a distance of about 10 miles (Image 4-1). Over a dozen of these sites were excavated during the 1983-1985 field seasons. The data analyzed from these sites, including a carbon 14 date sample from a house floor on a site located not too far from Pilot Rock, indicate that humans have occupied this region for 6,000 to 8,000 years.

[See Keter 1994c for a discussion of the prehistory and archaeology of this region.]

Due to the region's archaeological significance the entire series of interconnected ridges with approximately 120 prehistoric sites has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as the Pilot Ridge Archaeological and Historical District (Gmoser and Keter 1983: Pilot Ridge National Register Determination of Eligibility on file Six River National Forest). Even prior to aboriginal settlement the ecosystem of the Bald Hills had for tens of thousands of years become adapted to frequent relatively low intensity wild fires (Keter 1987). After Native Americans settled in the region the ecosystem was influenced even more by anthropogenic fires ignited in order to enhance and maximize their subsistence resources base. Native Americans were, in effect, employing what ecologists today term "traditional ecological knowledge" in order to promote the growth of desired plant and animal species.

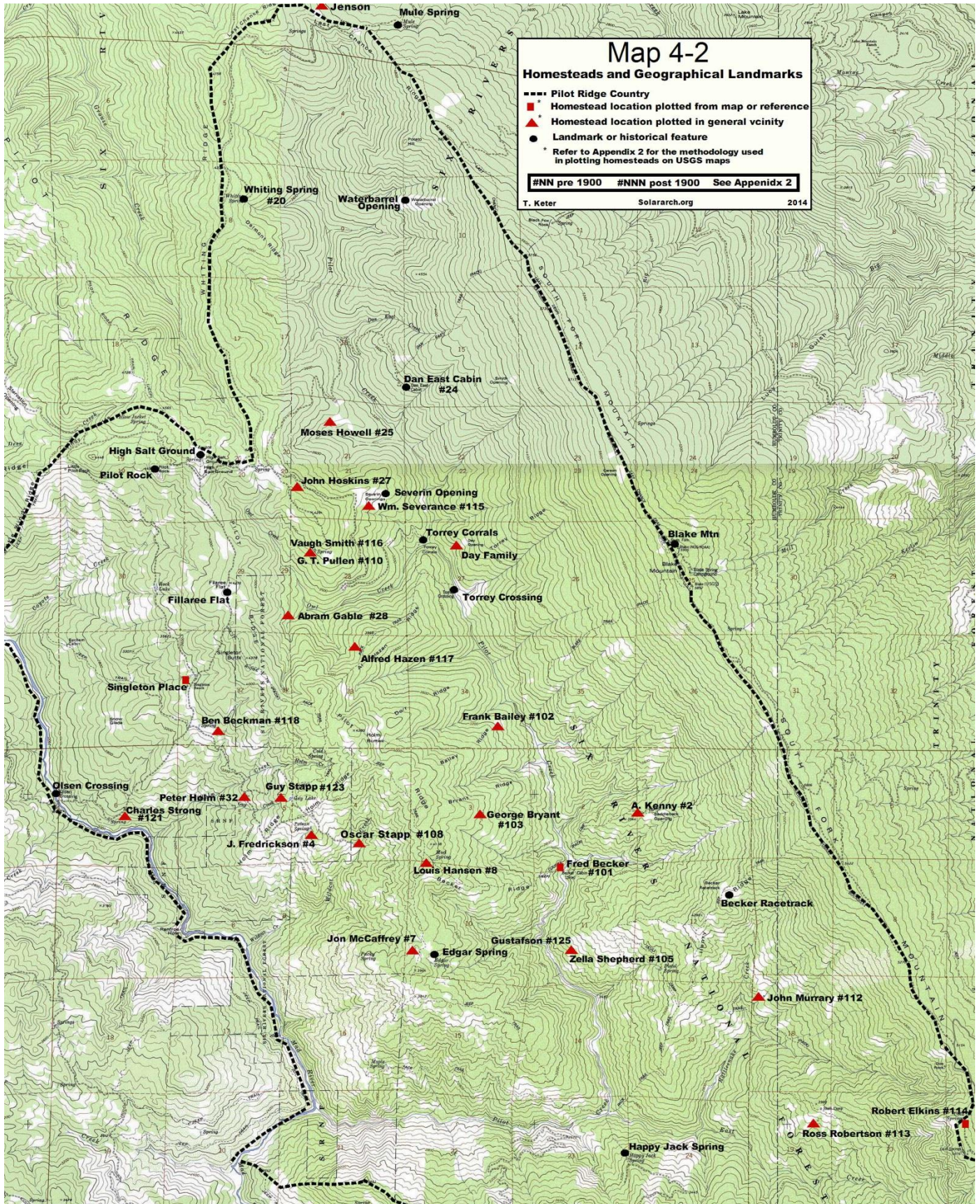
This fire regime had greatly influenced the distribution and areal extent of the open prairies, oak woodlands, and conifer forests that dominated Pilot Ridge country during the prehistoric era (Keter 1995). Then, in the mid-19th century with the beginning of the California gold rush, and nearly overnight in ecological terms, aboriginal land management practices in the southeastern Bald Hills were abruptly replaced by large-scale ranching operations using the oak woodlands and grasslands of the remote Bald Hills region as "summer range" for their cattle and sheep.

Most of the ranchers who were using Pilot Ridge country as summer range for their livestock during this era were wealthy and politically powerful individuals living in the lower Van Duzen River watershed, the Korbek and Blue Lake region to the northwest, and to the east in Hyampom Valley. During the late 19th century these large-scale ranching operations ran tens of thousands of sheep and cattle in the Bald Hills region and, as discussed in Part II of this study (see also Keter 1994a), the ranchers using these public domain lands in remote eastern Humboldt County and western Trinity County considered them as part their own private ranching empire--homesteaders were not welcomed.

The grazing of livestock on public domain lands in Pilot Ridge country for personal profit was unregulated until the Forest Service took over administration in 1905. Over the next several decades the agency issued a number of regulations governing the grazing of livestock on national forest lands to help reduce the negative impacts to the ecosystem as the result of over grazing (Keter 1989, 1992, 1994a). These negative effects included the destruction of vegetation resulting in the loss of top soil and severe erosion on the steep slopes of the easily erodible Franciscan Formation. Over grazing also resulted in the degradation of streams and aquatic habitat (see Keter 1994a).

During the ethnographic period Pilot Ridge country was situated within territory of the Athabascan speaking Nongatl whose winter villages were located in the more moderate climate found to the west of Showers Pass in the Van Duzen watershed (Baumhoff 1958). Given its seasonal use for centuries by the Nongatl, it is quite possible that Pilot Ridge country during the first two decades of the 20th century experienced the greatest number residents to have ever lived there on year-around basis. During this brief florescence of human activity beginning in the 1890s and peaking in the early 1920s, there were perhaps as many as 15 to 20 homesteads inhabited in Pilot Ridge country on a year around basis (Map 4-2, see also Appendix 2).

The number of homesteaders living in the area fluctuated greatly from year to year as new settlers moved in to try and "make a go of it," while others, deep in debt, or for some other reason, sold out--usually to ranchers or timber speculators. By the mid-to-late 1930s not one permanently occupied homestead remained within the Pilot Creek watershed. On the west facing slopes of Pilot Ridge that drop down to the Mad River, a few isolated homestead parcels still remained in private ownership and were inhabited part of the year; for example, during hunting season or by cowboys working for the ranchers who were running livestock in the area.



Map 4-2
Homesteads and Geographical Landmarks

- Pilot Ridge Country
- Homestead location plotted from map or reference
- ▲ Homestead location plotted in general vicinity
- Landmark or historical feature
- * Refer to Appendix 2 for the methodology used in plotting homesteads on USGS maps

#NNN pre 1900	#NNN post 1900	See Appendix 2
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The Last Frontier

At the beginning of the 20th century Pilot Ridge country was still far from the nearest wagon road and even further from the nearest town and the people who homesteaded in this remote region did not do so by happenstance. Just to get there took a day or two of travel on foot or by horseback from the lower Van Duzen River valley--about 28 to 30 miles to the west--mostly via trails. It was not until the early 1920s that a primitive wagon road was extended east to about Showers Pass (at the Mad River/Van Duzen River watershed divide) and nearby Harts Valley where there was a school and post office.

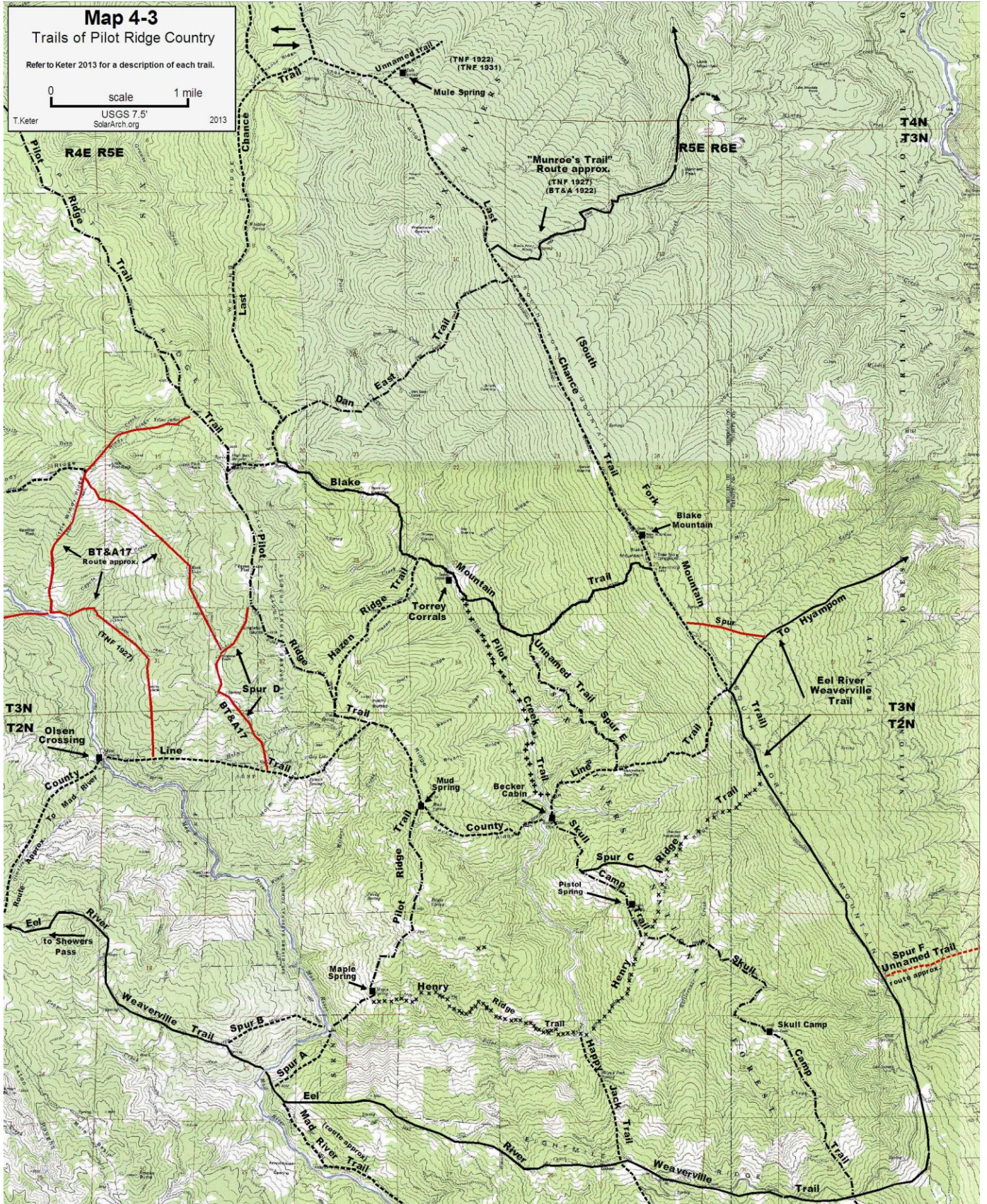
Most people from the settlements to the west in the lower Eel River Valley entered the southern region of Pilot Ridge country via the County Line Trail (also known as the Eel River-Weaverville Trail). The County Line Trail (Map 4-3) was established in 1852 by the five Cooper brothers who had settled in the lower Yeager Creek valley just to the east of Hydesville where they built a sawmill, gristmill, and ran a ranch in order to sell their products (including flour, butter, and pork) then in great demand by the gold miners in Trinity Country. In 1852 they blazed a trail leading to Hyampom where it connected with the heavily traveled Humboldt-Hyampom Trail that led from the towns on Humboldt Bay to the gold mining regions of Trinity County. The trail headed east to Showers Pass and then dropped down and crossed the Mad River at Olsen Crossing (Map 4-2) and climbed Hazen Ridge east to the crest of Pilot Ridge. It then dropped down to cross Pilot Creek at the location of Fred Becker's cabin (Image 4-2, Map 4-2) before climbing South Fork Mountain and continuing east towards Hyampom, Cox Bar, and Weaverville (*Humboldt Historian* Jan-Feb 1980:4, Keter 2013). Until the construction of roads into the region in the 1940s and 1950s this trail remained the principal access into and out of the southern region of Pilot Ridge country.

During winter the Mad River posed a formidable barrier getting into or getting out of Pilot Ridge country. It is not uncommon during this time of year for a series of storm fronts to pass through the region--sometimes raining or snowing for weeks on end. As a result of heavy winter precipitation the Mad River will often rise precipitously making fording the river dangerous or simply impossible. In 1856, a packer trying to cross South Fork Mountain from the west during the winter via the County Line trail found the trail blocked by heavy snow. When he dropped back down from Pilot Ridge to Olsen Crossing and tried to return to the lower Eel River valley he was forced to spend 22 days at that location waiting for the river to recede enough to cross safely (Keter 2013:15-16).

During the homesteading era, W. E. Severance, whose homestead is disused below, almost lost his claim due to the remoteness of his homestead and the difficulty of crossing the Mad River in the winter to get his mail at the post office at Yeager Creek. Severance sent a hand written letter to Trinity National Forest officials explaining that he could not get to the post office in a timely manner as the Mad River was at flood stage and he could not ford the river in order to pick up his mail. Today Pilot Ridge country is still so remote that

no permanent bridge crosses the Mad River from Highway CA 36 north to Butler Valley a distance of nearly 30 air miles.

It was no less easy to travel to the east where Hyampom, about a hard days ride from Pilot Ridge country, was the nearest settlement with a post office. Hyampom was usually reached via the County Line Trail. After crossing Pilot Creek near Fred Becker's cabin (Map 4-2, Image 4-2) the trail climbed directly up the steep west facing slope of South Fork Mountain for about 3,000 vertical feet in less than three miles. At almost 6,000' in elevation during the winter South Fork Mountain, forming the divide between the Pilot Ridge/Mad River watershed and the South Fork Trinity River watershed, was usually an impassable barrier with deep snow blanketing the area from about November to mid or even late May or some years early June (personal observation). After crossing over the broad crest of South Fork Mountain, the trail headed east on the descending ridgeline immediately to the south of Kurlin Creek. The trail then forded the South Fork Trinity River (impassable during storm periods) to Hyampom Valley (Keter 2013:10). The total distance to Hyampom from the crest of South Fork Mountain was about five and one-half miles and the descent over 4,000 feet in elevation.



Homesteading in Pilot Ridge Country Before 1905

It is not known when the first Euro-American settlers moved into Pilot Creek country. As noted earlier, the individuals running the large ranching operations in Humboldt, Trinity, and Mendocino Counties considered the public domain lands in this region as part of their own private empire and homesteaders were not welcomed on these valuable rangelands (see Keter 1994a). Another reason that there was little homesteading activity in Pilot Ridge country during the 1870s and 1880s was related to the fact that there were still public domain lands to the west of Showers Pass in the Van Duzen River watershed available for settlement (Rowley ms.). That area was more desirable for establishing a subsistence homestead with milder winters and also due to the fact that it was closer to the population centers in the lower Van Duzen River and Eel River Valleys.

By the 1890s a few "squatters" (those settlers who occupied public domain lands without filing any kind of legal claim for the land to gain ownership) and some homesteaders filing for "entry" under the 1862 Homestead Act (see Appendix 2: Map 1 and Table 1) had settled in Pilot Ridge country. The Homestead Act provided for the transfer of 160 acres of public domain lands to an individual on payment of a nominal fee after five years of residence (the waiting period was eventually reduced to three years). In addition, after six months of residence: a "commutation clause" in the law, permitted homesteaders to purchase the land as a "Cash Entry" for \$1.25 an acre.

The commutation clause was widely abused throughout the western states. In Pilot Ridge country numerous parcels of public domain lands--most associated with springs--were purchased under the Homestead Act as Cash Entrys during the 1870s and 1880s (Appendix 2 Table 1). It appears that most of these Cash Entry parcels on what is now the Mad River Ranger District were acquired fraudulently by the ranchers running their livestock in the region (Keter 1994a). The ranchers fronted the money to purchase the parcels of land to individuals who would file for entry and after six months purchase the land for about \$400 under the commutation clause. They then signed the title over to the rancher. Generally, these parcels were strategically centered on perennial springs since controlling the water in the dry summer and fall grazing seasons in the eastern Bald Hills meant, in effect, that the ranchers also controlled the surrounding countryside.

For example, in 1891 James Whiting purchased a 160 acre parcel of public domain land on Whiting Ridge containing Whiting Springs (Map 4-2). It appears that Whiting may have first declared entry in 1888 under the Homestead Act but records are not clear on this matter. The parcel was patented under the Timber and Stone Act in 1891 (Appendix 2: Map 1, Table 1). Whiting sold the parcel almost immediately for only one dollar to ranchers Ira Russ and J. G. Graham (Appendix 2: Map 1, Table 1). In another example, Sidney Edgar (Appendix 2; Map 1, Table 1) purchased a 40 acre parcel centered on Edgar Springs under the Commutation Clause of the Homestead Act in 1876 after declaring entry a year earlier. Edgar Spring is strategically located just to the east of the Pilot Ridge Trail (Map 4-3) at the southern end of Pilot Ridge. Within the Pilot Creek watershed alone 20 parcels of land totaling approximately 2,620 acres were purchased between 1877 and

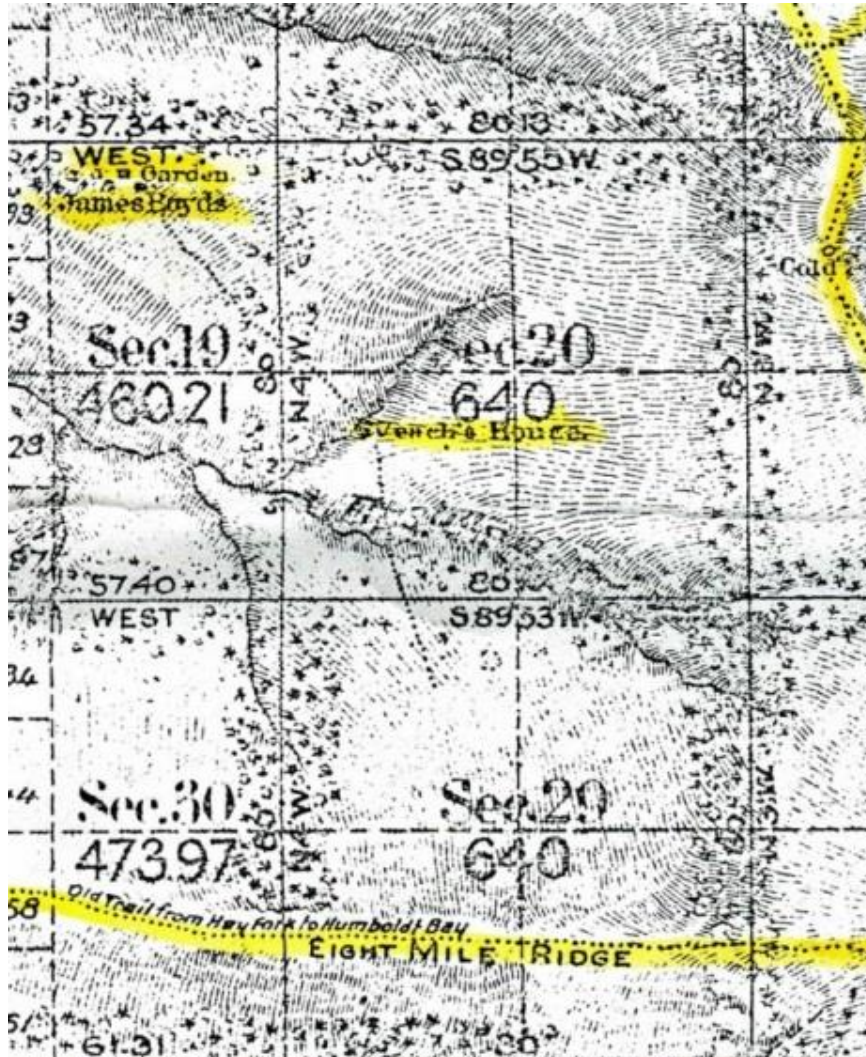
1890 under provisions of the Homestead Act and Timber and Stone Act (Appendix 2 Table 1, Keter 1994b).

