



**Part III, Riptide on the Columbia:
A Military Community
Between the Wars,
Vancouver, Washington
and the Vancouver
National Historic Reserve,
1920-1942,
with suggestions for
further research**

written by

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This document is the third in a research partnership between the Center for Columbia River History (CCRH) and the Department of the Interior National Park Service at Fort Vancouver National Historic Site in Vancouver, Washington. The National Park Service contracts with CCRH to encourage and support professional historical research, study, lectures and development in higher education programs related to the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site and the Vancouver National Historic Reserve (VNHR).

The Center for Columbia River History is a consortium of the Washington State Historical Society, Portland State University, and Washington State University Vancouver. The mission of the Center for Columbia River History (www.ccrh.org) is to promote the study of the history of the Columbia River Basin. CCRH is dedicated to examining “hidden histories” in the Basin and to helping people think about the historical record from different perspectives.

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Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, Vancouver National Historic Reserve

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Preface

The site of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve has been strategically important for centuries. First, native people occupied the region, living along a trade route that was among the most populated areas in North America. Then in 1825, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) established a fur trade post at the site along the Columbia River. In 1849 the U.S. Army established Vancouver Barracks near the HBC fort as a supply base for troops, goods, and services to the interior Pacific Northwest and the western coast. A thriving community, active waterfront, and army and civilian airfields developed nearby, all connected economically and socially with the military base. From its inception through WWII, Vancouver, Washington was a distinctly military place, with the army integral to the city's character. Today, Officer's Row, the historic buildings of Vancouver Barracks, Pearson Airfield and portions of the Columbia River waterfront connect as the 366-acre Vancouver National Historic Reserve (the Reserve), a locale that continues to impact community identity.

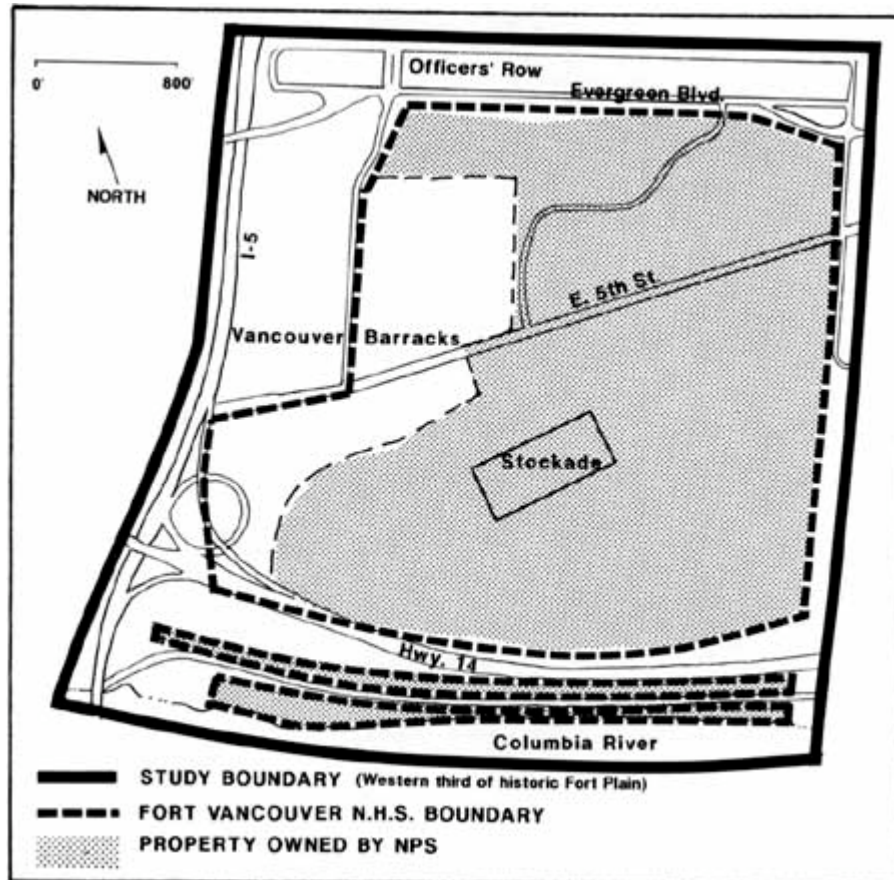
The following is the third in a series of multi-purpose interpretive documents, funded by the National Park Service, and examining the Reserve's rich social history. Each document provides a historical overview while proposing further research through a series of appendices. Five significant periods of development have been identified in Reserve history: pre-1846; 1846-1898; 1898-1920; 1920-1942; and 1942-1960.

This document explores the period from 1920-1942, when Vancouver faced labor strife, Prohibition, Depression, and the beginning of a Second World War. This was a time of technological anticipation and a time of innovation, hope, and despair. During this era aviation matured on the Reserve and the Columbia River channel deepened to thirty feet. The government built big dams on the Columbia, providing power for shipbuilding on Vancouver's waterfront and for aluminum production at ALCOA. Longshoremen struck along the Pacific Coast, local "milk wars" raged, and the government responded to the depression with public works programs. Some public works programs, including the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Works Progress Administration, connected to the Reserve. Vancouver was the regional headquarters for the CCC from 1933 to 1942. From this site the army administered a program that created tremendous economic, social, and environmental benefits for the region. General Stanley Ford organized the CCC district, and in 1936 General George C. Marshall became commander. In 1937, Marshall encountered the Russian aviators whose non-stop transpolar flight from Russia ended in Vancouver, bringing world renown to the town. As Vancouver entered a new decade in 1940, the U.S. prepared for war. By 1942, the Vancouver Kaiser Shipyard transformed the waterfront for shipbuilding, and public housing projects sprouted as thousands moved to a city that grew from 12,637 in 1920 to 18,788 in 1940, and then suddenly to 95,000 in 1944.

The purpose of this document is: (1) to provide a social history overview of the Reserve for NPS interpreters; (2) to provide directions for further research, by NPS staff, professional historians and graduate students; and (3) to make the history of the Reserve accessible to the general reader. Two main questions provided the research foundation: What were the relationships between Vancouver Barracks and the region, nation, and world? What were the relationships between the barracks and the nearby community? As a social history, questions of race, class, and gender underscored the inquiry.



Location of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, Vancouver, Washington, 1998
Courtesy Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust



The West Barracks region of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve, Vancouver, Washington, 1998

Courtesy Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust



Upper Vancouver National Historic Reserve, 1998. Includes historic tent camp sites to the north, behind Officer's Row, Vancouver Barracks, the Fort Vancouver palisade, and the site of Pearson Airfield
Courtesy Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust



Lower Vancouver National Historic Reserve, 1998. Note waterfront trail in relation to Fort Vancouver National Historic site and Pearson Airfield
Courtesy Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust



Washington State Employment Service Sign in Yakima, Washington
*Courtesy Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division
FSA-OWI Collection [LC-USF33-013138-M4 DLC]*



Yakima boys outside the Employment Office during the Great Depression. Such young men often ended up in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)

*Courtesy Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division
FSA-OWI Collection [LC-USF33013139-M4 DLC]*



*CCC boys fell a snag
Courtesy Gifford Pinchot National Forest*



Heroes of the Soviet Union in Vancouver, 1937
Courtesy Pearson Air Museum



Chief of Staff George Catlett Marshall, 1940
5th Brigade commander, Vancouver Barracks, 1936-1938
*Courtesy Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division
FSA-OWI Collection [LC-USF33-038043-C DLC]*

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Part I: Historical Overview, 1920-1942

A Modern Town: Vancouver Barracks in the 1920s

In 1929, on the eve of the Great Depression, President Herbert Hoover brought together a group of social scientists to compile information about American society. His goal was to provide a basis for policy-making. Ironically, the report titled *Recent Social Trends*, was not completed until 1933. By then, it presented a nearly outdated picture of the average American; however, the report provided a strong image of the post World War I social structure and the amazing changes that had occurred since the close of the nineteenth century:

the Great War, mass immigration, race riots, rapid urbanization, the rise of giant industrial combines like U.S. Steel, Ford, and General Motors, new technologies like electrical power, automobiles, radios, and motion pictures, novel social experiments like Prohibition, daring campaigns for birth control, a new frankness about sex, women's suffrage, the advent of mass-marketed advertising and consumer financing. "These," the researchers declared, "are but a few of the many happenings which have marked one of the most eventful periods of our history."¹

By 1920, Vancouver's wartime hum of activity along the Columbia River waterfront had settled. The old spruce cut up mill deteriorated on the barracks flight field and the Standifer Shipyards failed to generate revenue. Still, a spirit of excitement about a technological new age permeated Vancouver as the face of the city changed through new infrastructure and industry. Vancouver had grown since World War I, increasing in population from 9,300 to 12,637. The lumber, dairy, and fruit growing industries provided a foundation for community development. While a majority of the population was Caucasian, a small percentage of African Americans (20 people) and American

Indians, Chinese, and Japanese (65) lived in Vancouver. Many were first generation immigrants (1,403), with an additional 1,533 second generation immigrants.²

By the beginning of the 1920s, the military establishment at Vancouver had long been firmly established. Although the post's significance had been questioned in the early part of the century, its role as transport and supply base and home of the Spruce Production Division during World War I affirmed the importance of its location in the Columbia Valley. Vancouver Barracks lay squarely between the major developing cities along the Pacific Coast, Seattle, Washington and San Francisco, California, and near the major port and transportation hub of Portland, Oregon. The site of the Hudson's Bay Company's "Prairie Jolie" remained an open space and central locale along the Columbia River, conducive to meeting various needs in the region, most significantly supply, transportation, and aviation. After World War I, troops at Vancouver Barracks included the 1st, 32nd, 49th, and 59th Infantry Regiments, each serving at various times until 1921. In July 1920, between 400 and 500 men – eight companies of the 1st Infantry – arrived in Vancouver. Then came the 21st Infantry in 1921, relieved by the 7th Infantry, the following year.³

The 7th Infantry was among the oldest regiments in the army, constituted for the first time in 1798 and mustered out two years later, then reconstituted in 1808 for

¹ David Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 13; See, President's Research Committee on Social Trends, *Recent Social Trends in the United States* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 1970).

² Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "Composition and Characteristics of the Population for Cities of 10,000 or More: 1920" *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920, Volume III, Population 1920: Composition and Characteristics of the Population by States* (Washington: GPO, 1922), 1091.

³ Royce E. Pollard, "The Presence and Missions of the United States Army at Vancouver Barracks, Vancouver, Washington 1849 to 1988," *Clark County History* 39 (1989), 36-37; "Volens Et Potens," *Oregon Journal*, 3 January 1932, Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust Army Retiree Collection, Box 1, hereafter VNHRT Retiree Collection; *Vancouver Columbian* 17 July 1920, hereafter, *VC*. The 7th Infantry first came to Vancouver in 1900 and left in March 1901, not to return until 1922.

continual service. They fought in the war of 1812, the Mexican War, the Civil War, against the Seminole Indians, the Sioux, in the Battles of Big Horn in 1876 and Big Hole in 1877. They also fought in the Spanish American War and the First World War. It was these “doughboys”⁴ who arrived in Vancouver in 1921, soon becoming as integral to the community as the 14th Infantry had been in previous years. They arrived with honor, the community taking pride in their role in the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF). The 7th Infantry, whose motto, “Volens Et Potens,” meant “Willing and Able,” served in the following AEF operations: the Aisne Defensive, Chateau-Thierry, the Meuse-Argonne, Champagne-Marne, Aisne-Marne, and St. Mihiel. They served with the army of occupation in Germany from November 18, 1918 until August 12, 1919 before returning to the United States and first Camp Pike, Arkansas, then the Pacific Northwest. The 7th arrived at Camp Lewis on September 21, 1921, then came to Vancouver Barracks in September 1922 where they remained until the outbreak of World War II, becoming the regiment with the most time spent at Vancouver.⁵

In 1924, First Lieutenant Fremont B. Hodson of the 7th Infantry described the desirability of Vancouver Barracks as a duty station in the post World War I era. He also asserted the renewed significance of the post in the following treatise about the history of the barracks and of the 7th:

During the late war Vancouver Barracks proved as valuable a post as in the pioneer days. Two regiments of Engineers and one regiment of Infantry were organized, recruited to full strength and trained here for service in France, namely the 318th and 4th Engineers, both of exceptional war records, and the 44th Infantry. In 1918 the post became headquarters for the spruce production corporation, composed of approximately 30,000 officers and men. The large spruce mill located on the post, approximately on the same area where the old

⁴ Doughboy was a term of pride to the Infantry regiments. “Seventh Infantry Program,” pamphlet, VNHRT Retiree Collection, Box 09-01.

⁵ “Volens Et. Potens.”

Hudson Bay post stood, was operated entirely by officers and enlisted men of the Army. Records show the output of this plant was one million feet of spruce airplane lumber per day.

Since the war the 44th, 1st, 32nd, and 59th Regiments of Infantry have in turn been stationed here. At present the post is garrisoned by Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 5th Infantry Brigade, and the 1st and 3rd Battalions of the 7th Infantry, one of the oldest regiments in the United States Army. . . .

It seems only fitting that this regiment, with its long honorable traditions, should be stationed at such a post as Vancouver Barracks. Vancouver Barracks is within the city of Vancouver, Washington, and but twenty minutes is required to arrive by street car in Portland, Oregon.

The post is modern in every way, is provided with an excellent gymnasium and athletic field, tennis courts, hand-ball courts, and a splendid golf course. In addition a service club and a picture show are maintained for the enlisted men.

About sixteen miles northwest of the Barracks is another Government reservation [Camp Bonneville] used as a target range and maneuver ground, with an area of about three thousand acres, which abounds in wild game. Flowing through this reservation is a mountain stream which affords excellent fishing. During hunting season the commanding officer opens the reservation to officers and enlisted men who desire to fish and hunt.⁶

Like those who came before them, the soldiers of the 7th Infantry stationed at Vancouver Barracks became significant to the social and economic foundation of the community. Military baseball games, polo tournaments, football, theater,⁷ dance, and the tunes of the 7th Infantry band were central social activities in the community. The band regularly performed in military concerts for local events and during commemorative ceremonies in Portland. The Vancouver Creamery delivered “bottled milk for companies” throughout Vancouver Barracks and other local companies also delivered to the post, marketing their wares to officers and enlisted men. Reflecting the military presence in the community, the Curtis Grille on Main Street, “A Good Place to Eat” offered a ten percent discount to enlisted men and the USA Liberty Theatre ran daily

⁶ Fremont B. Hodson, “Vancouver Barracks, Washington,” in “Holiday Souvenir,” VNHRT Retiree Collection, Box 9, File 2.

matinees and continuous shows on the weekends including “High Class Vaudeville” and “First Run Pictures.” Ice cream parlors, jewelry, and shoe repair operations, cleaners and alteration shops, cutlery, hardware and dry goods stores advertised for the post business. Portland companies, such as the Oregon Packing Company and the Swift Meat Packing Company also aimed their promotions to the military market.⁸

During their stay in Vancouver, the soldiers of the 7th experienced the turmoil of a community and of a nation struggling to define its international role and domestic responsibilities. The 7th remained in Vancouver while the town faced a post-war depression, the impact of prohibition, tremendous social change, the Great Depression, and the beginning of yet another world war.

Depression, Prohibition, and Social Strife in Vancouver

As in communities across the nation, external forces provoked social change in Vancouver. By 1921 a national agricultural depression hit the country. Post-war surpluses led to low prices for crops, and farmers struggled to pay the bill for wartime expansion and mechanization.⁹ Clark County remained primarily agricultural throughout the pre-World War II era, as elsewhere impacted by depression and labor strife. During the 1920s and into the 1930s citizens re-defined the roles of labor and federal and state government, while contending with the social experimentation of prohibition and increasing modernization efforts. In Vancouver, the military base and the town’s prime location on the lower Columbia River presented the community with some unique

⁷ For the story of theater in Vancouver, Washington, see Ted Van Arsdol, “Live Theater in Vancouver 1900 to 1945,” *Clark County History* 24 (1983): 4-31.

⁸ *Ibid*; “Holiday Souvenir,” VNHRT Retiree Collection.

⁹ Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear*, 17.

opportunities for growth and development. Both river and highway transportation development placed the town in a central location. The Interstate Bridge provided a north-south passage on the Pacific Highway, and by early 1921, the east-west North Bank, or “Evergreen Highway,” extended to Camas and Washougal, increasing the economic value of the land along the river east of the military garrison.¹⁰

In 1921, the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce reorganized to consider ideas for redevelopment of its waterfront and downtown districts. The major failure on the waterfront was the Standifer Shipyards, a loss that ultimately benefited the port of Vancouver. In 1921, metal workers struck against Standifer due to lowered wages brought on by a general decline in shipbuilding. The Vancouver Metal Trades council granted Standifer permission to hire workmen to replace striking workers, but labor unrest continued on the Vancouver waterfront.¹¹ In January 1923, a group of men from the longshoreman’s union engaged in a fight, “in which rocks, clubs and bad names were freely used which almost developed to the boiling point of a riot involving a crowd variously estimated at from 60 to 150 men.”¹² The fight took place because “finks,” as union scabs were known, spent the day unloading lumber from a Japanese ship on the Vancouver dock. The conflict brewed all day as the two groups of men flung insults back and forth. At day’s end, both groups headed for the streetcar lines, and were suddenly met by a group of approximately fifty men from Portland. According to the *Vancouver Columbian*, “The fight raged through the whole group of workers until at least 50 men were engaged. Bloody noses were a frequent sight. Curses were hurled back and

¹⁰ *VC*, “The River Road,” 19 January 1921, 2.

