

George Palmer appears to have been the first white settler in the Eklutna area. A 1906 Alaska Central Railway map shows a homestead belonging to Palmer north of the village, along the shore of Knik Arm. Perhaps more intriguing is the depiction on this same map of an "A.C. Warehouse Camp No 6" just west of the homestead. A trail connects the warehouse and Eklutna, referred to on this map simply as "Indian Village".

William Elliott and Harry "Scotty" Watson settled near Eklutna in 1906 and by 1912 were operating roadhouses along the Iditarod trail (Potter 1963:1075, 1125; Carberry 1979:105-107). Elliot's roadhouse was approximately 2.5 miles southwest of Eklutna, near the Eklutna River. Watson's establishment was northeast of the village, roughly 3/4 mile from the Arm. The history of Watson's roadhouse, also known as Brown's roadhouse (Brown 1956:205) and Old Knik roadhouse (Cochrane 1982:15), is rather confusing. Traveling through Eklutna in 1912, Belmore Brown (1956:205) noted:

In the distance we could see Brown's road-house. Several years before I had camped close to the spot where the road-house now stands. At that time the only white inhabitant of Old Knik was "Scotty" Watson. It was he who built the road-house.

Although originally built by Watson, this roadhouse was for a time run, if not owned, by Harry (?) Brown. The field notes for a 1912 survey of Township 16 North, Range 1 East mention a "settler by the name of Brown who is engaged in

the roadhouse business during the winter months" (Warner and Williamson 1912). A 1914 survey map of Township 16 North, Range 1 East, produced in part from these notes, depicts Brown's roadhouse, house, and barn. Brown and his family, however, apparently moved to Knik in April of 1912. That same year, Watson again had a roadhouse at "Old Knik" (Potter 1963:1066; 1125). A comparison of the location of Brown's roadhouse on the 1914 survey map with that of Watson's roadhouse on a 1915 map produced by the Alaska Engineering Commission, show these two were the same.

Another early settler in the area was S. Frank Hunt, who in 1912 was living along the shore of Knik Arm and had "done some clearing" (Warner and Williamson 1912). His homestead included land on both sides of the Seward Meridian. Warner and Williamson's 1912 field notes also indicate that there were other, unoccupied buildings along the shore. The 1914 survey map of Township 16 North, Range 1 East shows land and structures belonging to both Hunt and William Elliot along the shore of the Arm, apparently in the area originally claimed by George Palmer.