It was not until the end of the 19th century when the large ranching operations were beginning to lose their grip on public domain lands, and with the best lands to homestead already claimed in the more westerly regions of the Bald Hills, that the more isolated Pilot Ridge country further to the east was considered as desirable for homesteading. The few individuals who had settled in Pilot Ridge country in the late 1800s generally ran some livestock, had small gardens, and hunted for their subsistence. All of the improvements on their homesteads were constructed out of local materials. Few of the cabins had glass-pane windows and often floors were bare ground or covered with bear hides (Keter 1994a). Given the few settlers in the area at that time the cumulative impact of their land use activities was minimal as compared to the decades of overgrazing that had previously taken place (Keter 1989).

The Earliest Documented Settlers in Pilot Ridge Country

Early homestead and settlement records are incomplete for this region and there are only a few files containing information and the names of individuals (nearly all of these homesteads were occupied by single men) who made efforts to establish homesteads in Pilot Ridge country during the late 19th century (Appendix 2: Map 1 and Table 1). Most of the settlers moved on after spending a few years trying--and most often failing--to make a go of it in this remote and isolated back country far from civilization.

Two "homesteads" from this era within the Pilot Creek watershed are identified on the 1897 Government Lands Office (GLO) survey maps (Map 4-4). These two locations were not identified on the original GLO 1879 survey maps so it is likely that the individuals settled here in the 1880s or 1890s. The Section numbers for these locations on the GLO maps do not match those on contemporary USGS Maps. The original GLO surveys in this region were notoriously inaccurate and, as is discussed below and in Appendix 1, this has created problems in accurately mapping the homesteads, cash entries, and Timber and Stone Act parcels on contemporary USGS 7.5' maps.



Map 4-4

1879 GLO Map revised in 1897; identifying the location of two "homestead" or "squatter" cabins on the west facing slope of South Fork Mountain

Both of the settler's names on the GLO map are partly illegible. One of the homesteads shown on the GLO map in the NW1/4 of Section 19 T2N, R6E, appears to be labeled "James Boyds"; next to the name is the notation "garden" and a dot placed on the map. It appears from its location that the cabin was located at Pistol Springs. The other homestead is located in the NW 1/4 of Section 20 (same Township and Range)--possibly at or near Skull Camp Springs. The name on the map is somewhat illegible (it appears to be labeled "Jench's House"). The location of these homesteads appears to be along the Skull Camp Trail (Map 4-3) to the north of Eight Mile Creek on the lower slopes of South Fork Mountain. The Skull Camp Trail is one of the oldest trails in the Pilot Creek watershed, Keter 2013:21).

There are no files in the homestead records related to homestead entry for either of these parcels. It is quite possible, therefore, that since neither of these homesteads appears in the Land Office Files or in Forest Service Lands Records, that these individuals were "squatters" and, as was not uncommon at that time, had settled on the land without filing a formal application for "entry" under the 1862 Homestead Act.

By 1900, the number of homesteaders settling in Pilot Ridge country began to steadily increase (see Keter 1994a). As a result, during the five years prior to the creation of the Trinity National Forest in 1905 several settlers had already established legal homestead claims or had filed for entry in this region. Homestead records show that within the Pilot Creek watershed alone, six homesteaders had "filed for entry" or had already had met the intent of the law and had their parcels "patented" (also referred to "listed") under the 1862 Homestead Act (Appendix 2: Map 1, Table 2). By 1905, however, several of these homesteads had already been abandoned. Most of the homesteaders sold out to timber speculators or ranchers. These subsistence homesteads were, generally speaking, rather primitive with nearly all the improvements constructed from local materials. Although by this time some of the cabins had a few glass windows and wood flooring.

Those individuals who were in the process of filing homestead entry claims and settling on lands within the boundaries of the newly created National Forests under the 1862 Homestead Act had the final field inspections and administrative reviews for their claims handled by the Forest Service. After submission by a settler of an application "for entry" to settle on National Forest lands, the District Ranger's job was to inspect the prospective homestead parcel to insure that it was not forested and, as the Forest Service *Handbook* set forth, was "chiefly valuable for agriculture." The inspecting ranger then completed a standardized form: *Report on Forest Homestead Application* (various titles and forms were used over the years but all were similar in content). The document included a discussion of any improvements made by the claimant, as well as a general description of the topography, soils, and climate.

Fred Becker Homestead (Map 4-2, Appendix 2: Map 1, Table 2 #101*)

In Pilot Ridge country one of the homesteaders in the process of "proving up" in 1905 when the Forest Service took over administration of public lands in the region was Fred Becker. In early June of 1902, Becker, who was unmarried, settled on a 160 acre parcel of public domain lands just to the west of where the County Line Trail (Map 4-3) crossed Pilot Creek (Keter 2013:13-14). I learned from one consultant that during the 1920s the section of the County Line Trail from Mud Springs to Becker's cabin was paralleled by a Forest Service telephone wire and the trail was cut deep like a trough due to the hundreds of pack mules and horses using it (Max Rowley interview).

Mad River District Ranger John Gray visited the homestead on February 15, 1908. The administrative inspection form entitled *Report on Agriculture Settlement* completed by the

ranger details the various improvements made by Becker in order to meet the intent of the Homestead Act. In his report dated February 18, 1908, Gray noted that Becker had filed for entry under the 1862 Homestead Act on June 5, 1902 (some file records show the date of entry as of November 15, 1901). The ranger noted in his report that Becker lived in a "Frame House 14 x 16 ft [with] 8 ft. walls built of split boards roof of shakes one door, two windows, and floor in cabin" (from the original). A 14 x14 shed attached to the cabin was used to store firewood (Image 4-2).



Image 4-2

Fred Becker Cabin: c1940: note the 14' x 14' wood shed had collapsed.
Marvin Stapp is holding a rattlesnake.
(Stapp Photograph Collection)

There was also 14' x 43' barn with 8' high sidewalls constructed partly of logs and partly of split lumber. The ranger also noted that there was a 6' x 9' poultry shed. There were about 10 acres of timber land on the claim. Becker had cut some trees--Douglas-fir for lumber and most likely incense cedar for roofing shakes--in order to construct his buildings. Becker had plowed about six acres and fenced about 35 acres and had about 23 acres in pasture (fence posts at that time were usually made of white oak or black oak as they last years longer than those of ponderosa pine or Douglas fir). Gray recorded in his report that Becker had 16 horses but no cattle or sheep and that he had:

...lived continuously on the land except for short intervals when at work for wages to earn money to buy supplies...Ben Backman and Wm Hagar neighbors stated that Becker has lived alone continuously on the claim, it being his only home. [From the original.]

The ranger noted that Becker had resided there on a permanent basis. He also recorded that Becker's mailing address at that time was the Yeager Creek post office about 25 miles away via trails and wagon roads. Ranger Gray concluded his report writing: "[t]he claimant has fully complied with the homestead law I recommend that Patent [be] Issued."

Becker raised race horses and usually had about 15-20 horses on his place. The local homesteaders used to gather at a large flat called "Becker's Race Track" on Henry Ridge to hold horse races (Image 1, Map 4-2). This is the first large flat on Henry Ridge after dropping down from the crest of South Fork Mountain--the contemporary USGS 7.5' Pilot Creek Quad still identifies this location as "Becker's Race Track." Henry Ridge was named after Henry Allen a rancher from Hyampom who used this trail for his livestock to access the oak woodlands and grasslands on Henry Ridge in the late 19th century (Keter 2013:17, Rowley ms.). Horse racing and betting on one's favorite horse was one of the most popular social activities of local residents during this era. It also provided a way for homesteaders spread across this remote community linked only by trails to socialize (Stapp interview).

Percy Jackson (see below,) who worked in Pilot Ridge country as a young man was interviewed in October of 1983 at his hunting cabin on south Pilot Ridge (Interview: #I340). At the time of the interview he was about 80 years old. He told the interviewer that when he met him; Becker "was an old man who raised horses and dogs" and that Becker once told him "never to pet someone's dog because it spoils them." Jackson said that Becker had built a barn and corral and that in order to earn hard currency, he raised and sold horses to local homesteaders like George Minor. He remembered that Becker always smoked Bull Durham tobacco.

Max Rowley (see below) who is referenced extensively in my research on this area was a long-time Forest Service employee, avocational historian, as well as a personal friend for 20 years. He was raised in the region to the west of Showers Mountain in Hydesville (see Keter 2013:35). In the 1960s he interviewed a number of individuals who knew Becker. He was told that Becker smoked constantly and that: "he always had one [cigarette] in his mouth, one on his ear ready to smoke, and he was rolling one"(Image 4-3).

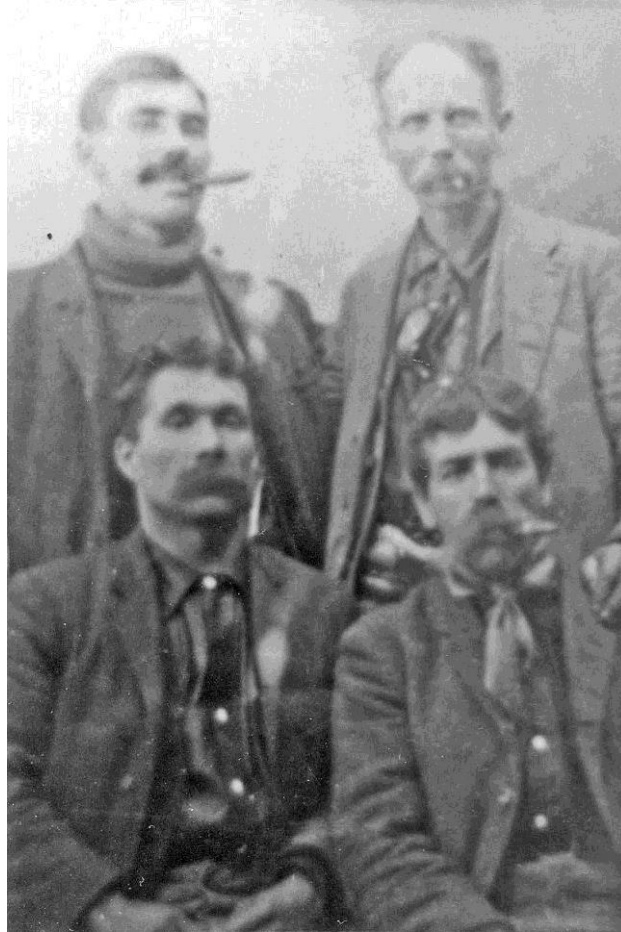


Image 4-3
Smoking Bull Durham c1920
Upper Right Fred Becker, Upper Left Sam Jackson,
Lower Right Jonny Olsen, Lower Left Bill Patterson
(Stapp Photograph collection)

Although District Ranger Gray had noted in his 1908 report that he had cultivated six acres of land, Becker was ultimately unsuccessful in growing crops on his homestead. This failure was not for lack of effort and is illustrative of why it was so difficult, if not impossible, to establish a homestead on 160 acres in Pilot Ridge country. Becker's lack of success was due to the realities of trying to cultivate land that was simply not suitable for agriculture--this was especially true given the severe erosion and loss of top soil due to over grazing that immediately preceded the homesteading era.

In 1916 Gray filed an inspection report for a homestead entry application by Frank Geffray on a parcel of land just to the south of Becker's place (Geffray Appendix 2, Map 1, Table 2: #122*). Upon inspecting the land he found that the parcel did not meet the intent of the homestead regulations as being primarily suitable for agriculture (see below for a discussion of this homestead application). In his report Gray then noted the failed effort by Becker to raise crops on his homestead:

This area has little value for the growing of agricultural crops; this has been demonstrated on very similar land within ¼ mile distance. Mr. F Becker a nearby settler and owner of the land mentioned advises that after seeding the lands to grain crops for three seasons, the hay crop produced was very light and the field was abandoned. The land later was seeded to tall oat grass, a hardy perennial; this appears to be making a very good growth (Geffray Homestead file #122*). [From the original.]

Marvin Stapp, whose family homesteaded in the area in 1918 (see below), told me that his father, Oscar Stapp, came by Becker's cabin one day and found him in bad shape due to emphysema. He bundled him up and took him to Showers Pass where he was taken by auto to the hospital in Eureka where he died. He is buried in the Hydesville cemetery.

Given the fact that he managed to live full-time on his homestead for nearly two decades, Fred Becker should be considered one of the more successful small-scale homesteaders to have ever settled in the region. The 1922 Belcher Title and Abstract Map (16) indicates that the parcel was owned at that time by Agnes J. Johnson. Although I could not determine the exact date when this change in ownership took place it appears to have been between about 1920 and 1922. Agnes J. Johnson was one of the individuals, who along with the Northern Redwood Logging Company (NRLC), was buying up homesteads in the area as they went up for sale (see below).

Charles Strong Homestead (Appendix 2, Map 1 Table 2:#121*)

Another early settler in the area was Charles Strong (Map 4-2). Like Becker, Strong was living on his homestead in 1905 when the Trinity National Forest was created. Marvin Stapp (see below) provided me with a hand-drawn map showing the approximate location of the homesteader's cabins in southern Pilot Ridge country including that of Strong who was already living on lower Holm Creek when the Stapps moved into the area in 1918. Strong filed for entry on June 3, 1902 and according to a letter in Strong's homestead file (Sept 8, 1908): "Final Proof was made October 30, 1907 and Final Certificate 1893 issued the same date." Witnesses interviewed by District Ranger Gray for the homestead inspection report were neighbors Fred Becker and William Hagan who both told the ranger that Strong was living on the homestead on a permanent basis although he spent some time away from his homestead in order to earn money. Strong had constructed from local materials a 12' x 20' house with shake siding and roof. The ranger noted that the structure had "one door and two windows, floor--possible value \$100." Strong also had a substantial barn 16' x 20' with 16' walls and an attached 14' x 20' stable: total estimated value \$110. One acre was under cultivation and fenced.

The 1922 Belcher Title and Abstract map showing that Strong still owned the property at that time does not match with the legal boundary description as contained in the "Report on Agriculture Settlement" form in Strong's administrative file. Due to the problems discussed in Appendix 1 related to the original GLO cadastral surveys in Pilot Ridge

country, this parcel and a number of others in the area have been mapped on contemporary USGS maps (Appendix 2: Map 2) as delineated on the generally more accurate Forest Service and 1922 Belcher Title and Abstract Maps.

George Bryant Homestead (Appendix 2, Map 1, Table 2: #103*)

As noted earlier, in the remote Pilot Ridge country it was difficult if not impossible to be successful living on a 160 acre homestead. Marvin Stapp indicated that a man named George Bryant had lived on a homestead just to the east of Pilot Ridge on Bryant Ridge (Map 4-2). Bryant, who had no family, filed for entry on June 5, 1902 and by the time District Ranger Gray's inspected the homestead and filed his report on February 18, 1908, Bryant had made substantial improvements to his homestead. These improvements included 12 x 24' frame house "built of shakes laid shingle fashion" as well as two windows, three doors, and a floor. There were also several out buildings including a 16' x 24' barn and a 13' x 18' woodshed. Bryant did not have any livestock and owned only one horse. District Ranger Gray in his inspection report indicated that:

The claimant has excellent improvements. Good house, barn, etc., field, pasture, and garden has cultivated the land raising garden, grain, etc. and has lived continuously upon the land.

Since the claimant has fully complied with the homestead law I recommend that patent be issued. [From the original.]

By 1922 Bryant had sold out and the parcel had been acquired by Agnes J. Johnson. Johnson, as noted earlier, was likely associated with one of the timber speculators working in this area as there are a number of old homesteads in the area that were acquired by this individual according to the Belcher Title & Abstract maps (1922: Maps 14,16,17).

The Homesteading Era in Pilot Ridge Country 1905 to 1932

With creation of Trinity National Forest in 1905, and shortly thereafter, passage of the National Forest Homestead Act on June 11, 1906, homesteading of the Pilot Creek watershed and the area directly to the west of Pilot Ridge accelerated and, along with single men, a number of families also began moving into the area to homestead. Settlers attempting to locate a 160 acre parcel of land that met the criteria for listing as "open to entry" under Forest Service regulations found, however, that this was no easy matter--especially in the nearly inaccessible and remote Pilot Ridge country. Furthermore, by 1905, settlers had already homesteaded most of the desirable lands that were "suitable for agriculture" and "open to entry" under the National Forest Homestead Act and Forest Service regulations.

In Pilot Ridge country most homesteads were situated below 4,000 feet in elevation, in areas that had good exposure (south and southwest facing slopes were preferred), and that were dominated by open prairies and oak woodlands in order to meet Forest Service regulations. Nearly all homesteads were located near a perennial spring or creek to assure adequate water, and most potential homestead parcels contained a few acres of relatively flat land--a rare commodity in the deeply dissected Coast Range Mountains. Adhering to Pinchot's philosophy of "best use" for National Forest lands, the Forest Service strictly enforced the regulations regarding the prohibition on homesteaders claiming any forested lands and the homestead inspection reports on the Mad River Ranger District are replete with areas of forested lands that were found to have been found ineligible by the rangers for homestead entry.

There were two principal methods settlers used in order to find suitable parcels to homestead in Pilot Ridge country. The first consisted of those settlers who moved into the area and acquired their homesteads by knowing a local settler who provided them with information on the location of parcels of land that met the criteria outlined in the regulations and were open to entry. Newly arrived homesteaders could also hire local men who were known as "locators." They were familiar with the area and were paid a fee to locate and provide information on parcels of land available to homestead and to help fill out and complete the paperwork. For example, in 1908, Joseph Pratt (Appendix 2: Map 1, Table 2: #109) hired a locator, H. Hocks, to find him property to homestead. Pratt ultimately obtained patent for this parcel of land as a Cash Entry.

Mad River District Ranger Gray reviewing the homestead application noted that the land was:

located by...H. Hocks--others [homesteads] were located by the same locator on nearby land--entry man was from a distance...John Sands a settler living near states that the locator merely rec'd compensation for locating and making survey of the land for the entry men (Pratt homestead record).
[From the original.]

Over the next two decades numerous individuals and families entered Pilot Ridge country in hopes of establishing a homestead. Given the hardships of establishing a homestead in this remote region on 160 acres of generally steep and basically untillable land, many of the individuals who filed for entry or squatted on the land after trying to "make a go of it" simply abandoned their homesteads after a few years. For that reason, there were always a number of homesteaders either entering or leaving the area. This fact when combined with the inaccuracy of the original GLO surveys, as discussed in Appendix 1, has complicated efforts to plot and record homestead parcels on contemporary USGS maps.