¹¹ Mockford, “Historical Currents of Trade and Transportation on the Columbia: Part III,” *Clark County History* 36 (1995), 81; Julian Lindley Sharon, *Vancouver and Clark County* (Vancouver, Washington, 1939), 38; *VC*, “Metal Trades Council Gives Permission to Fill Up Yard,” 5 February 1921, 1.

forth. Eye witnesses say there were sometimes 20 men trying to get in a jab or a kick at one man lying on the street.” The police arrested three men, and the Portland Waterfront Association investigated the melee, but no conclusive evidence of radicalism could be found. Two of the men received \$25.00 fines for assault and battery and disorderly conduct, and the third was set free.¹³

The shipbuilding industry continued in a downward spiral as Standifer did not recover from the economic downturn, leaving Vancouver by 1923. The company, unable to fulfill its thirty-year lease by maintaining a continuously operating shipyard “or other important industry,” gave Vancouver’s port commission complete control and possession of the shipyards. When Standifer left, the port received “absolute possession and control of the huge shipbuilding properties and all permanent improvements made by the corporation during the war.” The property deeded to the port consisted of fifty-two acres within the city limits and adjoining railroad property, cornering at the depot. Port authorities viewed the site near the Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railroad Bridge as one of the “most important industrial locations on the river.” The amicable return of the former shipyard property freed the property for future municipal development.¹⁴

Port development was extremely important to communities along the Columbia River during this period. The Dalles-Celilo Canal opened at The Dalles, Oregon in 1915, allowing the transportation of goods up and down the river and in and out of the inland interior Columbia Basin. Vancouver, located on the river’s banks only 120 miles from the sea, with its rich soil, vibrant fruit industry, and military post, viewed port

¹² VC, “Longshoremen Factions Fight In City Streets,” 3 January 1923, 1, 7.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ VC, 21 November 1936; “Standifers Give Deed for Site and Buildings,” 17 February 1923, 1, 3; “Shipyards are Deeded Back to Port Commission,” 19 February 1923, 1.

development as the key to a brilliant future. In 1922, the federal government cut a twenty-five foot deep, 300-foot wide channel to the port of Vancouver. The deeper channel allowed larger ocean-going vessels to dock, and provided the beginning of port development that would give Vancouver a stronger hold on international markets.¹⁵

Future changes along Vancouver's waterfront took place with the continued assistance of the federal government and comprehensive river development, through relationships with private industry, another war, and the establishment of a strong civic government.

By the early 1920s, the world had in many ways become a smaller place, and city managers worked to change the perception of Vancouver as a distant western outpost. Many changes combined to make the future seem brighter – river development that would increase exports, the Interstate Bridge connecting north to south, and an aviation field that would soon bring nationwide attention to Vancouver. As one scholar pointed out in 1936, Vancouver developed in a rather topsy-turvy way, without any definite plan for coherent growth. Still, by the early 1920s many civic institutions had been firmly established.¹⁶ The city contained a library, numerous churches and schools, and a central locale for community gatherings on the army fields of the military reserve. Within the following decades, although the “topsy” effect continued, civic leaders struggled to provide planned growth and development. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, such development would be determined as much by world affairs, national events, and new technologies, as it was by the advancement of civic leaders.

Meanwhile, social strife touched Vancouver in more ways than one when Prohibition came to the city. Although Vancouver had been dry since 1914, and the state

¹⁵ *VC*, 21 November 1936, 10.

of Washington since 1918, the 1920 Volstead Act forbade anyone to “manufacture, sell, barter, transport, export, deliver, furnish or possess any intoxicating liquor.” However, the purchaser was not subject to prosecution (up to \$1,000.00), and beverages containing less than .05 per cent alcohol were legal for home use. Vancouver became part of the Twentieth District of the Prohibition Service, Treasury Department, that included Washington, Oregon, and Alaska under the leadership of Roy C. Lyle of Seattle. When Lyle took charge of the Prohibition Service there were probably 10,000 stills in the state of Washington, with more built as the years passed. The isolated woods and coastline of the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia was particularly conducive to “rumrunning,” and the Prohibition Service was under-funded and understaffed, making it necessary to rely on local police enforcement for the National Prohibition Law.¹⁷

Clark County and Vancouver struggled with the prohibition mandate. Nearby Portland, Oregon, with its larger urban population provided a ready market for liquor as did the young unmarried soldiers of Vancouver Barracks. In 1921 the Washington state legislature outlawed “jointism” (maintaining a place where liquor is unlawfully sold) and bootlegging. In February 1921 the Vancouver police and sheriff’s office arrested Hodge Ali, owner of a pool hall on Washington Street. His charge – selling liquor to soldiers.¹⁸ The following day, February 5, Sheriff William Thompson and prosecuting attorney Joseph Hall stood and watched a still produce a gallon of whiskey when they raided a Fruit Valley farmhouse equipped as a distillery. When the lawmen arrived, the still was operating, and so hot that the “hotch” was made before they could touch the still to

¹⁶ James Miller, “Some Factors Affecting the Growth of Vancouver, Washington” (MA Thesis, State College of Washington, 1936), 121.

¹⁷ Norman Clark, *The Dry Years: Prohibition and Social Change in Washington* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), 149, 153.

dismantle it. Thompson and Hall captured 400 gallons of mash and ten gallons of moonshine in the raid. By May, the sheriff and his deputies began a “wholesale cleanup of the alleged ‘bootlegging ring’ said to exist in Vancouver.” On May 5, they had arrested eight men, two “jointists” and six bootleggers. The arrestees were a former shipyard worker, a shoe shiner, two taxi drivers, and one man from the Railroad Club. The other two included a bartender and the proprietor, (Fat) Lavelle, of Fat’s Place, a pool hall with a soft drink counter on Main Street. By mid-1921, liquor fines totaled \$10,000.00, seventy raids had been made, fifty-one people convicted of bootlegging, and twenty-three of moonshining.¹⁹ Sheriff Thompson was soon considered “the best booze locator in Clarke County,” and even spoke at a July 1921 meeting of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union.²⁰

Many claimed that prohibition enforcement engendered more graft than the old-time saloon, because of its political implications, violence, and corruption of youth.²¹ Certainly, drama was one clear outcome of prohibition in Vancouver. Sheriff Will Thompson waged his war against liquor throughout the first half of the 1920s. When the sheriff captured 200 gallons of “John Barleycorn” in August of 1921, he made a large production of pouring the precious liquid, worth approximately \$2,500.00, into the sewer in front of the Clark County Courthouse. “Many Vancouver people remarked that just for this one day they wished they were sewer rats when they heard of what the sheriff was engaged in,” reported the local newspaper. Marcel, the *Columbian’s* photographer,

¹⁸ Clark, *The Dry Years*, 154; *VC*, “Selling Booze to Soldiers is Charge Against Two Men,” 4 February 1921, 1.

¹⁹ Bootlegging refers to illicitly making, selling, or transporting liquor. Moonshine refers especially to corn liquor.

²⁰ *VC*, “Officers see Moonshine Made While you Wait,” 5 February 1921, 1; “Dry Law Violators Arrested” 5 May 1921, 1; “Liquor Fines Total \$10,000 This Year,” 22 July 1921, 1.

²¹ Clark, *The Dry Years*, 153.

was on the scene, capturing photos and movie images for viewing at the U.S.A. Theatre later in the week. That fall, the sheriff's men acted as workmen and boarded a Japanese ship loading lumber at the DuBois dock. They then raided the ship, seizing more than 200 cases of liquor and arresting four Japanese. The following year, Deputy Sheriff Wilfred E. Rorison conducted a raid in Skamania County with federal prohibition agents from Seattle. When the moonshiners fought back, both Ray Hickey, still operator, and Rorison, died "in a fusilade of gun and pistol shots." Throughout 1923, Sheriff Thompson continued his role as booze catcher, shutting down small and large-scale stills with a vengeance. When Simon DeYak of 1310 Harney was arrested in November 1923 for making 250 gallons of wine, he protested it was for his own use and panicked when officers moved the newly made wine to take it to the courthouse basement. Now on the lookout for wineries, Sheriff Thompson and his deputies raided a truck farm on the Battle Ground highway dismantling a "monster vat" capable of holding 1,500 gallons of fermenting grapes. They removed 2,500 gallons of wine.²²

In 1926, Clark County elected a new sheriff, Lester Wood, and the other outcome of prohibition – violence – hit close to home. Lester Wood was a relatively young man when he took the sheriff's office. By that time, the Vancouver born, newly-elected sheriff was in his early thirties. He had graduated from Vancouver High School, worked in his father's furniture business, and had a wife and four children. Just six months after what had been considered the county's most exciting election in years, Luther Baker a sixty-year-old "mountaineer-moonshiner" shot and killed Wood when the sheriff raided

²² *Ibid*; *VC*, "Much Booze is Destroyed at Court House: Photographer Gets Movie of Heartrending Scenes at Opening of Sewer," 12 August, 1921, 1; "Japanese Ship Found Full of Booze at Dock," 14 October 1921, 1; "Murderer of Rorison Shot By Pickett" 8 August 1922, 1; "Sheriff Finds Huge Winery in

Baker's still. As Wood and his deputies approached the still near Yacolt, they were unexpectedly met with gunfire from a high-powered rifle. Wood was shot through the body just above the hips, and died within minutes.²³ A year later, the state of Washington hung Luther Baker for killing the young sheriff. The night before his death, Baker was visited by his brother Ellis, a fellow bootlegger at the Walla Walla State Prison who had been convicted of life imprisonment for the same crime. The *Vancouver Columbian* reported that Baker hoped the governor would commute his sentence, but to no avail: "With squared shoulders and a steeled face that showed no emotion, Luther Baker waited for the final preparations to be completed. He looked at the spectators with a glassy stare. Then the noose was adjusted and the trap sprung." Baker's body was returned to Vancouver for burial, and Governor Hartley refused to comment.