Homesteading in Pilot Ridge Country: the Stapp Family

In the summer of 1983, I was assigned along with Six River Archaeologist Glenn Gmoser to survey timber harvest units and haul routes for a proposed timber sale for cultural

resources at the southern end of Pilot Ridge near Mud Spring in order to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (the sites recorded in this area are now part of the Pilot Ridge National Register District). At that time most of the scattered isolated private parcels surrounded by National Forest lands throughout the southern portion of the Pilot Creek watershed and on the west facing slopes of Pilot Ridge north to the Bug Creek watershed were owned by Simpson Timber Company and the only vehicle access to the area was via very primitive jeep roads that crossed Simpson lands (as of 2014 these lands are owned by the Green Diamond Resource Company).

Many of these private parcels were old homesteads and had been acquired by lumber companies, timber speculators, and ranchers during the first few decades of the 20th century (Belcher Title and Abstract Maps 1922:14, 16, 17). Originally the Korbels brothers owned the Northern Redwood Lumber Company (NRLC). Their lumber mill was located at Korbels near Blue Lake and they had bought up most of the private parcels of land in Pilot Ridge country as they had been put up for sale. Not all of the lands had been acquired for their timber value; some had been acquired in order to run cattle. The company had a large timber operation and needed grazing lands to run their cattle on to feed the men working in the woods and in their lumber mills. I was told by Max Rowley who began working in this area in the 1940s that at the time they bought the old homesteads most of the Douglas-fir invading the oak woodlands were only 15-20 feet tall and much of the countryside area was still good land for cattle grazing (Rowley interview and ms.). By the end of the 1960s most of the remaining isolated private parcels in Pilot Ridge country within the boundaries of the Mad River Ranger District had been acquired by the Simpson Timber Company (see Keter 2011 for a discussion of this topic).

In the early 1980s many of the isolated parcels (surrounded by National Forest lands) owned by Simpson at the southern end of the Pilot Creek watershed were still inaccessible but now had substantial volumes of Douglas fir and ponderosa pine standing timber. Given that the company had an interest in seeing roads constructed into this region in order to gain access, I was provided with a key to the locked gate on upper Maple Creek where the county road ends. Using the Simpson road in order to access the southern end of Pilot Ridge saved about two to three hours each way of driving time via an alternate route on National Forest lands; a rough four wheel drive trail down the crest of Pilot Ridge to High Salt Ground (see Keter 2013 for a description of this route).

A logging road had been constructed up the Maple Creek watershed to about Bug Creek in the early 1900s to access timber. This road was extended into southern Pilot Ridge country by lumber companies working out of Korbels about 1955 in order to reach a number of private parcels with substantial volumes of timber on the northeast facing slopes of South Fork Mountain (Keter 1994c, 2011:5). Max Rowley told me that the haul route:

...came up from Maple Creek around the Bug Butte area and hit Pilot Ridge near Pilot Rock. The road continued around Whiting Ridge and Last Chance Ridges and much of the timber they got was from the east side of South Fork Mountain. They also logged the private parcels in the Pilot Creek Watershed

that had been purchased from the homesteaders who had left and sold out. The Macintosh Lumber Company was the logging company and they got a right-of-way to get to their lands from the Forest Service. They also logged the right-of-way and hauled out those logs.

The road crossed the Bug Creek watershed at mid-slope and hit Pilot Ridge at a point about halfway down the ridgeline near its junction with Whiting Ridge at High Salt Ground (Image 1, Map 4-2). From that point, a primitive four-wheel drive trail, generally following the blazed route of the old Pilot Ridge Trail, headed south a couple of miles along the crest of Pilot Ridge to Filaree Flat (Maps 4-2, 4-3). Just to the south of Filaree Flat, the original pack trail continued south along the crest of Pilot Ridge while the jeep trail dropped down slope to the southwest several hundred feet in elevation circling to the west around Singleton Butte (Image 4- 1, Map 4-2). It then passed by the old James Singleton cabin (Map 4-2) and continued southeasterly to Holm Ridge. From that point, the jeep trail followed the old County Line Trail east climbing Holm Ridge to the crest of Pilot Ridge where it reconnected with the Pilot Ridge Trail coming in from the north. A very narrow and rough jeep trail then followed the old blazed trail south to Mud Spring (Map 4-2) continuing down the ridge a short distance before ending on the southern end of Pilot Ridge at about 3,000' in elevation (Keter 2013:18-19).

It was at that time, while driving the old jeep trail leading to the southern end of Pilot Ridge that I would pass by the old Singleton cabin (Map 4-2). The residents, whom I later learned were Marvin Stapp and his wife Isabel Peterson Stapp, were usually around to wave as I drove by.

[I later learned the Singleton place (see Appendix 5) was then owned by the Simpson Company and that over the years a number of individuals including members of the Stapp family had rented out the cabin.]

I eventually stopped by one day and visited with the couple. I learned that Marvin Stapp (born in 1914) had spent part of his childhood living on a homestead located on upper Wildcat Creek just to the west of Pilot Ridge (Map 4-2) and that Isabel Peterson Stapp (born in 1918) had been raised on a homestead in the Bug Creek watershed about eight air miles to the north of the Stapp homestead.

[Although the Bug Creek watershed is located to the north and west of the Mad River Ranger District and beyond the scope of this paper, I have included as Appendix 4 a brief discussion of the area and summary of the information provided to me by Isabel Peterson Stapp. I have also included in the Appendix a summary of the homestead entry and inspection reports for the two Peterson homesteads.]

Over a decade later, in 1994, I was assigned by Six Rivers National Forest to a Watershed Assessment Team in order to document the land-use history of the Pilot Creek Watershed. This interdisciplinary team of foresters, engineers, botanists, fisheries biologists, wildlife biologists, ecologists, and other natural resources specialists was directed to provide a contextual environmental history of the watershed and to summarize the current

scientific data on the various plant and animal populations and the physical condition of the landscape as the result of past grazing and homesteading land-use activities and logging and road building practices (Keter 1994C, 2011). During my research on the land-use history of the watershed, I visited with the Stapps at their home on the coast a few miles to the south of College of the Redwoods in the spring of 1994 and interviewed them on four separate occasions (Keter 2011: Interview #1). Marvin and Isabel generously shared their experiences of growing up in Pilot Ridge country and the changes that they had seen taking place from an historical and environmental perspective over the last nearly three-quarters of a century.

The following section is based on and summarizes information that the Stapps provided me during these interviews (a draft copy of the interview was reviewed by the Stapps before it was finalized). They also generously provided me with a number of photographs taken in Pilot Ridge country between 1920 to 1940. Some of these photographs have been included in this section. In the spring of 2014, I contacted one of the Stapp's daughters, Rowetta Stapp Miller. She provided me with some additional details on the Oscar and Guy Stapp homesteads. She also had some information on her mother Isabel Peterson Stapp's father, Peter Harvey Peterson and her uncle Nels Peterson who both had homesteads at Bug Creek (Appendix 4). See Appendix 5 for a brief biography of the Stapps and additional contextual information on the Oscar Stapp and Guy Stapp homesteads and the Peterson homesteads.

The Oscar Stapp Family Homestead

(Appendix 2: Map 1, Table 2: #104, #108)

Oscar and Cordelia "Dee" Stapp had nine children, with Marvin Devoe Stapp, born in Eureka on July 14, 1914, being the oldest. Marvin said that his uncle, Guy Stapp, and a friend had first moved to Pilot Ridge country in 1916 in order to establish a homestead. Marvin's parents and the family (there were four children by that time) followed in 1918 homesteading a parcel of land in the upper Wildcat Creek watershed--just to the west of Pilot Ridge (Map 4-2, Image 4-4). The "Wildcat homestead," as the property is known by family members, was not too far from the Guy Stapp homestead (Map 4-2). Carl Cameron had filed for homestead entry on the parcel of land in 1916 (the parcel totaled about 80 acres) and had built a small cabin (Appendix 2: Map 1, Table 2: #104). Cameron relinquished his entry rights to Marvin's father who filed an application for entry in 1918. The Stapps added a room on to each end of the cabin built by Cameron (Image 4-4). Oscar Stapp also filed for entry on the adjoining 80 acres to the south that it appears Cameron had previously abandoned although records are unclear on this matter (see Appendix 2: Table 2 #108). The patent date for the Wildcat homestead was 1923 (see Appendix 5).



Image 4-4

Marvin Stapp standing in front of the Stapp Homestead: upper Wildcat Creek c1940.
Note the shake siding and roofing made from local materials.
(Stapp Photograph Collection)

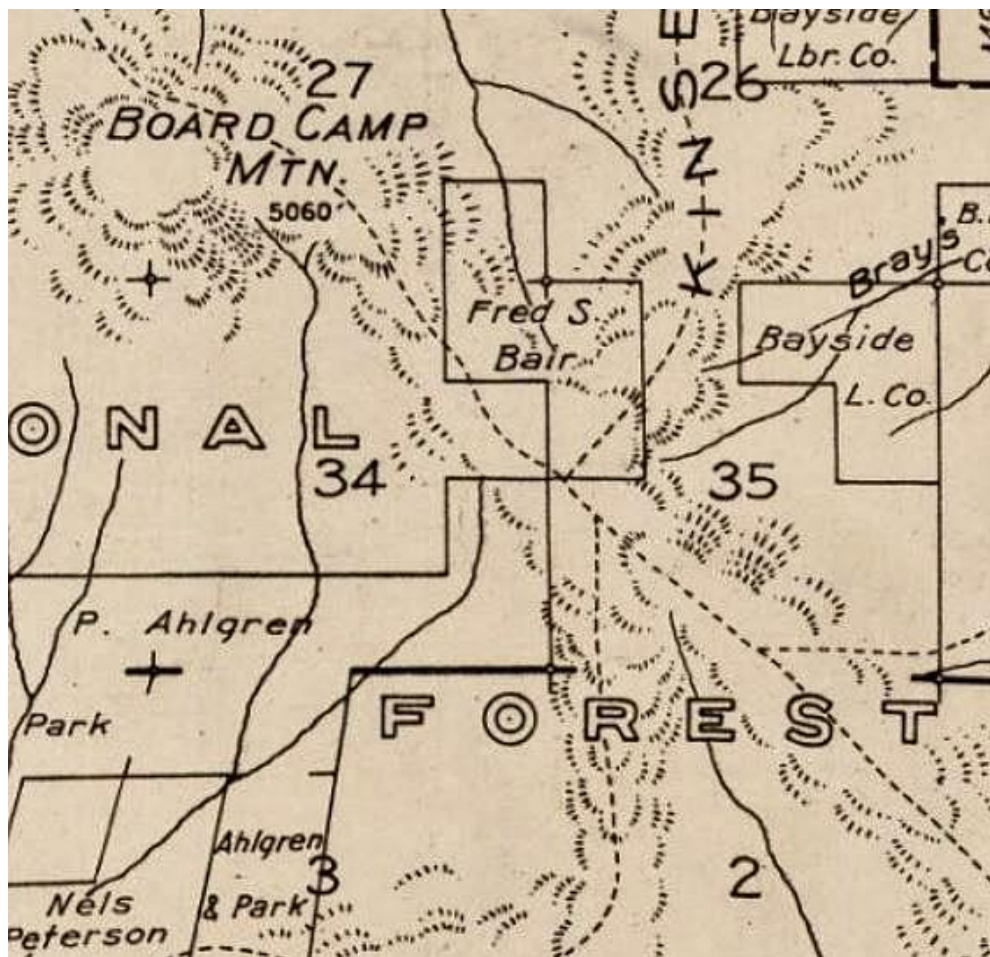
At the time the Stapps moved to their homestead there were only two large ranching operations still utilizing Pilot Ridge country as summer range for their cattle: the Russ Company and the Korbel Company. Marvin told me the Korbel Company ran a large cattle ranch in order to provide beef for the men working at their logging camps in Blue Lake and Korbel. He said that at that time Torrey Corrals in the upper Pilot Creek watershed (Map 4-2) was used by ranchers for cattle when he was growing up but that he did not remember a homestead there.

[Abner L. Torrey was a rancher who did not live there but ran sheep (in partnership with George Gray) in this area in the late 1800s. It appears that there was a cabin at this location at one time. He was born in Livermore Falls Maine and his occupation was a blacksmith. In 1873 He was Sherriff of Yuba County. In 1877 he moved to Eureka and had a sheep business on the Mad River with George Gray of about 1,000 acres in the Iaqua Buttes region (Rowley ms.).

There was some tension at the time they moved in between the homesteaders and ranchers in Pilot Ridge country. I learned from Rowetta that when Isabel Peterson Stapp's uncle Nels Peterson died in an automobile accident on the Maple Creek Road, her grandfather, Peter Harvey Peterson, refused to allow his brother's Bug Creek homestead (see Appendix 4) to be sold to the timber companies or ranchers—especially after it was

suspected by the family that individuals working for the timber speculators or ranchers may have caused a fire of "suspicious nature" destroying their original cabin and they had to rebuild. Rowetta also told me that she remembers her father, Marvin, telling her that at times when they were living on the Wildcat homestead that his father, Oscar, would stay awake at night in the "Barleyfield" to guard against the rancher's free-ranging livestock destroying their garden and grain crops. The destruction of homesteader's crops and gardens by cattle was apparently not uncommon in the Pilot Ridge area at that time (see also Keter 1994a).

Marvin said that when the Stapp family moved to the Wildcat Creek homestead, only one man, Fred Bair, was still running sheep in the area. Bair was a rancher in the Redwood Creek watershed to the north and he owned a parcel of land [with good water] in the headwaters region of Redwood Creek (Map 4-5) (See Keter 2013 for a discussion of the trails in this area).



Map 4-5

In 1922 Fred S. Bair owned a 160 parcel of land (with good water) at the head of Redwood Creek and the northern end of Pilot Ridge (Belcher Title and Abstract 1922: Map 14)

Marvin told me that one of the earliest settlers to enter Pilot Ridge country was Pete Holm. He settled in the area probably in the 1880s and raised sheep. Holm lost nearly everything in the devastating winter of 1889/90. That winter over 90% of the sheep in this region were lost as snow was 10 to 15 feet deep for months on some ridges (see also Keter 1994a). At about the same time import duties on wool were repealed opening the door to more inexpensive wool from Australia. As a result, by the late 1890s cattle began to replace sheep on the summer ranges of Pilot Ridge country and much of the Mad River Ranger District (Keter 1994a).

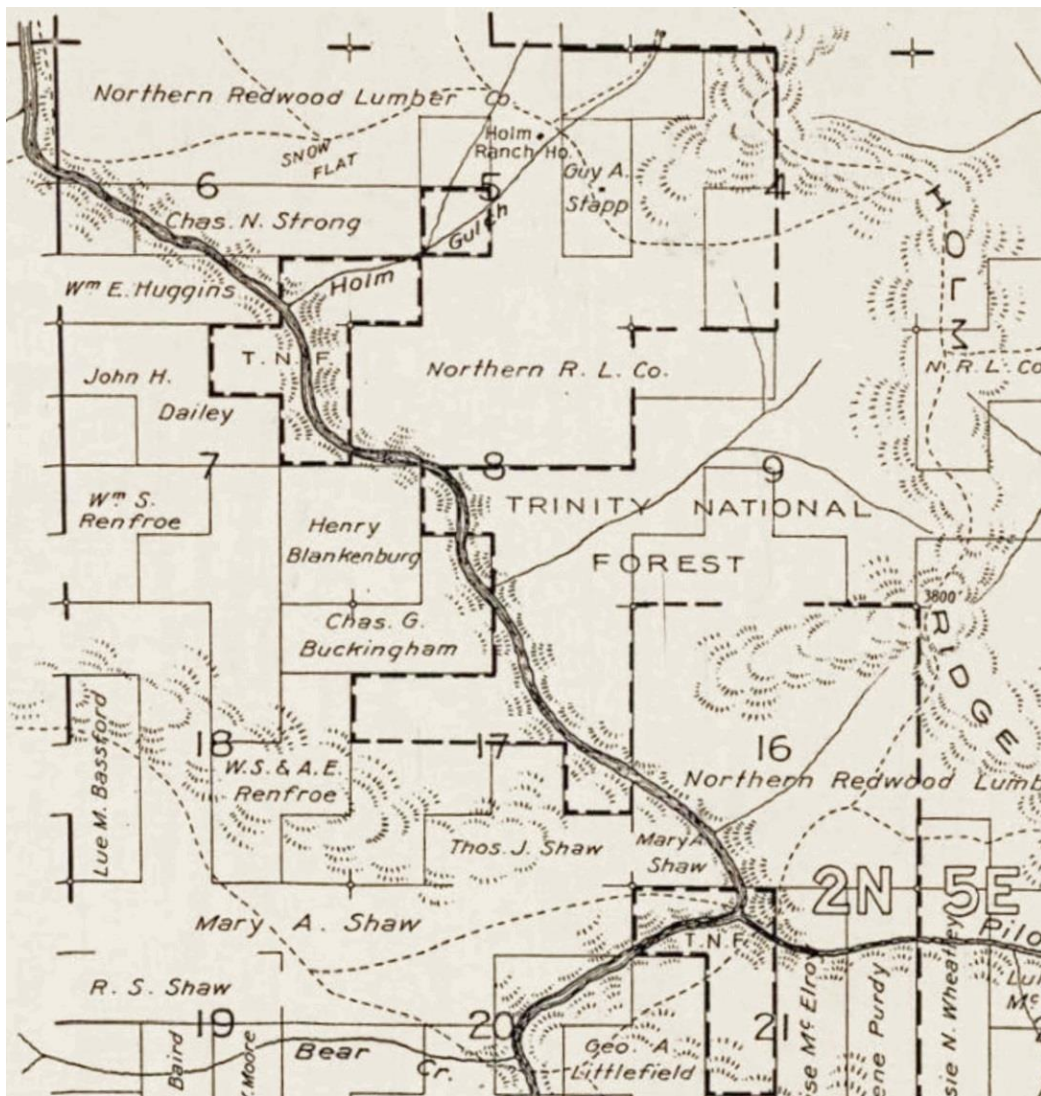
Most of the homesteader's cabins were made of local materials and used shakes for roofs and siding. Pete Holm was the only one Marvin knew of who had brought in milled lumber to build his cabin--carrying the materials in by mule (Image 4-5).



Image 4-5

Holm Cabin c1940: Marvin Stapp in photo.
Note the milled boards on cabin walls and 12 pane windows
(Stapp Photograph Collection)

Another consultant, Fred Graham, (Interview #341), in his late 80s or early 90s at the time of his interview in 1983 at Blue Lake was also familiar with the Holm place. Although he had not been to Pilot Ridge country in 40 years, he had worked for about 20 years as a foreman running cattle for the Russ Company who had a 15,000 acre ranch on Grouse Mountain (this property is still owned by the Russ family). Graham said that by the time he worked in the area the "Hollium Place" (Holm) was sitting on land owned by the Northern Redwood Lumber Company (Map 4-2). According to Graham, Holm's original house was good-sized, about 16 by 20 feet and had a small barn. During the time he worked in the area the house still had a wood stove and was used by "riders" (cowboys) working for the ranchers grazing livestock in the area. Although there is no date for when Holm sold his property it is listed under the ownership of NRLC on the 1922 Belcher Title and Abstract map (Map 4-6).



Map 4-6

Note that the Holm cabin in Section 5 (top center) located near the Guy Stapp homestead was under the ownership of NRLC by 1922.
(Belcher Title & Abstract 1922: Map 16)

Along with Peter Holm and Fred Becker, mentioned earlier, Marvin remembered another early homesteader, Happy Jack (Marvin knew him by no other name) was also living in the area at the time they moved to Wildcat Creek. It appears, given the topography of the area that Happy Jack Spring is probably the location of his cabin (Map 4-2). He may have been a "squatter" as the land was never claimed under the Timber and Stone Act or the Homestead Act and was placed within the Trinity National Forest boundary when it was created in 1905 (USGS 7.5 , Trinity National Forest map 1920, Belcher T&A 1922:16). It is likely that this area was not declared "open to entry" after 1905 by the Forest Service as it is situated on the north facing slopes of Eight Mile Ridge and was heavily forested. Some of the mature stands of Douglas fir in this area were acquired under the Timber and Stone Act (Appendix 2, Map 1, Table 1) and were clear cut in the 1970s and 1980s (see Keter 2013: 17-18).

During the time that the Stapp family was living at Wildcat Creek, Marvin said that there were many settlers, some with families, moving into the area to homestead. Other individuals and families that he remembered living in the area (Map 4-2) when he was growing up included his uncle Guy Stapp, the Shepherds (Appendix 2,; Map 1, Table 2: #105), John A. Murray (Appendix 2: Map 1, Table 2: #112) out on Henry Ridge, the Smiths (Appendix 2: Map 1, table: #116), the Hembecks, the Strongs, James Singleton, and the Day family (Image 4-6) (see Map4- 2 for homestead locations). Marvin also told me that some of the men moving into the area to homestead in the early 1920s were men who had fought in World War I. They wanted to live in a remote area with few people and appeared to be "shell shocked" and seemed to suffer from some psychological problems.



Image 4-6
Day Cabin c1940: Isabel Stapp in photograph.
(Stapp Photograph Collection)

Further to the north the Sargents lived on Coyote Creek and the Peterson families (Isabel's family and that of her uncle Nels Peterson) lived further north in the Bug Creek watershed (Appendix 4). He also remembered that a man named Jensen had a cabin at the head of the Pilot Creek drainage--just over the ridge into the Grouse Creek drainage.

[This location is an open glade about 1/3 mile to the west of the junction of Last Chance Ridge and South Fork Mountain. Glenn Gmoser and I recorded a site here in the early 1980s. At that time young Douglas fir (30 to 50 years old) were encroaching on the open glades. The area was recorded as a prehistoric site (Keter and Gmoser) no physical remains of the homestead were visible at that time. By 2011 when I passed by the area nearly the entire glade had been over grown by Douglas fir.]

At the time the Stapp family established their homestead at the head of Wildcat Creek there were no roads even approaching this region and it was very isolated. The first roads into this part of the country were not built until well after World War II (Keter 2011). The closest town for supplies was Korbel. It was a long journey to the coast and was usually only undertaken once a year (Image 4-7).



Image 4-7

The Stapp Family in Eureka returning to their homestead on Pilot Ridge: c1920.
(Stapp Photograph Collection)

Marvin remembered that they traveled up Pilot Ridge on the Pilot Ridge Trail (Map 4-3, Image 4-8) to its junction with Kinsey Ridge. They then headed to the northwest following the trail to Twin Lakes and Snow Camp (this trail is referred to locally as the Snow Camp Trail) where they met the old Humboldt-Hyampom Trail leading to Blue Lake (see Keter 2013 for the location of these trails).



Image 4-8

Marvin Stapp: view to Pilot Rock from south Pilot Ridge c1940.
(Stapp Photograph Collection)

During the height of the homesteading era, from about 1910 to the early 1920s, it is likely that there were as many as 15 to 20 homesteads occupied on a year around or near year around basis in Pilot Ridge country--this included a number of families with children. The Stapps both said that the homesteaders formed a close knit community and helped each other out and because it was such a remote area it was a necessity to cooperate with your neighbors. There were numerous trails in the area connecting all of the homesteads. Sometimes in the winter when the snows were deep the homesteaders used skis to get around since it was the only way they could travel.

All of the homesteaders used horses to get in and out of Pilot Ridge country as the nearest wagon roads were miles away (by 1920 the nearest road was at Showers Pass although one had to first cross the Mad River something that, as noted earlier, can be problematic in the winter). There were also quite a few mules in the area--they were used to pack in supplies--and were always led by a bell mare. Marvin said that they also used bells for their cattle as well since usually the cattle would stay around and follow the animal with the bell. When they first moved into Pilot Ridge country national forest lands were still open range and grazing permits were not required for the local homesteaders and they ran their stock without a permit on adjacent national forest lands.

Homesteaders did not earn much hard cash so they made, hunted, or grew nearly everything they needed. The Stapps told me that they produced most of their food, and that most homesteaders, especially those with families, had a cow for milk, some poultry, and a few hogs. In the fall they would butcher a hog and smoke enough meat to last through the winter. Most homesteaders also had large gardens, and hunted deer and other game. Many of the homesteads also had fruit trees--mostly apple although plum trees and pear trees were not uncommon.

Marvin said that many of the settlers raised pigs to earn money and that his father used to drive pigs to Scotia to the slaughterhouse (a distance of over 40 miles by trails and roads). He remembered once helping his father drive a herd of 50 hogs to market. He told me that they used dogs to drive the pigs to market. They usually used two dogs and that "if you used too many that could also cause some problems." Dogs were important work animals on the local homesteads and were also used for hunting. Marvin said that everyone had a few dogs on their homesteads and that most were "long-haired" shepherds.

The pigs were not fenced in and ranged throughout the countryside. They were fed occasionally to keep them returning home and Marvin remembered that usually they would return to the barn if a storm was coming in. They rooted the ground everywhere, both in the oak woodland areas and the open meadows where they ate acorns and some other species of plants. He said the Forest Service did not like pigs and thought they damaged the land. Finally, pigs were prohibited by the Forest Service from going on to national forest lands. For years afterwards, feral pigs still inhabited the Pilot Creek region. Marvin said that homesteaders contended that by digging up spring areas and opening up the ground water that pigs had some use. I asked if there were still any wild pigs in the area given their potential to negatively affect an ecosystem. Marvin indicated that there were pigs but that they were wild only in the sense that they escaped from the homesteads. [Within a few generations domestic pigs will evolve into feral pigs.]

Some of the homesteaders, including both Marvin and Isabel's fathers, used to earn money working for the Forest Service during the summer months constructing new trails or clearing the existing trails of brush. The settlers living in this region also did some trapping in order to earn cash. Marvin said that they used to trap raccoons, bobcats, civets, minks, and less often, but of considerably more valuable, fishers. They used to get advertisements from the various companies that bought pelts and would mail the pelts to the companies that offered the highest prices. Some of these companies were from as far away as Denver.

[Information on the historic environment of the Pilot Ridge region provided by the Stapps for the 1994 Pilot Creek Watershed Analysis has been reedited for this publication and is included in Appendix 3.]

Marvin also said that many of the homesteads on the Mad River Ranger District had telephones. Some were put in as early as 1918 as he remembers his family having a telephone in their cabin. Each phone had a unique ring (for example one long and one short

ring). The Forest Service furnished the line (a single wire hung through trees by porcelain insulators) and telephones and the homesteaders bought the batteries.

[Old telephone wires and insulators on trees were still common throughout the Mad River Ranger District in the 1980s.]

Marvin and Isabel said that one of the main reasons families had to leave the region was the fact that the area was so isolated that the children of the homesteaders were not able to attend school. It appears that the homesteaders placed a high value on education and often would leave temporarily or sellout and leave for good when their children became old enough to attend school. Marvin said that at one time there were so many children moving into the area that a school was proposed near the southern end of Pilot Ridge for the "School Section 16," but that the minimum required by the county of "five and a half students to establish a school" was never realized. For that reason, some of the homesteaders in the area sent their children to the Harts Valley School (Image 4-9) a small one room cabin to the west of Showers pass. There was also a post office at this location.



Image 4-9
Harts Valley School c1921
(Stapp Photograph Collection)

By the early 1920s a road had been constructed connecting the Showers Pass area with the lower Eel River valley. Shortly after "proving up" on the Wildcat homestead, when Marvin was nine years old, in 1923, the Stapp family moved to the "Batham Place" just to the east of Showers Pass in the Mad River watershed and then to the nearby "Hagen Place," (records show that a George T. Batham and a Bill Hagen had previously filed for

homesteads in this area) so that the children could attend the Harts Valley school (also referred to as the "Shower's Pass School"). For several years they would attend the Harts Valley School at Showers Pass and return to their Wildcat homestead to spend part of each winter (see Appendix 5). Marvin said that he walked about five miles each way to the Hart's Valley school. In 1968 Max Rowley interviewed Marvin's father Oscar Stapp (Rowley ms.). Max recorded that:

Oscar Stapp, who was living in Eureka at this time, says that the Showers Pass area, and especially the home he built and the little Showers Pass School, will always hold loving memories. He lived in the area for 50 years and served as clerk on the school board for many of the 50 years he lived in Showers Pass.

During many of their growing up years the Stapp children sometimes walked the five miles from their home to school, but there were many times in stormy weather when Oscar drove a team of horses or mules with the wagon, often through deep snow, to get the Stapps and the neighboring children to school. The wagon [road] served an area so rugged that the modern automobile would never make it today. At the Showers Pass School site there are three buildings; one apparently was used as a woodshed and storeroom. The other two were both schoolhouses. Reported to have been built as a sheepherder's cabin, the older one required a few poles on one side to prop up the sagging walls, but it served as a cottage for the teacher after the newer one was built.

Oscar Stapp reports that he and A. L. Lamareaux [Lamoreaux], working together, built the new schoolhouse in 1918. The little school is now (1980s) used by Hart Valley Gun Club as a meeting place and a camping out place for the hunters of Showers Pass. [From the original.]

It is likely that the period from about 1910 to 1920 saw the greatest number of individuals living year around within the Pilot Creek watershed during the historic era. By the early 1920s most of the original homesteaders had sold out to the NLRC or some other timber speculator (Belcher Title & Abstract 1922: Maps 10, 14, 16, 17). As detailed below, by the late 1930s the few remaining homestead parcels in Pilot Ridge country had all been abandoned although some were used seasonally by family members during the summer months or during the fall hunting season. Today, the Guy Stapp and Oscar Stapp family homesteads are still owned by their descendants. The extended Stapp family still has family gatherings almost annually at the old homestead in Pilot Ridge country where Oscar and Dee Stapp and their four children first homesteaded nearly 100 years ago. Refer to Appendix 5 for a brief biography of the Stapp and Peterson families.

Other Homesteaders in Pilot Ridge Country

As part of the effort to document the history of Pilot Ridge country, during the archaeological surveys undertaken in the Pilot Creek watershed and surrounding area in the early 1980s, several individuals with knowledge of the general area were interviewed. This section summarizes the relevant information contained in these interviews for Pilot Ridge country during the homestead era.

Percy Jackson

Percy Jackson was interviewed in the fall of 1983 (Interview #I340). He had spent time working in Pilot Ridge country during the homesteading era. At the time he was interviewed Jackson was about 80 years old. The consultant worked in the logging industry at Camp Korbel in 1919 when he was 17 year of age. As a young man he also worked in his father's blacksmith shop and in several garages. At times he ran cattle for various ranchers in Pilot Ridge country and he also worked as a packer. He used to pack into the area from Blue Lake on mules and on horses. There were trails connecting all the cabins in the area and the horses, belonging to the cowhands, knew the trails well.

He remembered that a man named Shepherd (Map4-2) owned a place on the south side of a creek on South Fork Mountain. He had a cabin and a woodshed. It used to take a day and half to two days to pack supplies to his place (Appendix 2: Map1, Table 2: #105).

[Note the homestead application is in the name of Zella R. Shepherd only. For some reason the name of her husband was not mentioned on the homestead application form completed by the ranger. A number of interviewees, however, indicated that the "Shepherds" lived on the homestead so it appears that the homestead was occupied by a married couple.]

A man named Murray (John B. Murray: Appendix 2, Table 1: #112) had a cabin on the western slopes of South Fork Mountain, about half way up and about east of the Shepherd's place (Map 4-2). There was a telephone line that connected the Fred Becker cabin, with the Murray, and Shepherd homesteads. Jackson remembered that one time he killed a deer and phoned Becker to come up to Shepherd's cabin to get it. Further to the north, the Day Cabin (Image 4-6) was located on the west slopes of South Fork Mountain and a trail linked the cabin with the Dan East cabin (Image 4-10) located about one and a half miles to the north on about the same contour (Map 4-2).



Image 4-10
Dan East Cabin c1940
(Stapp Photograph Collection)

Maxwell Rowley

Maxwell (Max) Rowley, as noted earlier, was a career Forest Service employee who was raised near Hydesville. He was a well-known local avocational historian (see References Cited Interviews section) and published a number of articles in local newspapers and over several decades gave presentations on the history of the region to numerous groups and organizations in Humboldt and Trinity Counties. During the early part of his Forest Service career, beginning in the late 1940s, Max worked on the Mad River Ranger District for a number of years and knew the area well. He retired from the Forest Service, in the late 1980s, working at that time on the Lower Trinity Ranger District. Max, who died in 2003, and I worked together and were personal friends for over 20 years. I found him to be one of the most knowledgeable individuals in Trinity and Humboldt Counties on the history of the southeastern Bald Hills that today constitutes much of the Mad River Ranger District--

especially regarding the old historic trails that crisscrossed the region. The information on historic trails that Max provided to me is summarized in my paper *Historic Trails of the Pilot Ridge Country* (Keter 2013).

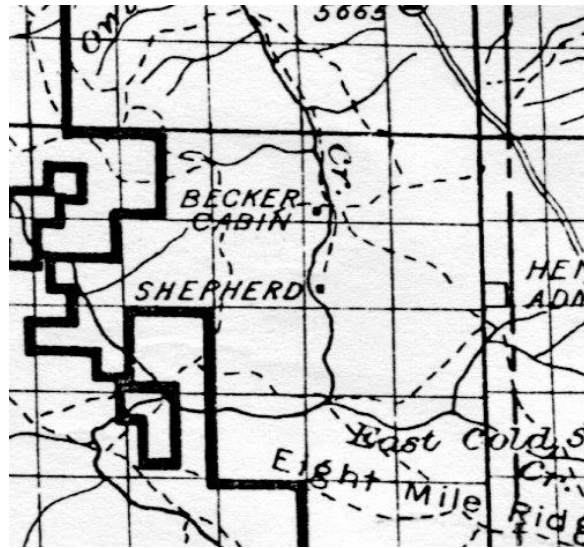
Max's grandparents homesteaded in the area just to the west of Showers Pass and over the divide from the Mad River. His father homesteaded in the same area and Max, who was born in 1928, had known members of the Stapp family since childhood. The small school near Harts Valley that the Stapp children attended was within about a mile of the Rowley homestead. The family eventually moved to Fieldbrook so that the children could attend high school. In addition to my interviews with him over the years, Max generously shared much of his historic research with me and provided me with copies of many of his notes and other historical data (maps, interviews, etc.) that he had acquired over the years on Pilot Ridge country.

Max told me that there were not a lot of homesteads in the Pilot Creek watershed as compared to some of the other areas to the south on the Mad River Ranger District but he knew of about eight to ten. One of the earliest homesteaders was Al Hazen (Appendix 2, Map1, Table 2:#117) who had a cabin on Al Hazen Ridge (Map 4-2).

[Alfred Hazen filed a homestead entry claim in 1902 and the parcel was patented in 1910. It appears that he was no longer living in the area when the Stapp family moved in as he was not mentioned in our interviews nor was the location of his homestead identified on Marvin Stapp's map identifying the locations of the homesteads in the area when they lived there. The 160 acre parcel was located to the west of Pilot Creek at Torrey Crossing at the foot of Al Hazen Ridge (Map 4-2). The Belcher Title and Abstract map (1922:17) indicates that like many other homestead parcels in this area it was acquired by Agnes J Johnson, presumably a timber speculator.]

Max was familiar with the Fred Becker place and he thought the 1964 flood might have taken out the Becker cabin (Image 4-2). Another homesteader by the name of Gustafson had a cabin in the 1920s that was located about one mile to the south of Becker's place just to the east of Pilot Creek (Map 4-2, Appendix 2: Map 1, Table 2:#125). Max was not sure if Gustafson lived in the area full-time.

[It appears that the Gustafson cabin and the Shepherd homestead cabin (Map 4-2) are one and the same. Given the fact that the Stapps did not mention the name Gustafson and the Shepherds still owned the property in 1922 (Belcher Title and Abstract Map: 16), it is likely that Gustafson acquired the land from the Shepherds sometime after 1927 as the Trinity National Forest map published that year still shows the cabin as being owned by the Shepherds. The 1947 map, however, labels the cabin at this location as the "Gustafson" cabin (Maps 4-6 and 4-7).]



Map 4-6
Location of the "Shepherd cabin"
(1927 Trinity National Forest)



Map 4-7
Location of the "Gustafson Cabin"
(1947 Trinity National Forest Map)

Max said that most of the homesteads were actually on the western slopes of Pilot Ridge south of Pilot Rock and that Torrey Corrals was originally used as a sheep corral and there was a cabin there at one time (Map 4-2, the cabin shows up on the 1922 Belcher Title and Abstract Map 17). He thought Torrey was a big-time sheep rancher in this country before the turn of the century (see also the comments on Torrey Corrals by Marvin Stapp above). Max also mentioned that the Dan East cabin was still standing when he worked out in this country in the late 1940s (Map 4-2, Image 4-9).

[The location of the Dan East Cabin was on a parcel that records indicate was acquired under the Timber and Stone Act in 1886 (Appendix 2: Map 1, Table 2: #24). By 1922 the property was owned by the NRLC (Belcher Title and Abstract 1922: Map 17).]

I asked how the settlers in the area made their living during the homestead era. He said his father told him that "they hunted a little, fished a little, worked a little," and with tongue-in-cheek, he said "and stole a little" to make ends meet. Some of them also ran a few cattle or sheep. He said that in about 1934 the Forest Service made the homesteaders and large-scale ranchers stop running sheep up in this country because it was destroying the rangelands (Keter 1989). There were still some sheep in the area on private lands [this was especially true for the upper Van Duzen watershed] but the market really collapsed in about 1941. After that time most of the sheep in this country were gone. A lot of this was based on economics. This was about the time that synthetics came on the market and wool prices collapsed. He said up in this country sheep were sheared once a year--in about June before the hot weather hit. The sheep were sheared by a group of men who traveled from ranch to ranch and were experts at it--they came from as far away as Sacramento or Oregon.

I asked why in the 1920s people began to abandon their homesteads. Like others familiar with the homesteaders living in the back country whom I have interviewed over the years, he noted that most homesteaders thought that getting an education was very important. It was for that reason that often when children reached a certain age, the parents would move to an area within a reasonable distance of a school in order to provide their children an adequate education. Max noted this kind of move happened in his family when they moved from the Showers Pass area to be closer to a school in Fieldbrook. Max told me that with the abandonment of the homesteads by the late 1930s and early 1940s the Pilot Ridge country had reverted to a somewhat wilder area.

[Refer to Appendix 3 for an in-depth discussion by Max of the plants and animals inhabiting the region during this era.]

The W.E. Severance Homestead (Appendix 2: Map1, Table 2: #115*)

Another settler living in Pilot Ridge country at the time the Stapps homesteaded was W.E. Severance. The Severance place (Map 4-2) like the Oscar Stapp homestead was made up portions of parcels of land that had been homesteaded earlier and abandoned. On June 5, 1902, Myron Bailey had filed for homestead entry on portions of this parcel under the 1862 Homestead Act. In May of 1909, Bailey filed for abandonment of the homestead. A hand-written letter in the file by Severance noted that William J. East had also filed for abandonment to his homestead in Section 28, T3N, R5E, and a portion of that land was also included on Severance's entry application.