By 1934, the American people voted to repeal the Volstead Act, a "cure" many had determined was "more dangerous than the disease." In June 1932, county sheriffs poured 800 quarts of beer and 80 gallons of moonshine into the sewer, and in September Jesse Cousins killed two federal agents when they raided his still near Camp Bonneville. Cousins received a life sentence at the Walla Walla State Prison in January 1933, and just a few months later, in April, the local paper announced that the barracks would get beer when it became available. Restaurants and stores, too, would be able to sell beer on a limited basis. By September 1933, Washington voters decided to repeal the 18th

Vancouver: Raid at De Yak Residence Yields 250 Gallons of Liquor" 24 November 1923; "Great Vats of Wine Uncovered in Truck Garden" 26 November 1923, 1.

²³ *VC*, "Sheriff Wood Slain While Raiding Still: Unknown Assailant Murders Officer in Wilds Near Yacolt," 22 May 1927, 1; "Luther Baker Hanged: Slayer is Silent to Very End: Expected Commutation of Sentence; Funeral Arrangements Unknown," 22 May 1928; Clark, *Dry Years*, 224.

Amendment by a vote of two-and-a-half to one. Clark County voted 13,866 wet and 7,976 dry.²⁴

Other social divisions besides labor unrest and prohibition conflict raged during this period. Religious and racial conflict was also a significant part of the Pacific Northwest landscape. In 1915, a revitalized Ku Klux Klan met at Stone Mountain, Georgia, riding horses rather than cars, and aiming their ire at immigrant Jews and Catholics as much as at Blacks. The Klan extended their reach from the south into the nearby state of Oregon in 1921, and quickly recruited members in outlying communities. Klansmen spearheaded a drive to outlaw private and parochial schools, which they viewed as anti-American and non-conformist. By 1922, the Ku Klux Klan had organized in Vancouver and hooded members of the Klan entered the sheriff's office, their stated mission to donate money – \$45.00 to a young boy for leg braces.²⁵ Such actions clearly elicited Klan sympathy and the following summer, 1923, the Klan held a Vancouver rally. The next year, on August 25, 1924, Klan forces congregated at Vancouver's Bagley Downs for the largest Ku Klux Klan rally in the Northwest. Two days earlier, a large advertisement for the event in the *Columbian* enticed attendees with the promise of a “good” speaker on School Bill, Initiative No. 49, the “Grandest Display of Fireworks ever seen in this section,” and free food. Citizens were invited to come and hear what the KKK stood for, and come they did. Hundreds of hooded and robed Klansmen took over the Bagley Downs race track while between ten and fifteen thousand watched. The event

²⁴ *VC*, “800 Quarts of Beer; 90 Gallons of Moonshine Go Down Sewer As Parched Spectators Look On,” 1 June 1932, 1; “Federal Agent Slain, Another Wounded in Clark County Crime: Suspect Being Held,” 30 September 1932, 1, 6; “Cousins Faces Life Term: Livingston Man Guilty of Crime in First Degree,” 14 January 1933, 1, 2; “Barracks Will Get Beer When It's Available”; “Twenty Permits to Handle Beer Granted By City,” 7 April 1933, 1, 2; “Washington Wet By 1 ½ To 1 Vote” 15 September 1933, 1.

²⁵ Carlos Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest: An Interpretive History* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 297; *VC*, “Ku Klux Klan Makes Raid At Courthouse,” 11 March 1922, 1.

began with “the appearance of a flaming emblem suspended from an airplane flying high above the crowds and thrilling the onlookers with a series of spectacular convulsions.” Hundreds of cars arrived from Oregon, reported the *Columbian*, to listen to speeches by men high in the Klan organization, including the Grand Dragon of Washington, H.O. Carpenter and C.W. Hurd, Grand Calif of Oregon. The mayor of Kent, Washington David Leopold, also Supreme Dragon of the Royal Riders of the Red Robe, gave a speech, as did the Imperial lecturer, John Jeffreys of Seattle. While Klansmen directed traffic at every major intersection in Vancouver, a hundred or more neophytes swore Klan allegiance in a ritualistic initiation ceremony, bringing the number of robed Klansmen attending the ceremonies to approximately 500.²⁶ As in nearby Oregon, the Klan became involved in local politics, unsuccessfully running a candidate for sheriff in the 1926 election.²⁷

A Birdman’s World: the historic development of aviation at Pearson Field

In the early 1920s, the Vancouver Airdrome – the army airfield – served many purposes. Just after World War I, only civilians used the army’s aviation field. Then, in 1921 the Army Air Service partnered with the U.S.D.A. Forest Service to provide air patrol over the vast forests of the Pacific Northwest. Army planes, under the direction of the Ninth Corps headquarters in San Francisco, flew regularly from the military field. In June of 1921, air patrol service halted briefly as the Columbia River rose twenty-five feet,

²⁶ *VC*, “Klan Officials Are Arriving for Big Ceremonial: Local Leaders Busy With Program Plans at Fair Grounds,” 23 August 1924, 1; “Thousands Attend Klan Ceremony At Fair Grounds: Flaming Cross is Carried in Sky; Big Crowds From Out of Town,” 1.

²⁷ For more on the Klan in Oregon, See David Horowitz, *Inside the Klavern: The Secret History of a Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999); For more on insurgent politics of the 1920s, see David Horowitz, *Beyond Left and Right: insurgency and the establishment* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997).

flooding lands along the river. Lieutenant Glover, post adjutant, assured the community that the field would again be used for fire patrol since the government would provide hangars, gasoline, and maintenance. The use of the airfield for this purpose was part of a broader effort by the army to demonstrate the various uses of aircraft in a time of limbo for the army air service. Another use for military planes soon became evident as army pilots mapped and photographed the region from the air, including mapping of the local port. Soon, the field served as a base for mapping army installations and ports throughout the region.²⁸

Throughout the 1920s, the Vancouver Army Airfield played a central role in the development and promotion of aeronautics technology and commercial aviation in the Northwest, also gaining national attention. The twenties were an era when distances shortened, and small planes zoomed through the sky carrying people from place to place faster than ever before. Aviators regularly made record-breaking flights along the west coast, landing in Vancouver, and increasingly diminishing flight times so that by 1923, a flight from San Francisco to Portland took just under six hours. A record five-hour and fifty-five minute air flight from Crissy Field at San Francisco to Pearson Field brought two U.S. airmen to Pearson Field on April 11, 1923. First Lieutenant John W. Benton and Private Charles Yates flew the 650-mile distance non-stop, using the DeHaviland plane, which carried 135 gallons of gasoline. Lieutenant Benton came to Vancouver to relieve Lieutenant C.W. Golsborough who was on an expedition to photograph all ports and fortifications along the Pacific Coast.²⁹

²⁸ VC, "Airplane Cannot Use Field at Vancouver," 15 June 1921, 1; Jon Walker, *A Century Airborne: Air Trails of Pearson Airpark* (Vancouver, Washington: Jon Walker, 1994), 33-34.

²⁹ Sharon, *Vancouver and Clark County*, 72; VC, "2 U.S. Airmen Land Here After Record Flight," 12 April 1923, 1.

During the same year, 1923, the 321st Observation Squadron, 96th Division, came to Vancouver. Although the commander, 1st Lieutenant James F. Powell, was a balloonist who had never flown an airplane, the equipment he commanded included heavier than air planes – a DeHaviland DH-4 and two Curtiss JN-4s or “Jennies” as the planes were known. Military air games and community celebrations coincided during this era, as for example when Vancouver military planes dropped flour-filled “bombs” in mock games on May Day 1923.³⁰ On July 4, 1923, President Warren Harding made a whistle stop in Vancouver before giving a major speech in Portland, Oregon.³¹ In 1924, Lieutenant Oakley Kelly took command of the 321st, the Organized Air Reserve. Lieutenant Larry Turner, stationed at the field’s headquarters, 96th Division in Portland, recalled: “We knew that our station was one of the poorest equipped and most remote from important air force activities so we could hardly believe it when the word came that Oakley Kelly would replace our balloonist.”³² Kelly, well known for his aviation feats, including the first nonstop flight across the continent, was considered a “bit of a daredevil.” While stationed at Vancouver between 1924 and 1928 he often flew under the Broadway Bridge in Portland.

Kelly was a promoter, and when presented with a poorly equipped, relatively unknown field in the wilds of the Pacific Northwest, he went energetically to work. His major accomplishment at Vancouver was development of the 175-acre flying field. When the lieutenant began improvement, a wooden hangar capable of housing approximately six airplanes stood in the middle of the flying field and the old spruce cut

³⁰ Walker, *A Century Airborne*, 33-34.

³¹ Milton Bona, “U.S. Presidents Visit Vancouver” *Clark County History* 19 (1978), 63.