After he acquired the place that included a small cabin constructed by Bailey, he worked with the Assistant District Ranger stationed at Hyampom, B. R. Garrett, who "examined" the homestead parcel for listing on October 9, 1910. He noted that at the time of his visit, Severance, whose address was recorded as Yeager Creek, had lived on the homestead for about one year. The following paragraphs are a summary of Garrett's examination report.

This tract of land is located one half mile west of Pilot Creek and 10 miles west of Hyampom Valley and Post Office. Korbels the nearest market is 60 miles connected by trail. Fort Baker the nearest point to a Wagon Road is 15 miles...Elevation about 2,500 feet. The tract is located on the north east slope of Pilot Ridge and lays in a Cove on a series of benches which modified the slope so that the greater portion of it may be easily cultivated...There is plenty of water for domestic use and to irrigate a garden furnished by springs on the land and a creek south of the tract....

A home can be maintained for all seasons...The cover consists of a park stand of small White Oak and Oak and Hazel brush and a few Douglas Fir scattered along the boundary. Approx. 20,000 feet of Fir, and 2,000 oak post and 300 cords of wood on the whole tract...A part of this tract was formerly covered by the Homestead entry of Miram [Myron] Bailey but has been relinquished. The improvements consist of a House of 1 room 14 x 20 made of shakes and a pasture of 20 acres fenced with poles and posts, all improvements in good repair. These improvements were built by Miram Bailey...

This tract is located in a sparsely settled community 50 miles from any markets and the settlers in that locality raise stock for a living. This tract would be suitable for raising Hay and Grain and apples and early vegetables. Nearby Farms valued at \$7 per acre. School and post Office 10 miles. Korbels Calif the nearest market 50 miles connected by trail. All transportation by pack animals. [From the original.]

In his report Garrett determined that 140 acres qualified for listing under provisions of the law and that 20 acres were not "open to entry" as they were found to be primarily forest land unsuitable for agricultural purposes. The Forest Supervisor approved the examination report and the parcel was listed on June 19, 1911. "Severin Opening" location of the homestead is still identified on the contemporary Blake Mountain 7.5' USGS map (Map 4-2).

Apparently, Severance was successful in his efforts to homestead in Pilot Ridge country. In the homestead entry application for David Blake (Appendix 2: Map 1, Table 2: #119*), District Ranger Haas in his inspection report noted that:

Mr. Ed Severance who has a homestead claim ½ mile distant from this tract states, that he is making a [livelihood] on his claim dry farming. Severance feeds all his hay out in the winter to stock.

The homestead files also contain what appears to be a second application for entry by W.E. Severance for a parcel of land on the east side of Pilot Creek just below (to the west) of the Skull Camp Trail (Map 4-3, Keter 2013:21) on May 2, 1913 (Appendix 2: Table 2: #120*). Administrative records are somewhat confusing on the subject as the name "W.E. Severance" is not listed in the "Report on Forest Homestead Application." Rather, the

name is recorded as "W. E. Severns." It appears, given the few settlers in the region, that Severance/Severns are one and the same person. Interestingly, Marvin Stapp spelled the name as "Severns" on the hand-drawn map that he drew showing the locations of the old homesteads in the area. Forest Service official James Poore visited the homestead later that year and concluded in his report that:

About 40 acres of this land is already clear and would [not] cost but very little to put under cultivation the remainder 70 acres would cost \$35.00 per acre to prepare for cultivation....

I recommend that the area...be listed if the applicant desires to exercise his homestead right upon it, as it is chiefly valuable for agriculture." [From the original.]

The Forest Service in a letter to Severns dated November 22, 1913 informed him that the parcel was "to be declared open to settlement and entry." At some point after this date Severns apparently abandoned his claim. Although no reason is given, a document in the W. E. Severns Forest Service Homestead file states that the parcel of land filed for under claim number 338 was "restored to entry, effective May 14, 1914. No other individuals applied for any portion of this 160 acre parcel and it has always remained in public ownership.

Filing for Homestead Entry on "Non Agricultural Lands"

As noted earlier, by the early 1900s the best locations to establish a homestead in Pilot Ridge country were already occupied. For that reason not all applications submitted for homestead entry were approved by the Forest Service. In most cases this was due to the fact that the agency strictly enforced regulations related to the classification of lands as being "chiefly valuable for agriculture" or as having the potential to grow timber as set forth in the National Forest Homestead Act and Forest Service *Handbook*.

For example, Frank Geffray (Appendix 2: Map1 Table2: #122*) made an application "for the examination and listing" on a parcel of land along Pilot Creek on December 28, 1915. Mad River District Ranger John Gray inspected the parcel and filed a report on May 5, 1916. Gray determined that "the area has little value for the growing of agricultural crops; this has been demonstrated on very similar land within ¼ mile distance" (see the section on Fred Becker above). He included a hand-drawn map of the parcel to document the assertions in his report regarding both the steepness of the terrain and the lack of potential for agricultural use (Image 4-11).

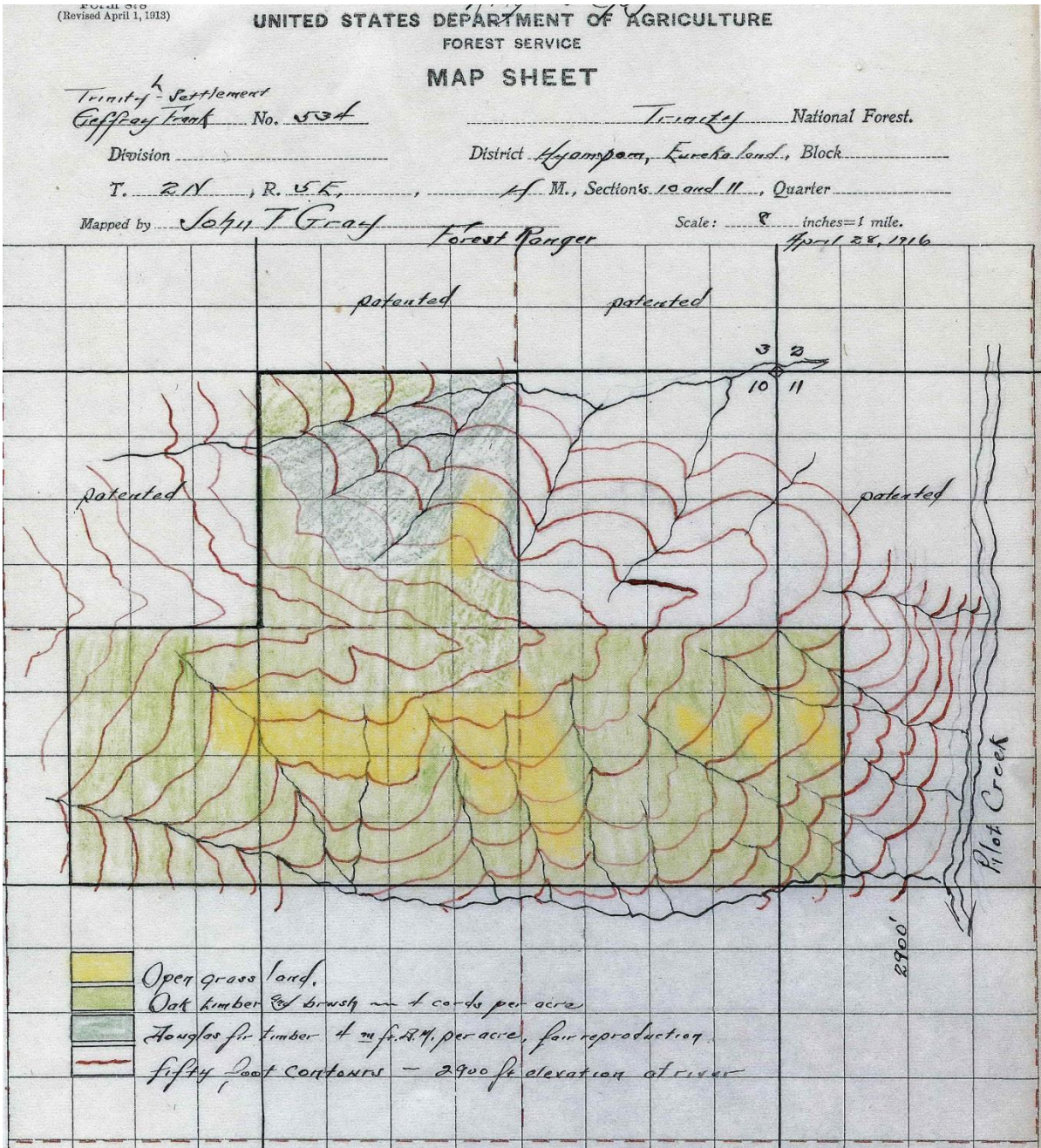


Image 4-11
Geffray Homestead Parcel Plot Map by District Ranger Gray.
(Homestead files, SRNF)

As a result of Gray's report, in a letter to Geffray dated May 9, 1916, the Acting District Forester informed him that:

The land for which you applied in the Trinity National Forest has been examined and found to be not chiefly valuable for agriculture and nonlistable under the Act of June 11, 1906.

The land is mountainous and is cut up by a number of small gulches and most of it is entirely too steep and broken up to be suitable for cultivation...The land is mainly valuable for grazing, and, since land of this character is not classed as chiefly valuable for agriculture, I regret that your application must be rejected.

The End of the Homesteading Era in Pilot Ridge Country

By 1922 when the Belcher Title and Abstract Company issued their maps showing ownership of property in Humboldt County, many if not most of the homesteaders living in Pilot Ridge country had already sold out and moved on. At that time there were three principal landholders accumulating property in the area: F.G. and R.B. Hinkley, Agnes J. Johnson, and the Northern Redwood Lumber Company (Belcher Title and Abstract Maps 1922: 14, 16, 17).

I asked Marvin and Isabel what happened to the homesteaders who had lived in the area and why did so many leave after only a few years. In addition to no nearby school for their children as they mentioned earlier, they both told me that in reality it was difficult if not impossible to maintain a successful homestead on 160 acres of land in this country. This fact did not escape the Forest Service rangers in charge of implementing the National Forest Homestead Act. In May of 1912, The Forest Supervisor of the Plumas National Forest, L. A. Barrett, along with the Mad River District Ranger, inspected a number of homesteads on the Mad River Ranger District. In his report Barrett wrote that:

The Trinity [National Forest], especially in the Mad River District, was liberally plastered with Forest Homestead applications. Notwithstanding the fact that most of the old original homesteads were abandoned all thru this region and that these old homesteads were better land than that now applied for, every homestead applicant was dead sure that he could make a success of agriculture here, even if the pioneers had starved out. As a matter of fact, most of the new bunch starved out shortly. "Hope springs eternal."

...it would have been a kindness to the perspective entryman if 95 percent of this land had not been listed. The entryman starved out in a short period of time. Not 5 percent of the 340,000 acres [listed in California] was ever placed under cultivation" (Barrett 1977:11, 1940:98). [From the original.]

In addition to the lack of arable land, all of these homesteads in Pilot Ridge country were remote and accessible only by trail. Thus, they were far from supplies, cash paying jobs, and potential markets for anything they produced. Ranger D. W. Haas in his inspection report for a homestead entry application filed by David Blake (Appendix 2: Map 2, Table 2: #119*) dated November 11, 1941 wrote that:

The inaccessibility of this region is a great hindrance to this locality besides the transportation facilities are very poor. It is considered impractical for a rancher in this region to pack any of his produce out to market.

On the Mad River Ranger District not one in ten homesteaders made it more than a few years. Today only a few of the original homesteads parcels within the boundaries of the Six Rivers National Forest remain in private hands with the vast majority having been sold over the last century to timber speculators or local ranchers. Thus, the homesteading era in Pilot Ridge country was already over with most of the homesteads already abandoned by 1934 when the National Forest Homestead Act was modified by Congress and the regulations were changed to prohibit homesteading on National Forest lands within the continental United States. After 1934 Alaska was the only state where homesteading on national forest lands was still permitted. The Forest Homestead Act was finally repealed by Congress in 1962.

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(Minor editing corrections were made to this paper on January 20, 2015)

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Maxwell Rowley (1928-2003) was interviewed by the author in regards to the history and past land-use activities within Pilot Creek Watershed and Grouse Creek watersheds on February 22, 1994, and April 5, 1994. Max also provided me with a number of maps, personal notes, and interviews that he had conducted during the 1960s to 1990s. I am greatly indebted to his pioneering research especially on the trails of eastern Humboldt and western Trinity Counties. We not only worked together for over 20 years but were good

friends sharing a love of local history--especially of the old trails in Pilot Ridge country and in the Yolla Bolly country further to the south.

Marvin Stapp and Isabel Peterson Stapp: Interviewed Spring of 1994. Refer to Appendix 5 for a brief biography of the Stapps and Peterson families.

Rowetta Stapp Miller. Rowetta was Interviewed spring of 2014. She also reviewed a draft of this paper and provided additional information and insights into her parents and grandparents homesteads on Pilot Ridge. See Appendix 5 for background information on Rowetta and the extended Stapp family.

Maps

1922 Belcher Title and Abstract Eureka CA.: Maps 14, 16, 17

Metsker n.d.: Map of Humboldt County.

Trinity National Forest Maps: 1915, 1922, 1947.

Six Rivers National Forest Map: 1947.

USGS Maps 7.5': Blake Mountain, Board Camp Mountain, Showers Mountain, Sims Mountain

USGS Map 15' Pilot Creek: 1951.

Appendix 1

Mapping Historical Features and Plotting Homesteads on USGS Maps in Pilot Ridge Country

Background

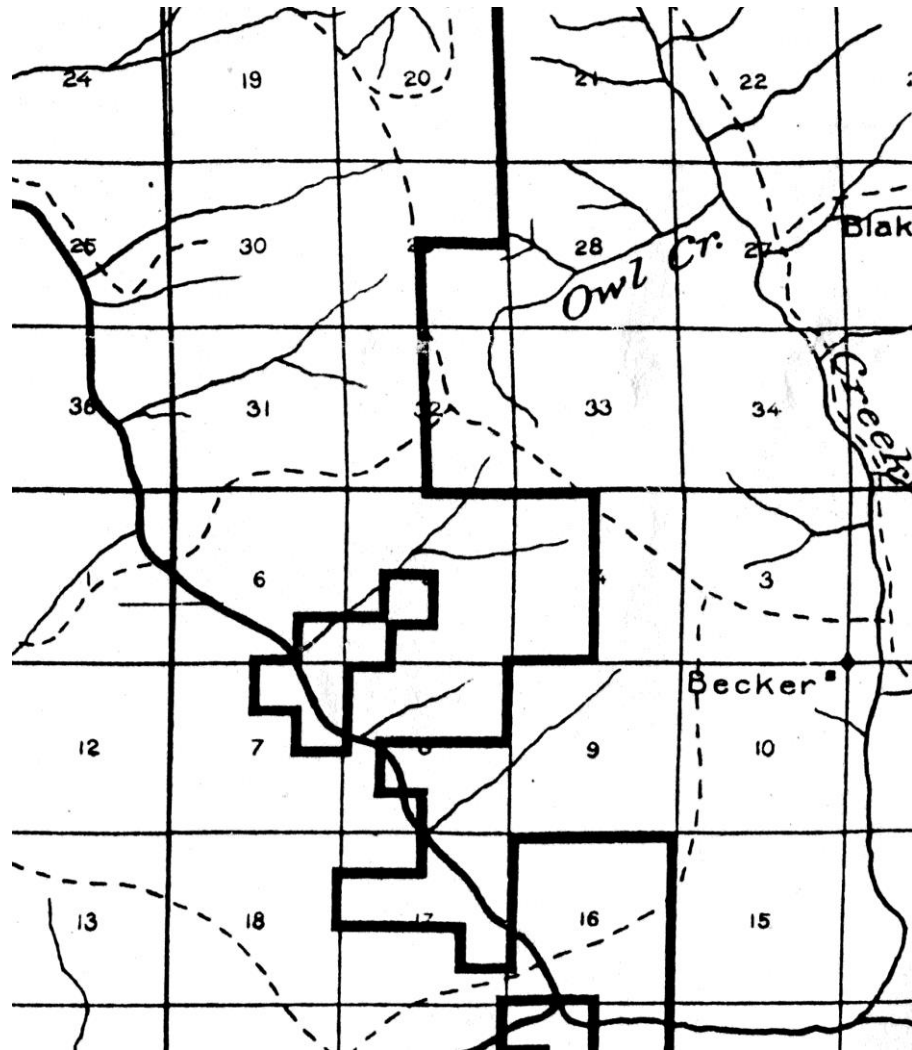
There were a number of challenges encountered in plotting the location on contemporary USGS maps of the patented homestead parcels and other privately held parcels of property acquired from public domain lands during the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Pilot Ridge country (Appendix 2: Map 1, Tables: 1-2). The problems stemmed primarily from the documentation contained in the original survey records and maps of the region produced by the Government Land Office (GLO) in the late 1870s. As I noted in my paper *Historic Trails of the Pilot Ridge Country* (Keter 2013: 42, Appendix 1), the original 19th century GLO maps and cadastral surveys for eastern Humboldt and western Trinity Counties were notoriously inaccurate. Not only were the original surveys often inaccurate, in some cases the original survey maps and documents submitted to the GLO were fraudulent. In Humboldt County many of the early GLO surveys of remote areas like Pilot Ridge country are commonly referred to as "bar room" surveys since the surveyors never even made it into the field, but put their surveys together while imbibing at their local saloon. For that reason, often the original GLO survey maps from the 1870s do not match the Township, Range, Section lines, and corners established by modern cadastral surveys. In the North Coast Ranges National Forest/private property boundary lines have been as much as a mile off. As a result many of the Township, Range, and Section lines remained poorly surveyed and inaccurately mapped, well into the second half of the 20th century.

After new cadastral surveys of National Forest-private property boundary lines were undertaken in the 1980s and early 1990s it created an ongoing problem for Six Rivers National Forest and adjacent land holders (personal communication Larry Walter, surveyor, Six Rivers National Forest). To deal with this somewhat chaotic situation Congress passed legislation: the Small Tracts Act. One of the Act's provisions provided a legal means for the adjustment of property boundary lines. As a result there were numerous land exchanges and "property line adjustments" under authority of the Small Tracts Act undertaken by Six Rivers National Forest to deal with this problem. For example, if a residence or other real property (barns, out buildings, etc.) of a private land holder was actually sitting on National Forest lands (I worked on several property boundary cases like this during my career on Six Rivers National Forest) an exchange of land between the Forest Service and private land holder could take place in order to remedy the situation.

GLO Maps

The problem with plotting the location of 100 year old parcels of land on contemporary USGS maps can be seen when reviewing the maps and legal descriptions contained on the various homestead application forms and their delineation over time on various maps of the

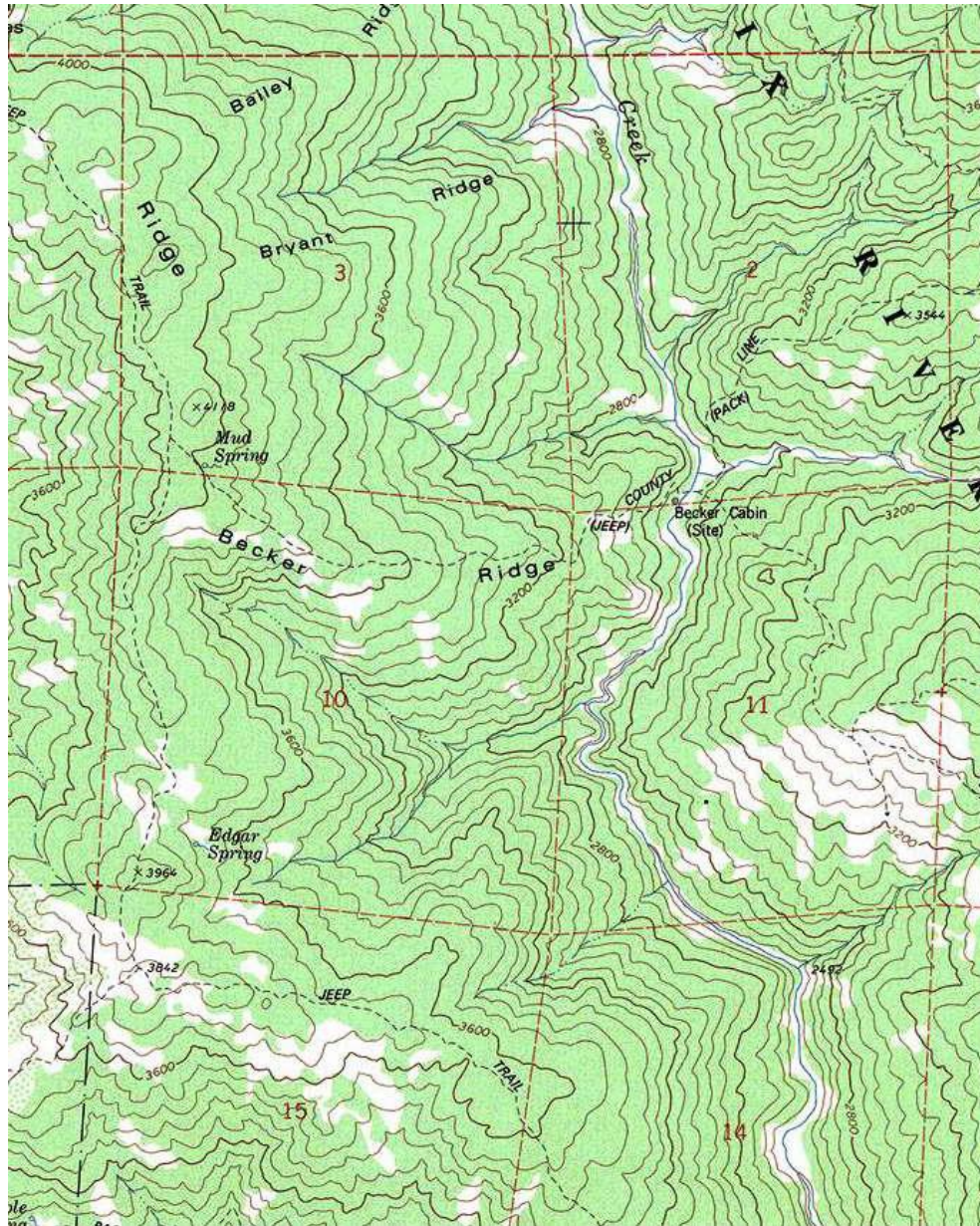
area (Belcher T&A 1922, Metsker n.d., Trinity National Forest maps--see Keter 2013: Appendix 2--for copies of several of these maps). An example of this problem is the delineation of the Township, Range, and Section lines on the 1922 Trinity National Forest map (Appendix 1: Map 1). The Section lines in the area are relatively squared as in the original GLO survey (and thus each Section is about 640 acres) and on this map the Becker Cabin is shown as being located in the extreme northeastern quarter of Section 10.



Appendix 1 Map 1

The Fred Becker Cabin in Section 10: note that all of the Section lines in this area are at or near right angles and roughly 640 acres in size on this 1922 Trinity National Forest Map.

Note how the Section lines and the location of trails and features like the Becker cabin on the Trinity National Forest map conflict with those as delineated on the contemporary USGS map (Appendix 1: Map 2). On the USGS map the Becker Cabin is located in Section 2 near the boundary with Section 11.



Appendix 1 Map 2
 The Fred Becker Homestead Parcel plotted in southwest quarter
 of Section 2 on the USGS Blake Mountain 7.5 Map.

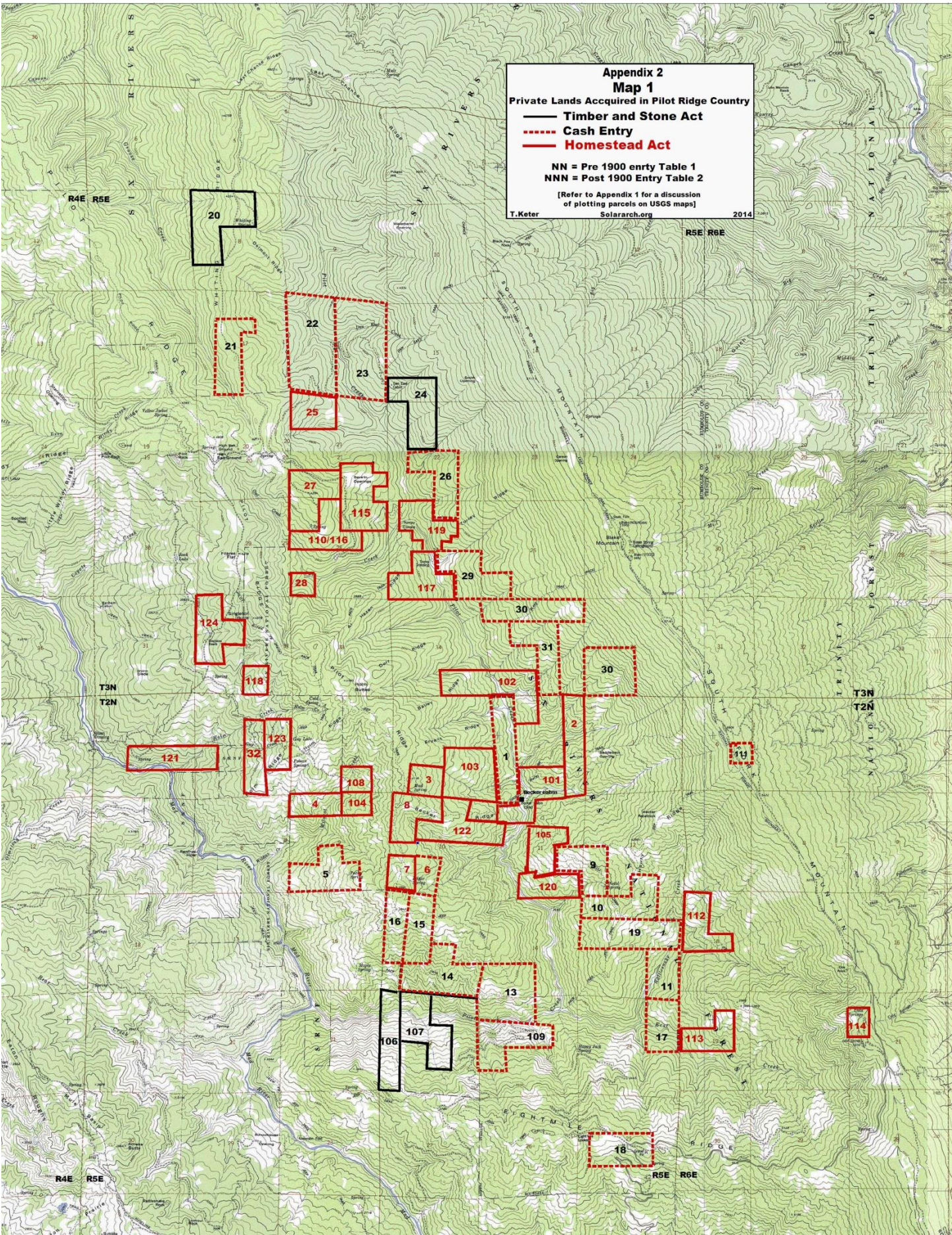
Given the conflicting surveys and maps for property lines in Pilot Ridge country, I have tried to map the homesteads as accurately as possible by using contemporary USGS maps, 1922 Belcher Title and Abstract maps, various generations of historic maps (see References Cited for a list of the maps used), the Homestead Entry form legal boundary descriptions, and records contained in the property records in Lands Department at Six Rivers National Forest. This mapping problem is significant and has implications not only in accurately mapping the location of the original homestead parcels and historical features but also in trying to locate them in the field.

Appendix 2
Map 1
Private Lands Acquired in Pilot Ridge Country

Timber and Stone Act
 Cash Entry
 Homestead Act

NN = Pre 1900 entry Table 1
 NNN = Post 1900 Entry Table 2
 [Refer to Appendix 1 for a discussion
 of plotting parcels on USGS maps]

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Appendix 2

Table 1

Pre-1900

Private Lands Acquired Within Pilot Creek Country

Refer to Appendix 2; Map 1

[See Appendix 1 for a discussion of the problems encountered in plotting private property boundaries in this region]

Map #	Name	Year Entry	Year Pat.	Entry Type	Total Acres	Pat. #	Comments
1	John A Russell	1877	1878	Cash	161		
2	Adamson J. Kenny	1884	1888	H.P.	161		
3	Louis Hansen	1875	1882	H.P.	40		This parcel probably included mud spring. Contemporary USGS maps do not match the Belcher map or GLO maps. See also #8 below.
4	Jacob Fredrickson	1875	1882	H.P.	80		Parcel appears to be west of O. Stapp. Poorly mapped due to early date of homestead entry--see Appendix 1.
5	Nils Nissen Peterson	1879	1882	Cash	160		Pistol Spring over the ridge to west
6	Sidney Edgar	1875	1876	Cash	40		probably include Edgar Spring in original survey
7	John McCaffrey	1875	1876	H.P.	40		see above - Edgar Spring near line
8	Louis Hansen	1875	1882	H.P.	120		20 acres to west of ridge Mud Spring See3 also #3 above.
9	John Henry	1876	1881	Cash	160		
10	Peter Knudson	1882	1882	Cash	160		
11	Charles B. Finch	1879	1880	Cash	80		
12	Isaac Andrews	1879	1880	Cash	160		not plotted on map
13	Samuel W. Allen	1879	1880	Cash	160		
14	William Ferrilough	1875	1875	Cash	160		
15	Sidney Edgar	1875	1876	Cash	120		(see also #6) Edgar went to Fredrickson and Peter Holm June 3 1875 for \$300
16	John McCaffrey	1875	1876	Cash	120		(see also #7)
17	Charles B. Finch	1879	1880	Cash	80		
18	Christian Jensen	1887	1878	Cash	160		note entry & pat dates conflict
19	John Henry	1876	1877	Cash	160		dates do not match see also #9

Appendix 2 Table 1 Pre-1900

Private Lands Acquired Within Pilot Creek Country

Refer to Appendix 2; Map 1

[See Appendix 1 for a discussion of the problems encountered in plotting private property boundaries in this region]

Map #	Name	Year Entry	Year Pat.	Entry Type	Total Acres	Pat. #	Comments
20	James Whiting	1888	1891	T.P.	160		Whiting Spring (resurvey on F.S. land adj to private) June 13, 1890 E1/2 NW SW NE NE SW Sec 8 conveyed to Ira Russ and J.G. Graham for the sum of \$1.00
21	John E. Hoskins	1886	1890	Cash	160	1540	portion in Grouse Creek Watershed
22	James H. Wilson	1886	1906	S.P.	320		School section parcel unclear how it was acquired--logged by Simpson in the 1960s.
23	Thomas L. Thompson	1889	1910	S.P.	320		School section parcel unclear how it was acquired--logged by Simpson in the 1960s.
24	Heirs of John R. Bonham	1886	1890	T.P.	160	6904	Location of Dan East cabin no date for when it was constructed.
25	Moses Howell	1885	1888	H.P.	80	2524	
26	Samuel B. Shaw	1887	1890	Cash	160	7013	
27	John E. Hoskins	1887	1890	H.P.	120	2643	(see 21)
28	Abram Gable	1874	1875	H.P.	40	2942	Problems with the original GLO surveys make placement of this homestead problematic. See Appendix 1.
29	August Peterson	1887	1890	Cash	160	7283	
30	Robert Taylor	1877	1878	Cash	320		320 equal to two Cash entries
31	Thomas Sibley	1886	1890	Cash	160	6973	
32	Peter Holm						I could not locate the homestead record. The plotting is based on interview data and the Trinity National Forest maps also the 1922 Belcher T&A map.

Sources: USFS SRNF Land Records and Homestead Files

Entry Type	
H.P.	Homestead Patent
T.P.	Timber and Stone Act Patent
Cash	Cash entry

Appendix 2
Table 2
Post-1900

Private Land Acquired Within Pilot Creek Country

Refer to Appendix 2; Map 1

[See Appendix 1 for a discussion of the problems encountered in plotting private property boundaries in the region]

#	Name	Year Entry	Year Pat.	Entry Type	Total Acres	Pat. #	Comments
101*	Fred Becker	1901	1908	H.P.	160		SW 1/4, SE 1/4, SE 1/4 SW 1/4, Section 2, and N1/2 NW1/4, Section 11,T.2 N., R.5 E. HBM
102	Frank A. Bailey	1902	1910	H.P. Cash	160	720 4707	2 separate parcels 20 acres Cash 40 H.P. See # 115 below abandoned May of 1909
103*	George M. Bryant	1902	1907	H.P.	160	4702	Bryant Ridge. Claimant had no family, no livestock except one horse. Date of Final Proof July 12, 1908. Filed entry on the claim June 5th 1902.
104	Carl E. Cameron	1916	-	H.P.	80		Relinquished--Oscar Stapp filed on this claim in 1918 could not locate his homestead file.
105*	Zella R. Shepherd	1920 1914 1916	1923	H.P.	160		Two parcels. Property is listed under "Miss" Zella, but M. Stapp refers to the "Shepards." Plotting of this parcel was problematic due to the problems with GLO surveys in this area. Note that the 1947 SRNF map shows the Gustafson place with trail from Becker's Cabin to the same location as Shepard parcel.
106	Jessie Wheatley	1907	1909	T.P.	160		
107	Lulu E. McElroy	1907	1902	T.P.	160		
108	Oscar Stapp	1918	1923	H.P.	80		Cameron abandoned. Could not locate homestead record.
109	Joseph Pratt	1907	1908	Cash	160		
110*	G. T. Pullen		1912		160		Portion abandoned and now part of #110 OK by Severance. Map only and some general info--not copy of homestead record.
111	A. H. Jones		1904 1943	S	65		school admin parcel
112*	John B. Murray	1912	1917	H.P.	147		acreage does not match. Structure plotted on SRNF 1947 map.
113	Ross R. Robertson	1914	1918	H.P.	95		
114	Robert F. Elkins	1901	1911	H.P.	40		Cold Springs still has structures. Within the South Fork Trinity watershed.
115*	Wm. E. Severance	1912	1918	H.P.	140	1747	"Severin" opening. Portions of this parcel were abandoned by Myron Bailey (#4703) under 1864 act June 5, 1902. abandonment of the HS May of 1909. Also in files a note from Severance that William J. East had also filed and abandoned his homestead in S28 3N/5E

Appendix 2

Table 2

Post-1900

Private Land Acquired Within Pilot Creek Country

Refer to Appendix 2; Map 1

[See Appendix 1 for a discussion of the problems encountered in plotting private property boundaries in the region]

#	Name	Year Entry	Year Pat.	Entry Type	Total Acres	Pat. #	Comments
116	Vaugh W. Smith	1918	1924	H.P.	140	3447	spring on parcel listed in homestead records applied for by G. T. Pullen in 1912 (same as 110)
117	Alfred Hazen	1902	1910	H.P.	160	4704	Hazen ridge
118	Benjamin Beckman	1904	1908	H.P.	40		Extends to the west over the ridge. Probably near the spring. Problems mapping due to GLO survey problems. See Appendix 2.
119*	David A. Blake	1914	1915	H.P.	62		ON the location of Torry Corrals
120*	W. E. Severns	1913	no		110	#338	Applied for homestead and was listed but "Restored to entry May 14, 1914. It appears he abandoned the Homestead before final entry
121*	Charles N. Strong	1902	1908	H.P.	est160	4701	Due to land survey problems this parcel is mapped according to the Belcher T&A map 16. It appears that not all of the parcel applied for was granted. Strong was living on the parcel and is identified on the Stapp map in this general vicinity.
122*	Frank Geffray	1915	N.A.	H.P.	160	534	Not Approved. The Ranger found the land not suitable for agriculture. Applied for Dec 1915, examined not approved May 1916.
123	Guy Stapp	1918		H.P.			This parcel mapped from Belcher T&A 16. Survey lines inaccurate in this area. Building placed on Map 4-2 as indicated on Belcher map.
124	Singleton				160		This parcel mapped from Belcher T&A 16. Survey lines inaccurate in this area. Building placed on Map 4-2 as indicated on Belcher map. Original homestead parcel included Guy Lake (Stapp interview)
125	Gustafson						The name and cabin location show up on SRNF 1947 and Trinity National Forest maps. For placement of the cabin on map 4-2 see text for a discussion of this problem.

Sources: USFS SRNF Land Records and Homestead Files

* Copy of homestead record in author's possession

Entry Type	
H.P.	Homestead Entry
T.P.	Timber and Stone Act
Cash	Cash entry

Appendix 3

Historic Environment of Pilot Ridge Country: Interview Data

The following information is provided for researchers interested in the past environment of Pilot Ridge country and how land use activities affected the region's ecosystem during the homesteading era. Refer to *Pilot Ridge Country 1947-1996: The End of History and the Rest of the Story* (Keter 2011) for a discussion of the impacts to the environment from the construction of timber access roads and the logging during the last half of the 20th century.

Marvin and Isabel Stapp Environmental Input

As part of my ongoing research on the historical environment of the Mad River Ranger District (Keter 1995c), I asked the Stapps a number of questions related to what the region was like in the early 1900s and how the environment of the area has changed over time. They both told me that during the early years the country was mostly open oak woodland with much less Douglas-fir than today (Appendix 3 Images 1-2). Marvin indicated that, for example, on South Fork Mountain, Potato Hill was more open as well as the area immediately to the south known as Waterbarrel Opening (Map 4-3, Appendix 3: Image 3), once a large glade (prairie), is now [early 1990s] nearly gone.



Appendix 3 Image 1

View SW to Holm Ridge c1940: note the conifer invading the oak woodland.
Today this area is dominated by young Douglas-fir.
(Stapp Photograph Collection)



Appendix 3 Image 2

View Southwest to the south facing slope of Pilot Ridge near Wildcat Creek: Note the size and age (under 40 to 50 years) of the invading conifer on the south and west facing slope c 1940.
(Stapp Photograph Collection)



Appendix 3 Image 3

Waterbarrel Opening c 1940
(Stapp Photograph Collection)

Isabel remembered that there used to be numerous beautiful black oaks five feet to six feet in diameter throughout Pilot Ridge country but that today the oaks are disappearing--dying under closed canopies of Douglas-fir forests. One of the reasons that this country had remained open prior to the creation of the Forest Service was that like the Indians who used fire to keep the hillsides open, the ranchers used to set fires to burn the underbrush [also killing the immature conifers growing under the white and black oaks] when they moved their herds out of the Pilot Ridge/South Fork Mountain region--usually in about November. Back then, it was also not uncommon for homesteaders and ranchers to "girdle" (using an axe to debark a ring around the tree) Douglas fir trees to kill them since they wanted to keep country open for grazing.

I asked Marvin about the flow of water from the springs in the area. He indicated that it appeared to him that the springs on average do not run as strong as they used to and even some of the creeks seem to have less water flow in the summer than in the old days. They both thought that one reason for this is that there used to be more rain and snow in the winter than there is today. [The increase in conifers and other vegetation has also greatly reduced the amount ground water see Keter 1995.]

I then asked them to discuss specifically what they remembered about the various animals inhabiting the region at that time and how their populations might have changed over time.