³² Turner in Roy Jones, “Clark County Aviation: Pearson Field: Lieutenant Oakley D. Kelly,” *Clark County History* 9 (1968), 306.

up mill, a concrete incinerator, and a fence hemmed in the field, preventing use of the nearby land. Kelly used his influence with the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce to encourage the city to obtain seventy acres just east of the army's flight field. The city decided a commercial field would be a good venture, and so leased the land from the S.P.&S Railroad Company for \$75.00 per month. Meanwhile, the lease allowed Kelly to order the fence between the fields torn down, and he commanded the old wooden hangar moved to the northeastern part of the field near a newly built hangar. The cut up mill was demolished and the incinerator razed with dynamite. The land was then leveled and graded, disked, dragged, and rolled, making the army flying field one of the most developed military landing fields on the coast, second only to the army's main base in San Diego.³³

Vancouver quickly became a stopover landing field. When the army commissioned an around-the-world flight in 1924, the Vancouver Airdrome entered national headlines. The World Cruisers were bi-planes, with twelve-cylinder Liberty engines, and could be outfitted with both wheels and pontoons to meet unexpected conditions. The around-the-world fliers landed at Vancouver on March 19, 1924 as over 2,000 onlookers turned out to watch their approach. Although they were scheduled to fly to Seattle the same day, poor weather conditions forced them back to Vancouver. Such occurrences were common, highlighting the need for numerous air fields throughout the nation. Later in the month, Lieutenant Kelly flew to Seattle for an air circus in connection with the departure of the World Fliers.

³³ *Idem*, 31, 34; *VC*, "Kelly's Dream of Best Field Being Realized: Pearson Field Improvements Now Nearing Completion," 20 March, 1924, 1; "Improvement at the Vancouver Flying Field" in *The Columbian, Bulletin of the 96th Division*, 32.

The Vancouver Barracks fields drew onlookers for other major events, especially polo matches, sometimes accompanied by air circuses. Large crowds attended the matches on the reserve, which included air games and the opportunity to watch skilled polo players and officers compete on horses with names like “Winkles,” “Sweet Patootie,” and “Tiger.” During the late spring of 1924, May 9 to May 18, Vancouver barracks hosted the Northwest International Polo Tournament. Colonel Jason M. Walling and First Lieutenant Oakley G. Kelly highlighted yet another possible use for airplanes when they toured over the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho in an aerial advertising campaign waged by the army. Six teams were slated for the tournament and visitors included General Babbitt, commander of the Third Division who arrived from Camp Lewis to attend military exercises at Vancouver Barracks. The visit would be the last active military service of his long career, an ending the general found desirable since he began his career from Vancouver Barracks. He had lived in Vancouver as a boy while his father was stationed at the local post. Babbitt left Vancouver for West Point in 1880. After participation in military exercises, the general attended a polo match between Camp Lewis and the Oregon Agricultural College held on the military polo grounds.³⁴

During the next few years, the field at Vancouver Barracks continued as a public gathering site. In late September 1924 the World Fliers returned, this time unexpectedly landing at the Chamber of Commerce Airfield when Lieutenant Leigh Wade’s airplane experienced difficulties with the oil pressure mechanism. Mechanics at the barracks quickly made repairs, sending the plane off within twenty-six minutes, and the surprise landing gave Vancouver a place in the official itinerary of the flight. Of the three planes that landed in September, only one had returned, that of Lieutenant Lowell Smith with

³⁴ *VC*, 26 April 1924; 14 May 1924.

Lieutenant Leslie Arnold as mechanic. Major Frederick I. Martin, flight commander, with Sergeant Alva Harvey as mechanic, abandoned his plane in Alaska after crashing into a mountain. Lieutenant Wade with Lieutenant Ogden as mechanic abandoned his in the Atlantic Ocean while attempting to fly between Scotland and Iceland. All survived, and Lieutenant Kelley, who had not been in Vancouver to greet the World Fliers, flew to Seattle, accompanied by the official aerial photographer of the 321st Squadron, to attend the world flight concluding ceremonies. The fliers returned to Vancouver from Seattle the following month, this time on a planned visit. Lieutenant Kelly escorted the three planes, Smith in the *Chicago*, Wade in the *Boston*, and Nelson in the *New Orleans*. As between 2,500 and 3,000 people gathered at the barracks flying field to witness the landing, the troops of the 7th Infantry guarded the north side of the field to prevent crowding. Portland's reception committee included Governor Pierce of Oregon and Mayor George L. Baker of Portland. In preparation for the World Fliers' arrival, the 321st Reserve Squadron took to the air and flew over the city in formation.³⁵

The experiences of the World Fliers underscored the dangers associated with flying. At the same time that the public became more familiar with the positive possibilities associated with flight, numerous pilots died as planes crashed and burned regularly. By the summer of 1924, the local newspaper noted that most of the airplanes that had come to the field the previous year were wrecked and improvements to the military field took place because of its size and dangerous placement near the river.

³⁵ Walker, *A Century Airborne*, 35-36; Sharon, *Vancouver and Clark County*, 77; VC, "Informal Call is Made at Barracks By Heroes of Air," 9 September 1924, 1, 3; "World Fliers Arrive: Aviators Over City," 17 October 1924, 1.

More than once in the field's history aviators set down in the middle of the Columbia because they could not gain enough altitude to avoid the Interstate Bridge.³⁶

Among those who died in the early years of aviation was Lieutenant Alexander Pearson of Portland and Vancouver. Alexander Pearson, "one of the finest pilots in the Army Air Service" died September 2, 1924 at the Pulitzer Race at Wilbur Wright Field in Ohio. Alexander Pearson had attended school and worked in Vancouver, his brother flew regularly from Vancouver, and his family lived in Portland. Pearson was one of the top pilots in the nation. His notoriety stemmed from breaking speed and distance records, including winning the 1919 speed contest from New York to San Francisco. It took him forty-eight hours for the round trip. He also made the first flight through the Grand Canyon to survey the air currents there.

Pearson seemed slated for disaster, facing many dangerous situations in his aviation career, with his final flight ending in tragedy. In 1921, he attempted a two-stop cross-country flight, leaving Fort Bliss, Texas on February 10 and never arriving at his final destination, San Antonio. Both cowboys and army pilots searched for him. Ultimately this event ended happily. He was rescued in the middle of the Rio Grande River after six days. In 1923 he attempted to fly in the Pulitzer Race in St. Louis, but dropped out because of propeller problems. The following year in Ohio, he tried again, this time with sad results. Pearson's wings collapsed and sent him crashing to the ground. An investigation revealed that the hollow laminated interplane strut caused the wings' collapse. As a result of Pearson's death and the subsequent investigation, the struts on navy planes were replaced with solid struts and the military recommended parachutes for pilots. Because of his association with Vancouver and his fame as an

³⁶ Walker, *A Century Airborne*, 36.

aviator, the following year, on April 6, 1925, the Secretary of War ordered that the name of the military field, Vancouver Barracks Airdrome, be changed to Pearson Field.³⁷

The army planned a “mammoth air circus” for the dedication of Pearson Field on September 16, 1925. Pearson’s widow and his family, military and civic leaders, and three of the World Fliers who visited Vancouver the previous year attended. The military provided parking for 6,000 people, and an air of excitement permeated the city. The *Columbian* reported: “Ice cream and ‘Hot Dog’ stands sprang up near the field and lend a festive touch to the grounds. Soldiers from the barracks are stationed about the field and give a distinctly military appearance to the affair, and a microphone system allowed for speechmaking and crowd control. Cars have been pouring in all morning from Portland.” Vancouver schools also closed down, businesses ran with minimal crews, and by 2:00 p.m., planes roared across the sky above the military town. Fifty-three airplanes maneuvered over the field in massive formation before speeches and a 100-gun salute began the festivities. The fun consisted of games and competitions including air relay races, competitive formation, stunt flying, commercial plane speed race, bomb dropping, and demonstrations of wing walking and aerial combat. When a figure dropped from the sky with an unopened parachute, the crowd panicked, unaware that it was a dummy dropped to demonstrate the importance of parachutes. Many later complained about the distasteful nature of the demonstration to the local newspapers. Chief of Staff, Colonel Frederick T. Arnold of the 96th Division, read the War Department Order naming Pearson Field and Major Robert Walsh pronounced the field “the finest Reserve officers field in

³⁷ Walker, *A Century Airborne*, 43-46. For more on Alexander Pearson and the dedication of Pearson Field, see pp. 43-47; *VC*, “World Famous Pilots To Be Here Wednesday,” 11 September 1925; Sharon, *Vancouver and Clark County*, 79.

the United States.” That day, with over 20,000 present, the Army Air Corps mounted a concrete monument dedicated in loving memory of Alexander Pearson.³⁸

Vancouver’s Centennial Year

Among the speech-makers on Pearson Field’s dedication day was Vancouver’s mayor, O.W. Storey, who marveled at how far Vancouver had come in the previous 100 years. Storey spoke of how appropriate it was that in the Centennial year, Pearson field should be dedicated nearly on the very site where the Hudson’s Bay Company established its fort one hundred years earlier. Governor Roland Hartley, although not present, sent a message to the airmen at Vancouver via the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce. Hartley remarked:

When we contemplate the scenes incident to the dedication of Pearson Flying Field we can but pause in wonderment and are left but powerless to forecast what marvelous transformations will be worked in another century. Aviators taking part in today’s ceremonies are pioneers in another great era of human achievement, and someday civilization will do them homage as we have so lately done those intrepid frontiersmen who blazed our western trails. I sincerely regret my inability to be with you. Accept my congratulations.³⁹

The Vancouver Centennial, observed through the spring and summer of 1925, was a major event. The celebration was accompanied by a strong connection to the former site of the HBC fort on what later became the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, part of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve. In 1921, Felix Robinson, civil engineer at the barracks, determined the original site of the Hudson’s Bay Company stockade when he was ordered to remove to Camp Lewis. As he prepared to leave his office and dispose of a large quantity of old papers, he found an aged roll of linen tracing.