Deer-- There were a lot more deer in the 1920s and 1930s than today. Some deer would spend the winter in the lower elevations of the Pilot Creek watershed. Marvin remembered that one time while traveling through "Section 16--the school section" with his father, they counted over 75 big bucks and many with smaller horns. He thought that opening up the logging roads and making it easier for hunters to get into the area contributed to the decline.

[The large decline in the extent of oak woodlands, prime deer habitat, was an important factor in the decline of the deer population on the Mad River Ranger District (see Keter 1987, 1995).]

Black Bears--There were quite a few bears but the number varied depending on the acorn crop in the fall. Marvin said that they used to travel up to the north and cross over Last Chance Ridge into the Grouse Creek drainage if there was not a great acorn crop.

Bobcats-- There were lots of bobcats in this country and they were one of the main animals trapped---Marvin said that one year during the 1920s they took 19 bobcats just in the Wildcat Creek drainage.

Mountain Lion-- There were quite a few mountain lions in the area.

Raccoon--They trapped raccoons to sell the pelts.

Coyote--There were quite a few coyotes in this country at that time and there still are.

Wolves--Neither Marvin or Isabel had ever seen or heard of wolves in this country.

[Marvin said that about six years earlier in the 1980s, he twice saw a wolf in the Pilot Ridge area. It was dark brown almost black and had fluff on cheeks. This sighting is questionable and may have been a domesticated animal since there had been no confirmed wolf sightings made in the state for decades until more recently. On Dec. 28, 2011 a 2 ½-year-old, male gray wolf entered California from northeastern Oregon. The last confirmed wolf sighting in California was in 1924 and since then, "sightings" that have been investigated have turned out to be coyotes, dogs, or some kind of wolf-dog hybrids (California Fish and Game web site). See also the comments on wolves by Max Rowley in the following interview.]

Civet Cat (spotted skunk)--There were quite a few Civets. They were trapped.

Ringtail cat--Marvin caught several of these in the area while trapping.

Porcupine--There were lots of porcupine in Pilot Ridge country.

Fox--There were foxes in the area.

Wolverine--Neither of the Stapps had ever seen any wolverine.

Badgers--There were quite a few badgers in this area in the 1920s

Marten--There were a few martens they were found higher up on South Fork Mountain. They were not common but Marvin remembered seeing one.

Fisher--There were more fisher than marten. Marvin said that he remembers trapping two or three fishers in the area sometime in the winter between December to February in the late 1920s or early 1930s and the fur companies paid about \$90 to \$100 for their pelts.

Trout--Although the trout are still about the same size they are much less common than they were in the 1920s and 1930s. [Marvin was not sure if these were resident trout or steelhead.]

Eels--Eels were also found in the Mad River. Like the anadromous fish they had trouble getting over the falls at the "Big Bend." Marvin said that a few steelhead usually made it past the falls as did some eels. Eels used their

suckers to affix themselves to rocks and inch forward by reattaching their sucker to a rock. He remembered seeing the pool below the falls "full of steelhead" trying to get past the falls.

Quail/Grouse--there were lots of quail and grouse in this country.

Pigeons--After mentioning that Max Rowley (Keter 1994c: Interview #12) had talked about all the pigeons in the area--Marvin said that yes he also remembered that there were thousands of pigeons. He thought they were the most common in the fall and that they were there to consume acorns. He remembered that one time he shot a pigeon for food and found 7 acorns in its throat.

Eagles--Most of the eagles were golden eagles but there were some bald eagles in the area.

Peregrine Falcon--Marvin had never seen one in the area.

Lady Bugs--Both the Stapps remembered seeing millions of lady bugs. They seemed to come out in the late summer or early fall. Marvin remembered one time seeing a huge "ball" about three foot in diameter of solid lady bugs.

Max Rowley Environmental Input

Max said that there was much better water in the summer back then. The springs flowed better in the summer and the creeks had more water in them. He felt that one of the reasons for this was that from the 1880s into the early decades of the 1900s the winters were generally wetter than today and that most winters they got from about 50" - 60" of rainfall. In addition, there might be some decline due to the replacement of oaks by fir forests (See also Keter 1995c).

I asked about fires during this era and why Douglas-firs still managed to become established in the oak woodlands, He said that the number of fires started by ranchers were maybe over estimated. He said that as a kid he did not remember many fires in the area. [This was, however after the Forest Service had taken over in 1905 and prohibited the setting fires). He also said that the ranchers burned differently that the Indians. Ranchers burned later in the year than the Indians when they were taking their stock out of Pilot Ridge country to their winter range. Most times the fires didn't do much--they "squirreled around" but did not burn hot since the heavy grazing has removed much of the vegetation in the area.

Wildlife

Elk: Max's father who came into this country in the 1880s never saw any elk in the area. [There may have been elk, however, at the far northern end of Pilot Ridge in the headwaters region of Redwood Creek.]

Bald eagles: In all the years as a Mad River Ranger District employee he never saw a bald eagle until the Ruth Reservoir came in. There may have been a few but very rare. There were some golden eagles.

Peregrine Falcon: Max did not remember anyone mentioning peregrine falcons.

Hawks: There were many hawks in the area. Most homesteaders did not pay much attention to the species of birds. Raptors were either "chicken hawks"--those up in the mountains-- or "fish" hawks--those close to the river.

Quail and Grouse: They were in the area but he did not recall extremely large populations.

Civet Cat: A small skunk they were not very afraid of people and they were found all over the area.

Ringtail cat: Max remembered that there were some in the area.

Bobcats: They were very common.

Mountain Lions: They were also very common out in the Pilot Ridge country.

Coyotes: During the homestead era there was always lots of coyotes in this country

Wolves: Max said that his father told him that the last wolf killed in this region was in the Kelsey Peak area in about 1913 or 1914 (in the headwaters region of the Mad River). There were never very many in this country at least during the last 100 years.

Grizzly bear: They were gone by the time most homesteaders moved into the area. They were killed early on because unlike black bears they do not run but stand their ground so it was easy to hunt them down.

Black bear: There was a large population. Hunters would always see bears whenever they were in Pilot Ridge country. Max thought that the reason the bear population was so large was due to the fact that the area had both areas of conifer forest (for cover) as well as lot of oak trees with acorns.

Wolverine: Max said that recently (1990s) that there has been a big argument over this "critter." While government scientists [Forest Service] say they are present, locals say that they have never seen any and that what people are seeing are fishers (see Marvin and Isabel Stapp's comments above).

Marten: They were rare but they were found in Pilot Creek watershed.

Fisher: There were lots of fishers in the area especially in Pilot Creek drainage even though Pilot Ridge was open, there were lots of true fir stands at the higher slopes of SFM and also some good stands of Douglas fir on its mid to lower slopes.

Porcupine: There were not a lot of porcupines at that time they "were kind of rare"

Badgers: Very rare: Max said: "I saw one in the area"

Wild pigs: The domesticated pigs of settlers escaped captivity and for years there were large numbers of "wild" pigs in the area. They were common into the mid-1930s. Max remembered seeing the evidence of their ground disturbing activities. Under oak trees the ground was so disturbed that all of the grasses and forbs would be totally uprooted-- almost as if someone had dug the area up with a shovel or rototiller. The damage resulted when the pigs rooted under the fallen leaves for last year's acorn crop. When he was young he said that his grandfather would close down his lumber mill each year for a month to go hunting in Pilot Ridge country and they would always bring back deer and wild pigs. Max said that the Pilot Creek country at about Pilot Rock was really a boundary between the montane conifer that dominated the landscape to the north and the more open oak woodlands which stretched all the way south to Round Valley. It was in the Bald Hills from Pilot Rock southward, that the wild pigs were most common--there were not that many north of this point in the Grouse Creek watershed or in the Redwood Creek watershed.

[As noted in the section on the Bald Hills (Appendix 4), there were some open areas to the north of Pilot Ridge on the more southerly facing slopes in the Redwood creek watershed, however, south of about Pilot Rock the oak woodlands/grasslands tended to dominate to a much greater extent.]

Salmon: Max said that he never saw a salmon in Pilot Creek or even the Mad River up this far--he thought that there was a barrier--"a falls" lower down Mad River at a place called "Big Bend" that prevented their migration upstream. His family never caught any salmon here and they fished in the river as early as the 1880s.

Steelhead: Max did not know if they were catching steelhead or resident trout in the Mad River but the fish were about 2 feet long and it was easy to catch a lot of fish in the river during the summer. The best fishing during the era before the 1950s was in Mad River. Although there were trout in Pilot Creek they were smaller in size.

Band-tailed Pigeons: There were thousands and thousands of band-tailed pigeons in the area. At times in the fall "the ground was blue with pigeons eating acorns."

Lady Bugs: One thing Max volunteered which he thought was notable was the number of lady bugs in the area. He said that in one spot in the rocks you could stick your arm up to the elbow on lady bugs and that the stems of hazel were coated several inches thick with ladybugs.

Rattlesnakes: He remembered that [in the 1940s] there were also lots of rattlesnakes in the country during this period when he worked on the Mad River Ranger District.

Appendix 4

Homesteading in the Bug Creek Watershed

Because of the region's proximity to Pilot Ridge and the Pilot Creek watershed, I am providing as an appendix a summary of the limited historical data that I have gathered on this region. The principal sources of historical information for this area that I have collected are related primarily to my interview with Isabel Petersen Stapp. Also, in the Heritage Resources files at the Six Rivers National Forest office in Eureka there is a rather incomplete set of homestead files, and some associated administrative records for the Bug Creek watershed. In the Lands Department there are also some records related to property ownership as well as copies of the original GLO survey maps.

Background

Other than driving through the Bug Creek watershed on the Maple Creek road, a private road owned by the Simpson Timber Company, in order to access to the southern portion of Pilot Ridge, I have not spent any time in this area except for conducting archaeological surveys and hiking the old trails in the Board Camp Mountain-Bug Creek Buttes high country that lies within the boundaries of Lower Trinity Ranger District of the Six Rivers National Forest and working on the crest of Pilot Ridge south from Kinsey Ridge to High Salt Ground also generally within the boundaries of the Lower Trinity Ranger District .

The location of the western boundary of the Trinity National Forest in the Pilot Ridge country of the Bald Hills was established in 1905 when the Lower Trinity and Mad River Ranger Districts were created (in 1947 these two Ranger Districts were included within the boundaries of the newly created Six Rivers National Forest). The National Forest boundary lies generally just to the west of and parallels the crest of Pilot Ridge south from Kinsey Ridge to High Salt Ground near Pilot Rock (see for example the Trinity National Forest Map:1915 , Belcher Title and Abstract 1922: Maps 14, 17).

One of the reasons for establishing the National Forest boundary in this area was due to the fact that, as noted in the overview, many of the south and west facing slopes of the Bald Hills were still, at that time, generally dominated by grasslands and oak woodlands--especially below about 4,000' in elevation. Therefore, much of this area to the west of Pilot Ridge was not considered as having the potential to grow conifers and thus did not qualify for inclusion under the Forest Reserve Act. There were still, however, substantial stands of Douglas fir on some of the north facing slopes of the deep cut canyons in the upper reaches of the Bug creek watershed above about 3,500' to 4,000' in elevation. Due to the fact that the region was relatively close to the lumber mills in Blue Lake and Korbek, and as the timber companies year-by-year continued to log their way up the Mad River watershed towards this region,

timber speculators, among them most notably the NRLC (Northern Redwood Logging Company), had already by 1905, purchased a number of parcels in the area under the Timber and Stone Act.

Eventually, by the second half of the 20th century, as with the Pilot Ridge country further to the south, most of the old homesteads and the parcels of land claimed under the Timber and Stone Act within the Bug Creek watershed and along the west facing slopes of Pilot Ridge south to the mouth of Coyote Creek were acquired first by timber speculators (Belcher T&A: Map 14) and, by the 1950s, nearly all of the private parcels in the area were consolidated under the ownership of the Simpson Timber Company.

Northwestern Pilot Ridge Country: The Environment

Bug Creek is a perennial stream with, in most years, a substantial summer flow. Its headwaters are situated in the Bug Creek Butte/Board Camp Mountain region just to the west of the junction of Pilot Ridge and Kinsey Ridge. The Bug Creek Buttes/Board Camp Mountain high country is over 5,000' in elevation and is a prominent topographical feature visible from the coast. This is a strategic location where the Mad River /Bug Creek, the South Fork Trinity River/Grouse Creek, and the Redwood Creek watersheds meet, and it is for this reason that a number of historic (and most likely prehistoric) trails come together at the northern end of Pilot Ridge (Keter 2013:Map 7). There are numerous prehistoric sites in this region both along Pilot Ridge and in the high country of the Board Camp Mountain/Mad River Buttes region (see Hildebrandt and Hayes 1983: especially site record CA-HUM-546, Hayes and Hildebrandt 1985).

The northern half of Pilot Ridge from Kinsey Ridge south to about High Salt ground, varying in altitude from about 4,500' to 4,800', is the first high ridgeline in from the coast and for that reason, and also due to its location at the southern edge of the Maritime climatic zone it receives a considerable amount of precipitation--much of it falling as snow. In this region the winter snowline is at about 4,000' in elevation. From personal observations over the last 30 years it is evident that during the winter and spring the snow depth on the crest of Pilot Ridge to the north of about High Salt Ground is not only much greater than to the south (where the ridge is also several hundred feet lower in elevation), but also, snow stays on the ground much later in the year--sometimes into late May or early June. It is probable that colder snowier winters are one of the reasons that no homesteads were ever established along the crest of Pilot Ridge to the north of High Salt Ground or to the north of this point within the Pilot Creek watershed (Appendix 2: Map 1).

From the coast the Mad River trends inland to the southeast for about 25 air miles to about Mad River Buttes. There, at a point known as "Big Bend," the river trends nearly due east for several miles to the mouth of Bug Creek. Here, the river again bends to the southwest towards its headwaters in the Yolla Bolly Mountains and begins to steadily increase both its elevation and distance inland from the moderating coastal climate. The general micro climate

for this sub-region stretches south from Big Bend to about where Windy Ridge drops down to the Mad River to the west of High Salt Ground and Pilot Rock (Map 2) .

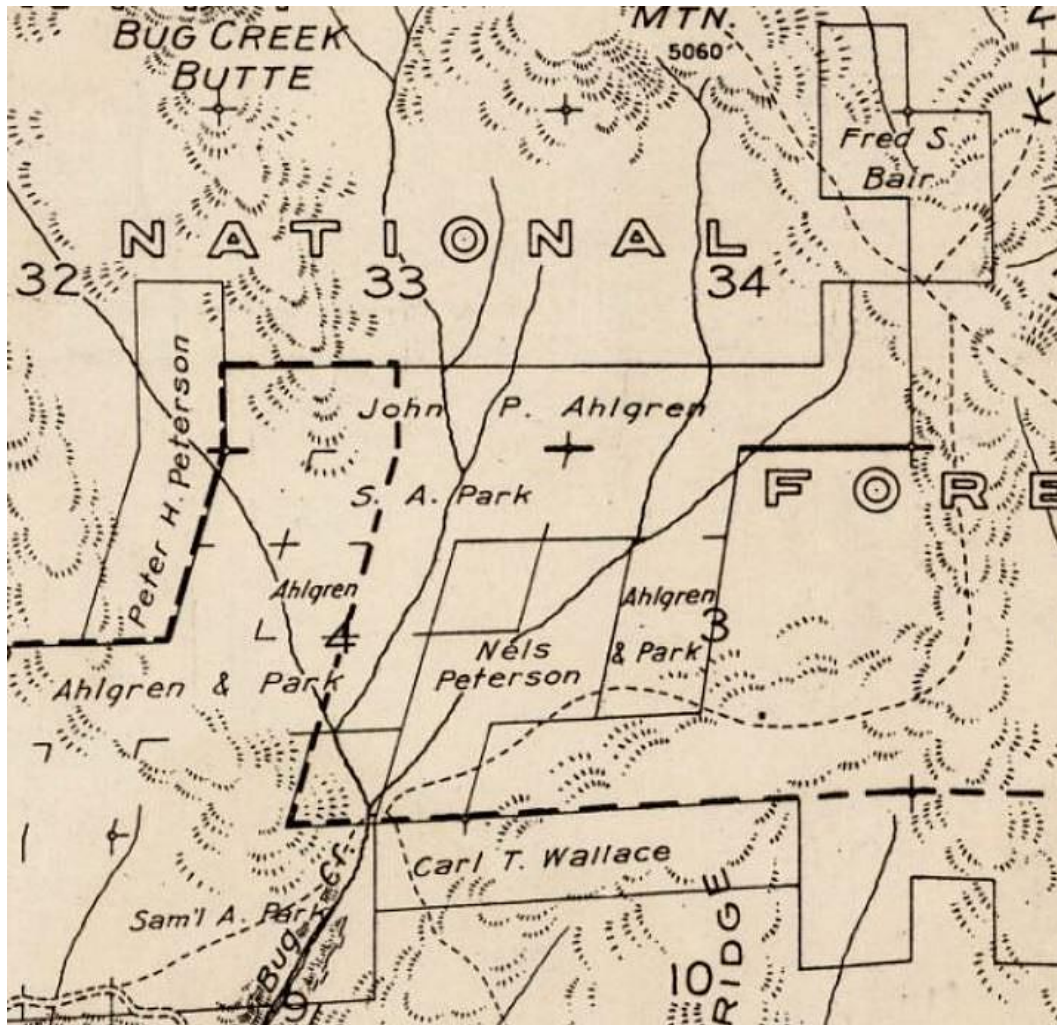
[At Big Bend the Mad River is roughly 28 air miles from the coast and at about 750' in elevation while to the southeast about 13 air miles and roughly 17 river miles at the confluence of Pilot Creek and the Mad River, the distance to the coast is about 38 to 40 air miles and the elevation of the river is about 2,100'.]

In addition to somewhat milder winters and good dependable water in the lower Bug Creek watershed, another principal reason for the early homesteading activity, like that of timber speculators, was due to the area's proximity to Blue Lake and Korbel (Isabel Stapp interview). It is located nearly a day's ride closer to Korbel, than the southern region of Pilot Ridge country. Also, by the time the Trinity National Forest was established in 1905 a wagon road was already being extended year-by-year further and further up Maple Creek towards the Bug Creek watershed as the NRLC out of Korbel continued to expand their logging operations further inland.

Homesteading in the Bug Creek Watershed

Like other regions of the Bald Hills prior to the historic era the southwestern facing slopes in this region were at one time dominated below 4,000' in elevation by oak woodlands and grassland savannas vegetation associations that were maintained by anthropogenic fires (Keter 1995). The homesteads, like those to the south, were centered on open prairies and oak woodlands but were generally located at lower elevations (most were below about 3,000' in elevation). The Six Rivers National Forest homestead files contain a few homestead applications for the area that were filed after the creation of Trinity National Forest including the homestead entry and homestead inspection reports for Isabel's father, Peter H. Peterson as well as his brother Nels Petersen (Appendix 2: Map 1, Table 2).

[Given that the homesteads established in this region were actually located to the west of the National Forest boundary (see Trinity National Forest maps for 1920, 1927), it is not clear why Trinity National Forest personnel and the Forest Service were the responsible government agency for administering applications for entry under the Homestead Act in this area.]



Appendix 4 Map 1
 Location of the Nels Petersen and Peter Peterson homesteads
 on the 1922 Belcher Title and Abstract Map 14.

Nels Peterson

[Parcel 1: 107.5 acres were declared open to entry, Application No. 468. T3NR4E Sec. 3: W/2 NW SW, W/2 E/2 NW SW, W/2 SW SW, W/2 NE SW Sec. 4: SE NE E/2 E/2 NE SE, NE NE SE SE]

Isabel's uncle, Nels Peterson, brother of her father Peter "Harvey" Peterson, was the first to file for homestead entry on Jan 6, 1915. In November of that year he filed a second homestead entry application for an adjacent parcel of land (see below). The Forest Service reviewed the first claim for homestead entry filed in January of 1915. District Ranger David W. Haas after inspecting the entry parcel, described the land as being located at the forks of Bug Creek, on an old pack trail about one and half miles from the nearest wagon road and about 35 miles from Korbel. The ranger noted that the nearest settlement with a post office was at Maple Creek.