On the yellowed linen was Lieutenant Bonneville's "long lost map of the Old Fort Vancouver" made when Bonneville surveyed the military reservation in 1854, and showing the fort's exact location. The state historical society made copies, and then the map went into the military reservation's vaults.⁴⁰

Thus began the stimulus for historic preservation of the HBC site evident in connection with community planning for the 1925 centennial event. The previous year the Prunarians voted to support a congressional bill to restore the old stockade at Vancouver Barracks. According to the *Columbian*, "Centennial plans took on a new lease of life on receipt of a letter by the trustees from Representative Albert Johnson inclosing a letter from Secretary Weeks to the chairman of the House military affairs committee in which the cabinet member gave hearty approval of the bill offered by Representative Johnson to restore the old Fort Vancouver stockade." The request was for \$30,000, but Secretary Weeks suggested \$60,000. Everyone agreed that reconstruction would allow Vancouver "a real centennial celebration."⁴¹ However, it would take many years before fort construction became a reality.⁴² Meanwhile, in the spring of 1925, the local newspaper berated Vancouver's citizens for their apathetic centennial fundraising: "We have been promised assistance in Portland, Seattle, Tacoma, but we must do our best here first," said Senator Shaw, president of the Centennial Board of Trustees. More

³⁹ Walker, *A Century Airborne*, 46; *VC*, 16 September 1925.

⁴⁰ *VC*, "Hudson Bay Co. Early Stockade Location Found," 13 July 1921, 1, 6.

⁴¹ *VC*, 10 December 1924, 1; *VC*, "Sec. Weeks Wants Old Fort Vancouver Stockade Restored," 12 December 1924.

⁴² The efforts of local groups resulted in establishment of the Fort Vancouver National Monument on June 19, 1948, and the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site on June 30, 1961. HBC Fort reconstruction began in 1966. Walker, *A Century Airborne*, 95.

than \$6,000.00 remained for the city to raise, and Shaw declared, “It’s up to Vancouver. Do we go or don’t we?”⁴³

City leaders saw the centennial as an opportunity to replicate the 1905 Lewis & Clark Exposition by stimulating city planning, drawing attention to, and bringing commercial ventures to Vancouver. Funding for the centennial celebrations was slated to come first from donations, and later from centennial coins minted at San Francisco. The 50,000 coins, designed by Vancouver’s Laura Gardin Fraser, would be sold for \$1.00, with fifty cents each going into the centennial coffers. Celebrations began with a parade and banquet on the city’s official birthday – March 19 – in commemoration of the 1825 christening of Fort Vancouver. While a band from Vancouver Barracks played, soldiers, children, and others gathered at the traditional parade gathering site, 10th and Main, to march to the old apple tree on the military reserve. The Scotch Pipe Band from Portland played, and that evening Governor Roland Hartley along with 400 others celebrated the centennial in the military post’s gymnasium.

Although highly enjoyed by many, the event was an ill-fated kickoff to the larger celebration. Next came the May 1 unveiling of a granite marker by the Washington State Historical Society. Without noting the long-term occupation of native people along the lower Columbia, the marker commemorated the first “permanent” settlement in what became Washington State.⁴⁴ Despite continued fundraising efforts and public commemorations, very little money came forth. Although originally slated for a six-

⁴³ *VC*, 16 April 1925.

⁴⁴ Ted Van Arsdol, “Vancouver’s Centennial Year” *Clark County History* 26 (1975), 14-16. The marker was placed at “Century Point,” on the North Bank highway, just east of the barracks. It was later moved to the front of the U.S. Grant House.

week exposition-like celebration at what is now 39th and Main Street⁴⁵, by June, centennial plans changed due to lack of funds. Organizers announced that a one-week celebration featuring a pageant, “The Coming of the White Man,” would be held, pending the decision by the U.S. Mint to turn out souvenir coins to finance the celebrations.

On August 1, 1925, Lieutenant Kelly returned from San Francisco with 500 of the 50,000 coins slated for minting. Kelly set yet another air speed record when he retrieved the coins from California’s coastal city, making the round trip in just under eleven hours.⁴⁶ The lieutenant’s rapid return drew wide attention, and movie men were on hand to film the flight’s return and the handoff of coins to Herbert Campbell,⁴⁷ president of the Centennial Company. The first ten coins went to Vancouver’s officials, with one each to President Coolidge and to Lieutenant Kelly. The *Columbian* reported:

The coins were first sold at the Vancouver National Bank and later at banks and some stores around the region. They were described by the Vancouver *Columbian* as: especially beautiful. On one side is the bust of Dr. John McLoughlin, founder of Fort Vancouver in 1825. This side bears the words: “United States of America” at the top and “Half Dollar” at the bottom, with the figures “1825” on one side of the bust and “1925” on the other side of the bust. Under the bust is the name ‘Dr. John McLoughlin.’ On the reverse side the center is occupied by a picture of a trapper in furs, carrying a rifle, with the old Fort Vancouver Stockade and Mount Hood in the background. On the top margin appear the words “Fort Vancouver Centennial” and below the picture are the words “Vancouver, Washington, founded 1825 by Hudson’s Bay Company.”⁴⁸

Although the centennial coins were a much-heralded novelty, only 14,994 sold.

The remainder returned to the mint for credit. The centennial pageant, sporting officials in pioneer regalia was a community success, but did not bring the desired attention to

⁴⁵ The Pacific Highway at that time.

⁴⁶ Lieutenant Kelly was gone for thirteen hours and six minutes, with a flight time of ten hours, fifty-five minutes. Van Arsdol, “Centennial Year,” 19.

⁴⁷ Herbert Campbell was also publisher and editor of the *Columbian* until his death in 1941. Van Arsdol, “Centennial Year,” n.8, 18.

⁴⁸ *VC*, 3 August 1925 in VanArsdol, “Centennial Year,” 18-20.

Vancouver. Instead, it ended in disaster when centennial secretary Charles Watts, under pressure to pay centennial bills, committed suicide on the next-to-last night of the pageant. Yet, at least one positive outcome occurred. Lieutenant Kelly declared that his trip to pick up coins had demonstrated the possibility of airmail service between Vancouver and San Francisco, something no one had ever tried before.⁴⁹

Commercial Flight: The City Air Field

For Vancouver, the centennial year portended an era of new beginnings. In the spring of 1925 Lieutenant Kelly worked with the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce to establish Vancouver as an airmail center. Recent news that the government had called for route bids between Elko, Nevada and Pasco, Washington, spurred a movement to get Vancouver on the air mail map. The government had also recently forbidden commercial fliers from landing at military air fields, and Kelly prompted the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce to purchase the land adjacent to Pearson Field for commercial purposes. Hope for air mail designation was one of the primary factors in the purchase of seventy acres next to the military field. For Lieutenant Kelly and others in the Army Air Corps, the commercial aviation field represented an opportunity to train civilian fliers for the reserves, to enlarge the capacity of the airfield in case of emergency, and a way to draw attention and public support to the army aviation program.⁵⁰

The development of commercial air activities in Vancouver began with endorsement of the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce Field by Washington Senator

⁴⁹ Van Arsdol, "Centennial Year," 22, 26, 20. For a full account of the events leading to Watts' suicide and the financial difficulties of the centennial as well as the general social milieu of 1925, see Ted Van Arsdol, "Centennial Year."

⁵⁰ Walker, *A Century Airborne*, 49.

Albert Johnson, the Portland Chamber of Commerce, and Lieutenant Colonel Frank P. Lahm, assistant chief of the Air Service in San Francisco. The Vancouver site was a logical choice because it was approximately halfway between the Canadian and California borders in a natural airway and nearby Portland did not have a suitable airfield. Vernon C. Gorst, a former bus line operator who learned to fly hydro planes with Silas Cristofferson, received Contract Air Mail Route No. 8 (Seattle to Los Angeles). By March 1926, the last of improvements planned for Pearson Field took place, making the 175 acres adjacent to the City of Vancouver Chamber of Commerce Flying Field available for use.⁵¹ The same month Vern Gorst, having begun the Pacific Air Transport Company, later part of United Airlines, completed a survey of the air mail routes between Seattle and Los Angeles. Gorst handed the first air-borne letter to Portland postmaster J.M. Jones at Pearson Field. Claude Ryan, president of the Ryan Aircraft Company, which was producing planes for air mail service, piloted the monoplane that landed on March 19. It was the first to land at Vancouver and “aroused considerable curiosity because of its peculiar construction.” The small, speedy plane had broken the flying record between San Francisco and Seattle with a seven-hour and three-minute flying time. The time from San Francisco to Vancouver was five hours and thirty-eight minutes.⁵²

Bright spirits at the Vancouver airfield dampened the following summer, 1926, when Lieutenant Harry Goode, reserve officer of the 321st Observation Squadron burned to death. The DeHaviland plane often used by Lieutenant Kelly had just left the ground

⁵¹ *VC*, “Kelly’s Dream of Best Field Being Realized: Pearson Field Improvements Now Nearing Completion,” 20 March 1926, 1.

⁵² Walker, *A Century Airborne*, 49-50; *VC*, *Idem*, “Kelly’s Dream,” 1; *VC*, “Airmail From Seattle Starts With Test Flight,” 20 March 1926.

when it burst into flame. Lieutenant Goode, realizing he could not reach the river, landed just east of the polo field, but was caught underneath the plane. Soon after the landing, the Vancouver Fire Department removed his charred body from the crash. Goode's passenger, reserve officer Julius Syfford, suffered burns about the face and died the following day. Other fatal accidents occurred at the field. On April 25, 1927, Danny Grecco took two Portland telephone operators for a joy ride, crashing into the high grading of the S.P.&S. Railroad when the plane faltered at about 100 feet. The two women, Zola V. Schan and Harriet Franklin, died instantly. Grecco survived, but only after a lengthy hospital stay.⁵³ Aviation remained dangerous, but soon became less a novelty to the average person and more an opportunity for those engaged in the transportation business.

The March visit to the airfield by Gorst and Ryan signaled not only the arrival of air mail, but also changes taking place in aviation. Gorst announced a major development – Pacific Air Transport would provide passenger service in addition to mail service.⁵⁴ Passenger service would reduce travel time and before long aviation, previously the domain of the military, would come into the private sphere. At the same time, the local newspaper announced that the Rankin Flying Services, established in Vancouver in 1924, would run a commercial operation that would provide air taxi service at “auto taxi rates.” Tex Rankin, who soon became nationally known, also offered scenic pleasure trips from the Vancouver Field and taught students to fly. Although he left Vancouver in 1926 to establish his own private flying field across the Columbia at Mock's Bottom on the Willamette, Rankin continued to use the Pearson Field when

⁵³ *VC*, “Blazing Airplane Crashes,” 12 June 1926, 1; Jones, “The Municipal Air Field,” 319.

weather conditions or flooding made Mock's Bottom inaccessible. After World War II, Rankin sold *Seabee* amphibian craft out of a hanger at Pearson.⁵⁵

Gorst's test flight confirmed use of Pearson Field for the airmail contract. The first airmail left Pasco on April 26, 1926, and the 321st Observation Squadron flew to Pasco to participate in the launching ceremonies. Vernon Bookwalter made the first contract air mail flight in the Northwest in his "Travelair" biplane for the Pacific Air Transport Company in connection with the first air mail route between Los Angeles, California and Seattle, Washington. Bookwalter left the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce field on September 15, 1926 and flew south to Medford, Oregon, returning the same day with the northbound mail, less than twelve hours from his Los Angeles departure. Prominent officials and military men greeted the air mailmen. Each spoke briefly, outlining the future of airmail service. However, Vancouver's status as an air mail hub was short lived. Controversy ensued over tolls to cross the Interstate Bridge, and although the toll was soon removed for the mail truck, the port of Portland decided to build an airport of its own at Swan Island. Charles Lindbergh was among the first to land at the new Swan Island Airport the following year. At the ceremonies inaugurating airmail service in September 1926, no one from the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce was asked to speak, exacerbating a longstanding Portland-Vancouver feud. Meanwhile the airfield's use continued to be significant militarily. On Tuesday, September 21, 1926 eight U.S. Navy planes stopped in Vancouver on a return flight from an Alaska mapping

⁵⁴ Pacific Air Transport later passed into control of Boeing Air Transport and then into a consolidation of western airlines under the name United Airlines. Jones, "The Municipal Air Field," 320.

⁵⁵ Walker, *A Century Airborne*, 52.

trip. They were on a three-year aerial mapping project, and after spending the night at Vancouver Barracks, they headed to their winter base at San Diego, California.⁵⁶

Aviation, Military, and Community

Through the end of the 1920s, Vancouver Barracks continued as both aviation center and military training site and Americans remained alert to the possibility of another great war. In his 1925 inaugural speech, newly elected president, Calvin Coolidge, pointed out the need for a militarily ready citizenry:

Our country represents nothing but peaceful intentions toward all the earth, but it ought NOT TO FAIL TO MAINTAIN SUCH A MILITARY FORCE AS COMPORTS WITH THE DIGNITY AND SECURITY OF A GREAT PEOPLE. It ought to be a balanced force, intensely modern, capable of defense by sea and land, beneath the surface and in the air. But it should be conducted that all the world may see in it not a menace but an instrument of security and peace.⁵⁷

Among the strategies for defense was the Citizens' Military Training Camp (CMTC), a youth corps military training program similar to the army reserves. Citizens' Military Training Camps began in 1920 and ended with the beginning of World War II. Young men attended Red, White, or Blue trainings that indicated their status in terms of the number of years they attended. The courses of study ranged from artillery and infantry to aviation. In 1925, Congress allocated enough money to train 35,000 young men in the nation's Citizens' Military Training Camps, 930 to attend the camps in the Pacific Northwest – Fort George Wright, Fort Worden, and Camp Lewis. The following year, from June 18 to July 17, 1926, Vancouver Barracks held its first CMTC, slated to be the most successful in the West. Young men were recruited throughout the Pacific

⁵⁶ Sharon, *Vancouver and Clark County*, 81.

Northwest, with particular emphasis on those of high school and college age. “The benefits of the camp and the training it will offer will be placed before the high schools of the county and before other youths who might be interested,” reported Vancouver’s *Columbian*.

By mid-June 1926, 460 young men had enrolled at the camp, with other applications rapidly pouring in as an intensive drive for recruits took place in nearby Portland. While numbers lagged elsewhere in the Ninth Corps, the *Columbian* bragged about Vancouver’s high enrollment. The first activity of the boys from Oregon and Washington would be a physical exam at the post hospital. Next, they would receive equipment and uniforms from the quartermaster department, after which they would settle into squad tents in a grove of trees north of Officer’s Row, “with cook, mess, and bath houses ready.”⁵⁸ Training for the young men would be conducted by the Infantry, Field Artillery, Cavalry, Coast Artillery Corps, Corps of Engineers, and the Signal Corps and included the following for military preparedness: physical training; citizenship; hygiene and first aid; drill; marksmanship; combat principles or tactics; topography and orientation; reconnaissance and signal communications; field artillery driver; care of animals and hippology⁵⁹; duties of officers and NCOs; field artillery drill regulations and material; field artillery gunnery; instruction mounted; artillery movements mounted; field work service practice; field fortifications, explosives, demolitions; roads; bridges, rigging and technical proficiency tests.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Ed. Lt. Col. William C. Webb under direction of Colonel F.T. Arnold, “On Being American, From the Inaugural Address of President Calvin Coolidge, Commander-In-Chief of the Army,” in *The Columbian: Bulletin of the 96th*, 1.

⁵⁸ *VC*, “Civilians to Aid C.M.T.C. Work,” 20 March 1926, 1; *VC*, “Quota Limit Raised,” 15 June 1926, 1.

⁵⁹ The study of horses.

⁶⁰ *VC*, “C.M.T.C. Headquarters,” 11; “Announce C.M.T.C. Plans For Training in 1925,” in the *Bulletin of the 96th*, 14.

The army attempted to make CMTC fun, combining outdoor living and play with military training in an effort to induce young men into the all volunteer army. Reds and Whites received more intensive training and rookies engaged in close-order drill, while the Blues learned about officers' duties and weapons. One of the benefits of CMTC, announced the *Columbian*, were the meals. Camp Hurlburt, where the young men resided, was known for "good eats." A breakfast of fresh plums, cereals, hot cakes, bacon, milk and coffee, would be followed by a dinner [lunch] featuring pork chops and cream gravy, buttered new potatoes, fresh green beans, lettuce, milk, coffee, and ice cream. A rich supper followed in the evening. After morning calisthenics, came all camp drill and then training sessions. In the afternoon, the young men played competitive sports such as playground ball, volley ball, tennis, and golf.⁶¹

The end of the 1920s was a time for conscious community development, with deliberately engendered pride in the military reserve where the young men trained. The Great War had passed, new technologies were on the rise, and Vancouver attempted to claim its heritage and forge a niche in the twentieth century Pacific Northwest. In May 1927, the community dedicated a monument to General Ulysses S. Grant. Before his rise to fame, as a young officer in 1852 Grant had been stationed in Vancouver. One of his many failed schemes to make extra money included planting potatoes in a field just beyond the barracks. The Columbia River ruined Grant's potato planting venture when it flooded the field, but by that time Grant had decided the river saved him the work of digging since it seemed everyone else was selling potatoes and the price had dropped. Northwesterners claimed Ulysses Grant as part of their heritage, and Vancouver Mayor

⁶¹ *VC*, "C.M.T.C. To Open In Another Week," 27 June 1934, 4; "Annual Citizens' Military Training Camp Started Today," 5 July 1934, 1; "Allegiance Oath Taken By Youths," 6 July 1934, 1; "'34 CMTC Camp

John Kiggins, Joseph A. Hill, president of Portland's Hill Military Academy, and other civic leaders attended the monument's dedication. The six-foot monument, cut from the stone of Portland's Rocky Butte, was erected in the triangular tract of land that lay just beyond the barracks grounds in the angle formed by the junction of Fifth Street and the North Bank highway. Ceremonies of the day featured the 7th Infantry Band and the cadets of Hill Military Academy.⁶²

As the community commemorated days gone by, it embarked upon a new era. It had been over twenty years since the first flights took place on the Reserve and since the first automobiles caused a commotion in the city. The airplane and the automobile symbolized new beginnings that changed ways of life. Community leaders recognized that often new beginnings were rooted in endings; for example, when the Vancouver streetcar system halted in 1927 because of increased automobile use. At the time there were eight passenger coaches, one freight car, and eight flat cars. When the streetcar lines were torn up, the Port of Vancouver stored some equipment in the "old" wartime Standifer Shipyards, and sold the remainder for junk. Farmers received ties and poles, and rights of way reverted to the owners of adjoining property. Rural lines and city lines were gradually abandoned until final disbanding in April 1927.