At the time of the inspection he noted there was no indication of settlement nor of any improvements (structures, fencing, etc.) on the land and that had it only been used for the grazing of local stock. He also noted that the tract's elevation was about 2,500' with an annual precipitation at 40" with half of that in snowfall.

The ranger's report is summarized below.

The land is situated on the side of a mountain 1,000' vertically above Mad River. This tract is made up of open glades of cultivable land, and the general slope of these glades is 15 to 20%....several huge slides are quite noticeable... This tract of land itself forms part of a large slide but however it will require years before it will become noticeable.... Sufficient water could be obtained from Bug Creek for domestic use and to irrigate 20 acres of land....15 acres of this land will produce 2 to 3 crops of alfalfa and clover hay, the balance... will grow fruit trees and grain cribs. 1 1/2 tons of grain hay or 25 bushels of grain can be produced from an acre of this ground. Hay is sold for \$20/ton in this locality. All fruits, garden trucks, and grain cribs produced on this land could be shipped out by auto-truck to Korb. Farmers on the south and west of this land with identically the same land are making a living. About 30 acres of this land is already cleared and ready for cultivation....

...This land contains 10 acres of young Douglas Fir timber averaging 10 M Ft B.M. to the acre or a total amount of 100 M Ft B.M. The average age of these trees will be 50 to 100 years. There is no market for this timber at the present time. The stumpage value for fir timber in this locality is \$1.00 per M.B.M. This land also contains a scattering stand of oak wood averaging 2 cords per acre or a total stand of 88 cds [cords] valued at 50 cents per cord with a total value of \$44.00. There is no young reproduction on this area.
[From the original.]

Haas concluded his report by stating that he had "examined the land found it as I should judge homesteaded land" and declared the tract open to settlement and entry.

The homestead files contained a second Homestead Application for entry by Nels Peterson dated November 23, 1915. The inspection report, also completed by District Ranger Haas, was dated Nov 8, 1915. On Peterson's Forest Homestead Entry application he noted that the land applied for adjoined patented land to the north, east and west that Peterson had applied for previously under the his first application #468 (see above).

[The Legal boundary description as it appears on the Homestead application: November 23, 1915 approved 117.5 acre homestead Trinity NF, List #5 - 2689 (Application No. 495) T3NR4E Sec. 3: SW NW, E/2 E/2 NW SW (contiguous with:) Sec. 4: W/2 NE SE, W/2 E/2 NE SE, W/2 SE SE, SE SE SE, S/2 NE SE SE, NW NE SE SE]

Ranger Haas' report is condensed and summarized below.

The tract is located on the forks of Bug Creek near an old pack trail, about 1 1/2 mile from the nearest wagon road and 35 miles from Korbel. The nearest settlement and post office is Maple Creek, 15 miles distant. There was no settlement on the tract and no improvements. The land had been used only for grazing. [Haas reported the elevation was about 3,000' and precipitation averaged 42 inches per year]...This region lies within the fog belt and is frequented by very dense fogs at all time of the year. Temperatures range from 24 to 100 degrees. Growing season is from May 15 to Oct 15. Killing frosts sometimes occur as late as June 1. First frosts usually occur after Oct 15.Crops of wheat, oats, barley, rye, alfalfa, fruits and all kinds of garden trucks [vegetables] that can be raised and matured in a temperate zone can be grown in this region. ...

... [The land] is situated on the side of a mountain 1,500' vertically above Mad River. Tract is composed of a series of open glades with a rolling surface. The formation of this tract is serpentine with huge cliffs noticeable over a greater portion of lands adjoining this tract. This tract itself form[s] part of a large slide with a slow movement. The slide will require years before it will seriously interfere with this tract as a farming unit.

[Wherever] level basins occur on the tract, residual soils exist and are] found to be very productive and contain a high percentage of vegetable matter....During the spring and summer months this tract produces a splendid stand of wild grasses of all kinds. Sufficient water could be obtained for domestic use and to irrigate 10 to 20 acres...This land is best adapted for grain crops.... Fruit for unknown reasons does not thrive in this region.... Garden trucks of all kinds do well in this region... and can be transported by Auto-truck to market. Farmers on the south and west of this area are making a living. About 20 acres of this land is already cleared and is ready for cultivation...All lands in this region that cannot be irrigated on account of being to[o] steep are called grazing lands. 10 acres of this tract contains a Douglas Fir stand of 6 M Ft. B.M. per acre. The balance of the tract contains a total st[a]nd of about 30 M Ft. B.M. of Douglas Fir. This makes a sum total of the whole tract amount to 90 m Ft of saw timber which valued at the regular Forest Service stumpage rates of .75 cents per M [thousand] would amount to a total of \$67.50. There is also a scrub oak stand on this tract which will average about 2 cords of oak to the acre with a total stand of 30 cords on the entire area, worth all told \$30. The average age of timber on this tract is about 50 to 100 years old. There is no evidence of timber having been destroyed by insects. There is no market for this timber at this present time. There is no young reproduction on the entire tract. [Summarized from the original.]

Ranger Haas ended his report with the statement that he believed the tract to be more valuable for grazing than for any possible future forest use and recommended approval of the homestead entry application.

Nels Peterson was killed in an auto accident on the Maple Creek road. See Appendix 5 for more information on the disposition of this homestead after his death.

Peter H. Peterson Homestead

[Legal as it appears in the Homestead Application: T3NR4E. Sec. 5: E/2 NE and T4NR4E: Sec. 32: E/2 SE Sec. 4: W/2 NE SE, W/2 E/2 NE SE, W/2 SE SE, SE SE SE, S/2 NE SE SE, NW NE SE SE]

On May 6, 1916 Isabel Peterson Stapp's father Peter Harvey Peterson filed for homestead entry a parcel of land in the Bug Creek watershed. This parcel of land was located about 10 air miles to the northwest of where the Stapp family homesteaded in the upper Wildcat Creek watershed. According to the homestead entry record, Peterson and his family first settled in the Bug Creek watershed in the early spring of 1915. In early June of 1920, District Ranger Harry Everest inspected the Petersen homestead (Image Appendix 2-14, Appendix 2 Map 1) and reported favorably on the application for Homestead Patent finding the land to be chiefly valuable for agriculture. At the time of the field inspection, the ranger noted that the Petersons received their mail at Maple Creek post office about 15 miles away and that the nearest wagon road was about to the edge of their property (Belcher Title and Abstract 1922: Map 14).



Image 4-11

Isabel Peterson Stapp's father Peter Peterson raking hay on their Bug Creek homestead: c1920. Note the open prairie and oak woodland in the background of the photo. (Stapp Photograph Collection)

The ranger recorded in his report that Peterson had a wife and two children and that at the time of the field inspection the family was not residing on the property. The following section briefly summarizes ranger Everett's homestead inspection report dated June 5, 1920:

[The] residence was established apparently at once and claimant and family made continuous residence on the land until August, 1918 at which time they left the claim, claimant working in the logging woods near Eureka. Claimant and family returned to the claim in December, 1918 and made continuous residence until the fall of 1919 when on account of his wife's health claimant was forced to leave the isolated country (which is without quick transportation and communication) and take the family to Eureka so that his wife could secure medical treatment. Claimant is now working in the lumber business near Eureka. Information is from residents in the locality and is backed up by the examiner's personal knowledge of this case.

At the time of examination residence was not being made; cultivation however was evident. The house contained ample furniture. Farm implements on the claim were observed as follows mowing machine, hose rake, plow, harrow, horse cultivator, farm wagon, cart, two sets double harness, riding and pack saddles and ample small tools.

The entire claim is very similar in character being hilly and broken; it consists of open glade slopes and slopes with scrub oak cover. The south 40 has the best agricultural possibilities as it is not so steep as the 40s on the north. 60 acres can be cultivated if cleared. Altitude ranges from 2,400 on the south to 3,700 on the north... Estimated average slope of the area under cultivation 15 - 20%. It is the custom in this region to plow and cultivate very steep land and this has been done in this case.

The soil is adobe and the growing crops show that it is quite fertile and in the examiner's opinion is much better than the average soil on Forest homesteads. This is borne out by the excellence of the land for grazing purposes.

Dwelling house, 12x18', 2 rooms, built of peeled logs and split material in a very workmanlike manner; is ceiled and floored with sawed limber and clothed and papered inside, casings of lumber, doors standard. House contains 2 double and 1 single window, shake roof. Value \$250.00. Barn, 18x24' mow with 16 foot sheds on three sides, built of timbers, split boards with shake roof. Is a very good building and easily worth \$350.00. Poultry house 8x12', built of timbers with split boards with shake roof; is an excellent building and worth \$75.00. Implement shed 12'x12', built of poles, with shake roof, open sides, value \$20.00.

The spring is confined by a thick covered cement boxing 6 ft long, 4 ft. wide and 3 ft. deep from which water pipe leads. This installation must have cost \$50.00." "1/4 mile of wagon road and good timber bridge across Bug Creek has been built at a cost of about \$200.00. Fence consists of 80 rods of 5' picket and rail fence worth \$1 per rod; 240 rods of wire an rail fence worth 75 cents per rod which with brush and natural blockade fences encloses and subdivides about 80 acres. Total value of fencing \$260.00. The dwelling is habitable at all seasons. Water for domestic use is obtained from the developed spring situated 50 feet from the dwelling. All the improvements were made by present claimant and make an exceptionally good showing.

12.05 acres were found to be actually under cultivation. In addition to this area 10 acres consists of such excellent natural open hay land, the stand being composed of clover, natural and tame grasses and other forage plants that in the opinion of the examiner it should be classed as cultivated. Several tons of hay is out each year from this 10 acres and the land is so productive in its present condition that there is no motive to attempt to increase its productivity by tilling. The crop desired is hay and the quality of this hay is excellent.

There are about 2 dozen mixed fruit trees three years old not yet bearing and a good supply of small fruits. The trees are set out in such a manner as to insure good growth and permanency. There is no ditch. About 1/2 acre slash not under cultivation.... Irrigation is not practiced to any extent in this region; being near the coast damp fogs supply additional moisture to crops.

In 1916, 5 tons of wild hay was cut and 2 acres was under cultivation to garden truck, corn, beans, etc. In 1917, 8 tons of hay was cut being half grain and half wild hay, In 1918, 8 tons and in 1919, 12 tons. The cultivated area has increased from the 2 acres in 1916 to 12.05 acres in 1920 Outside of an acre of two devoted to garden truck, corn and beans all the cultivated area has produced grain hay. At the present time the entire cultivated is in grain cribs which are in excellent condition.

Until the present season claimant has had a good garden each year. It appears that several hundred pounds of beans have been sold from the claim each year of the last three years. Hay raised has been fed to stock owned by claimant. Claimant now owns 6 horses. The last few years has owned an average of 15 cattle but sold these in 1919 apparently to defray the expenses connected with his wife's sickness. Permit has been secured from the Forest Service. There is no timber on the claim. The cover consists of small scrub oak.... The land is most valuable now for farming, grazing and stock raising. [From the original.]

Isabel told me that a number of families were moving into the Bug Creek area at about that time to homestead and that by the early 1920s there were enough children living in this area

that a school was constructed at her uncle Dee Harmon's place located in the lower Bug Creek watershed. The school was built of logs, and as was typical of schools in the back country at that time--a simple one room building constructed by the local homesteaders out of local building materials. Isabel said that she rode horseback three miles each way to attend school and that the school was also a place where homesteaders would gather to play music, dance, and to socialize. Everyone would ride their horses to the dances and they would dance all night returning the next morning to their homesteads to do their chores (in the summer day break is about 4 am).

Appendix 5

Homesteading in Pilot Ridge Country: The Stapp and Peterson Families

Introduction

In February of 2014 I contacted Marvin Stapp's and Isabel Peterson Stapp's daughter: Rowetta Stapp Miller who lives in the Humboldt Bay area. I provided her with a draft of this paper and a series of questions related to her parents and their homestead on Pilot Ridge. This document provides a contextualized summary of her written input.

Stapp Family History

Oscar Ellis Stapp was born on March 19, 1885 to David Washington Young Stapp and Ida Luhettie "Perryman" Stapp at Bethany Illinois. When Oscar was a child, the family crossed the Mississippi River and headed west to San Francisco. In 1906, Oscar, his brother Guy and their father traveled to Humboldt County where Oscar began working in the copper mine at Horse Mountain (on the Lower Trinity Ranger District). While living at Horse Mountain, Oscar met and Cordelia Marie Lamoreaux and they were married in Eureka on September 2, 1913 and moved to Eureka at that time.

Oscar and "Dee" had nine children with Marvin Devoe Stapp, born in Eureka on July 14, 1914, being the oldest. In 1918, Oscar and Dee purchased 80 acres of the "Wildcat homestead," as the property is known by family members, from Carl E. Cameron (Appendix 2: Map 1, Table 2 #104).

[According to homestead records the Stapps also filed for entry that year on an additional 80 acre parcel (Appendix 2 Map 1 #108) adjacent to the Cameron homestead. Although records are not completely clear on this matter, it appears that this parcel had been "abandoned" by Cameron and was reopened to entry prior to the Stapps arrival as the Homestead files note that the date of entry was by Oscar Stapp in 1918 (Appendix 2 Table 2 #108). The homestead was patented in 1923. The final homestead Patent was for 160 acres. In 1924 the Humboldt Country Records Office entered the Patent into the County Records. (Number 925449, Book 23 of Patents, page 378).]

Oscar and Dee added rooms on to each end of the cabin. They also tilled the ground for a garden and cut hay. When Marvin was nine years old, in 1923, shortly after proving up on the Wildcat homestead, the Stapp family moved to the "Batham Place" in the Showers Pass area (just to the east of Showers Pass in the Mad River watershed) and then to the nearby the "Hagen Place," so the children could attend school (records show that a George T. Bateham and a Bill Hagen had previously filed for homesteads in this area). For several

years they would attend school at Showers Pass and return to their Wildcat homestead to spend part of each year.

Marvin married Isabel Marie Peterson on June 4, 1938 at the Bug Creek homestead of Isabel's parents Peter "Harvey" Peterson and Jennie Violet Peterson (see below). When Oscar Stapp passed away in 1969, the homestead at Wildcat Creek was subdivided into smaller parcels and his children who wished to participate each pulled a slip of paper out of a hat to let them know which parcel was theirs. Since that time, with the exception of one parcel, the rest of the subdivided parcels of land from the original homestead of Oscar and Dee Stapp still remain owned by family members.

The parcel from the Wildcat homestead that Marvin and Isabel inherited was known as the "Barleyfield" property. Marvin died in 1996 and Isabel in 2005. After their deaths, the Barleyfield parcel was passed on to their five children – Tanya Currier, Rowetta Miller, Aron Stapp, Brian Stapp and Anita Diaz. The Stapp children continue to have almost annual gatherings (unless some other family event such as a wedding is taking place). Rowetta wrote that:

There is a memorial marker for Dad and Mom and their ashes are scattered at the Barleyfield near a trail where they'd watch the deer come into the opening from their cabin window.

I learned from Rowetta that her parents Marvin and Isabel "Bella" Stapp had never lived permanently on the Jimmie Singleton place. At the time I first met them on south Pilot Ridge in the mid-1980s, the Singleton place (Map 4-2) was owned by Simpson Timber Company and was being rented, however, Rowetta informed me that Marvin's brother, Carrol "Kay" and wife Ione "Hitchings" Stapp did live on the Singleton place while he was ranching and working in the woods as a faller. [This would have been in the 1950s and early 1960s when the old homestead and timber and Stone Act parcels were being logged. See Keter 2011.] When their daughter Roxie who was born in 1961 was old enough to begin school, they moved to town.

Guy Stapp Homestead

Oscar's younger brother Guy Albert Stapp also homesteaded in the Wildcat Creek area; the parcel included a small pond still identified on 7.5' USGS maps as Guy Lake (Image Appendix 5 Image 1, Map 4-2). He married Ruby Cross and they had two sons -- Albert Stapp and Lee Stapp. He lost his wife Ruby shortly after she gave birth to a baby girl, Claire and the baby died. Guy remarried twice but had no more children. Jeff Peterson and his wife Tuesday "Fales" Peterson (Rowetta Stapp Miller's cousin) now own the Guy Stapp homestead. Tuesday told Rowetta that the cabin was still standing in 1994 but had been propped up several times. It is no longer standing and a replacement cabin was built. The homestead record file for this homestead is incomplete (Appendix 2 Map 1, Table 2 #123); however, the parcel was patented as it is recorded by Humboldt Country recorder office (Book 23, page 160) and was signed as completed on August 23, 1920.



Appendix 5 Image 1
Marvin Stapp at Guy Lake: c1940.
Stapp Photograph Collection

Peter Harvey Peterson Homestead

The homesteads of Isabel's father Peter Harvey Peterson and his brother Nels Peterson bordered each other in the lower Bug Creek watershed. Isabel Peterson was the second daughter of Peter Harvey and Jennie Peterson and was born September 18, 1918 in Eureka. I learned that her uncle Nels Peterson was killed in an auto accident on the Maple Creek Road. One of our conversations concerning this incident reminded Rowetta of the conflict and tension that had existed at that time between the large-scale ranchers and newly arrived subsistence homesteaders. As noted in Part II and Part III of this study there was an ongoing conflict during the late 1800s and early 1900s between those who ran cattle on public domain lands (often considering them as being a part of their own ranching empire) and those settlers who filed for entry under the 1862 Homestead Act. Rowetta told me that when her great uncle Nels Peterson died in automobile accident on the Maple Creek road her grandfather, Peter Harvey Peterson, refused to allow his brother's homestead to go to timber companies and large scale ranchers – especially after it was suspected by the family that individuals working for the ranchers had caused a fire that burned their original homestead cabin to the ground and they had to rebuild.

Rowetta also told me that she remembers her father telling her that at times her grandfather Oscar Stapp would stay awake at night in the Barleyfield" in order to prevent the ranchers livestock that were running free from destroying their garden and grain crops. The destruction of homesteader's crops and gardens by cattle was apparently not uncommon in the Pilot Ridge area at that time (see also Keter 1994a).

Isabel's father and mother Harvey and Jennie were divorced and she kept the town property and he the homestead at Bug Creek. According to Rowetta, he eventually sold his homestead to the Fultons and moved closer to town near Fortuna. The Bug Creek homestead was later purchased by Lyn McGill who is still the owner. Rowetta wrote that:

All four daughters of Harvey and Jennie Peterson – Darlene Whiting, Isabel Stapp, Arvis Turner, and Pansy “Prim” Burke along with Nels Peterson’s son Stirling Peterson (cousin to the Peterson girls) and his wife Louise and Isabel’s three daughters Tanya Currier, Rowetta Miller and Anita Diaz visited this property after it was purchased by Lyn McGill. Lyn had many questions for the Peterson sisters and they had a strong desire to revisit their old home. They even climbed the hill to the old orchard planted by my grandparents, Harvey and Jennie Peterson.

A final note: There is an August Peterson listed in the land records who filed for cash entry for a 160 acre parcel of land on the west facing slope of South Fork Mountain in 1887 (Appendix 2 Map 1, Table 1 #29). Also a Nils Nissen Peterson in 1879 filed a "cash entry" on a 160 acre parcel near or including Pistol Spring (Appendix 2, Map 1, Table 1 #5). This is directly to the south about one-quarter mile from the southern property boundary of the Oscar Stapp homestead (GLO and USGS maps conflict on this issue but it likely included the spring).