By the following year, the states of Washington and Oregon completed payment for the Interstate Bridge built in 1917, ending the toll era and initiating new connections between Portland and Vancouver. The age of automobile travel had arrived in full force.

Quota On Hand," 7 July 1934, 1; "Meals At CMTC Please Recruits," 9 July 1934.

⁶² VC, "Grant Monument To Be Dedicated Here Tomorrow," 20 May 1927, 1; "Grant Monument Dedicated Today With Ceremonies: 150 Cadets From Hill Military Academy at Dedication," 21 May 1927, 1.

The last day of the tolls, nearly 17,000 people crossed the bridge,⁶³ yielding \$1351.95. That night, December 31, 1928, brought Vancouver's citizens to the streets. Throngs of people in automobiles and afoot awaited the 12:01 a.m. signal that they could cross from Vancouver to Portland without cost. A shrill siren sounded and the mayors of both towns, George L. Baker of Portland and John P. Kiggins of Vancouver, and the police chiefs of both cities, L.V. Jenkins of Portland and Ira C. Cresap of Vancouver, congratulated the populace. Next came the first toll-free crossings after the official opening. Washington State Highway patrolman Harry Williams rode across the bridge and back on his motorcycle followed by Allison Burnham, a private citizen, and pedestrian Mrs. Clement Scott on foot.⁶⁴

At the end of the 1920s, Vancouver's future shone brightly. The Vancouver Chamber of Commerce Field boomed through 1927 and 1928, the civilian Bell Line Air Service taking as many as eighty-five people into the air on a Sunday afternoon. Approximately 150 reserve officers trained at Pearson Field in 1928, and when Lieutenant Kelly left the station in May of that year, fifty-year-old daredevil Captain Aubrey Eagle, replaced him. As one former lieutenant recalled, "in spite of his age, or perhaps to prove that he was not old, he had a yen for stunting dangerously... He was contemptuous of some well established regulations and soon was in trouble with the department." First Lieutenant Carlton F. Bond replaced Eagle in February 1929 and remained at Pearson until 1933.⁶⁵ Record flights continued and on October 8, 1929, four

⁶³ Over 5,000 crossed by streetcar. Although the Vancouver streetcars closed in 1927, they continued crossing the Interstate Bridge until 1940.

⁶⁴ Sharon, *Vancouver and Clark County*, 45-46, 27.

⁶⁵ Jones, "Pearson Field: Lieutenant Oakley D. Kelly," 307-308; Jones, "Grand Opening of Vancouver Municipal Field," 316. Lieutenant Paul E. Burrows replaced Lieutenant Bond in 1933 and remained until 1938 when Bond returned. In 1940, Bond was replaced by 1st Lieutenant J.H. Cox who stayed at Pearson until the field closed due to war preparations.

Russian fliers made a forced landing at Pearson Field in their two-motored, all metal, low-winged monoplane, *Land of the Soviets*. The aviators were on a good will trip to Oakland, California, but developed oil trouble, forcing them to halt in Vancouver. Field commander Lieutenant Bond stationed soldiers around the plane to protect it from spectators.⁶⁶ When asked why they did not land at the nearby Swan Island airport in the larger city of Portland, the Russian aviators replied, “this is soldaden – army field.”⁶⁷

The significance of the military space encountered by the aviators would heighten as outside forces soon altered the world economic and social structure. By the eve of the Great Depression, Vancouver remained primarily agricultural with its military post and small export businesses along the waterfront providing additional economic benefits. The aviation field on the Reserve provided a community gathering site, and in 1930, the city of Vancouver dedicated the Chamber of Commerce Field the Vancouver Municipal Airport. Throughout the day, commercial aircraft carried passengers on sightseeing trips and joy rides for one cent per pound, with a 100 pound minimum. Edith Foltz was named “Queen of the air show” when she won the dead-stick landing against a group of men. Her black and orange biplane came to rest almost exactly on the mark.⁶⁸ Foltz was among the women who began flying at Pearson in the late 1920s, among them Leah Hing, a young Chinese woman who learned to fly from Tex Rankin.

Vancouver in 1930 remained a relatively small town of 15,766, over one-half male, and approximately 1,300 foreign born. Of those 1,300, 184 came from Germany and twenty-eight from Italy. It was a youthful population, with just a few more than a thousand people over age sixty-five, and it was primarily Caucasian – ninety-one percent.

⁶⁶ Sharon, *Vancouver and Clark County*, 82.

⁶⁷ Jones, “Russian Fliers Land at Pearson Field,” 313.

According to census records, nineteen African Americans lived in the community, with fifty American Indians in the county, sixty-three Chinese, eighty-seven Japanese, and nineteen Mexicans. Only fifty-eight of those classified as “other races” lived within the city. A little over half of the men, fifty-six percent, were married, and sixty-three percent of women were wedded. The population remained fairly literate – only four percent could not read.⁶⁹

Depression, Development, and the Port of Vancouver

The era known as the Great Depression entered the American consciousness slowly. When President Herbert Hoover was inaugurated on March 4, 1929, the country looked on expectantly: “[w]e were in a mood for magic,” wrote journalist Anne O’Hare McCormick. “We had summoned a great engineer to solve our problems for us.”⁷⁰ Hoover immediately addressed the agricultural depression that had persisted for nearly a decade by creating the Federal Farm Board to sustain and stabilize commodities markets. However, in October 1929 when the New York stock market crashed stock prices plummeted. Still, the crash did not immediately constitute a depression – only about two-and-a-half percent of the population owned stock in 1929. But the hard hit business community slowed production, eventually leading to mass unemployment and Hoover

⁶⁸ Walker, *A Century Airborne*, 41; Jones, “Grand Opening of Vancouver Municipal Field,” 316.

⁶⁹ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Prepared under the Supervision of Leon E. Truesdell, Chief Statistician For Population, *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930: Population, Volume III, Part 2, Reports By States, Showing The Composition And Characteristics of the Population For Counties, Cities, and Townships Or Other Minor Civil Divisions, Montana-Wyoming* (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1932). “Table 12 - “Population by Age, Color, Nativity, and Sex, For Cities of 10,000 or More: 1930,” 1222; “Table 15 – Composition of the Population, for Cities of 10,000 or More: 1930,” 1229; “Table 17 – Indians, Chinese, and Japanese, 1910 to 1930, and Mexicans, 1930, For Counties and For Cities of 25,000 or More,” 1231; “Table 18, Foreign-Born White By Country of Birth, For Counties And For Cities of 10,000 Or More: 1930,” 1231.

⁷⁰ Anne O’Hare McCormick, in Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear*, 43.

did not believe in direct relief to the unemployed. Instead, he attempted to stimulate business through a top-down economic strategy. Over the next two years import tariffs increased, international banks defaulted on loans from the First World War and consequently banks collapsed. Hoover's attempts to stimulate private business rather than addressing the plight of the people ultimately failed.⁷¹

As the weight of the Great Depression descended nationwide, its effects also hit the Pacific Northwest. Lumber exports declined, manufacturing decreased, mortgages foreclosed, and unemployment and homelessness raged throughout the region. At the same time, scores of Dustbowl refugees headed to the Northwest – an estimated 10,000 families in 1936 – and unemployment continued to rise. At a time when little public relief existed and few had heard of unemployment insurance, many came to the conclusion that only the federal government could solve the nation's economic problems and resulting social crises.

The nation's rescuer was Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the New Deal Democrat elected in 1932. Roosevelt would remain president through the Great Depression and well into World War II, and would also visit the Pacific Northwest three times during his presidency. His first visit took place in 1934 when he toured Bonneville Dam, the second in 1937 when he dedicated Timberline Lodge, and the third visit brought him to Vancouver in 1942 when he toured the first western plant of the Aluminum Company of America. According to historian Carlos Schwantes, "Except during the First World War, the federal government had never been so involved in so many aspects of American life as during the era of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal."⁷² For the Pacific

⁷¹ Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear*, 39-44.

⁷² Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest*, 302-305.

Northwest and for Vancouver the New Deal brought comprehensive development of the Columbia River, emerging trade and transportation systems through federal funding and civil works projects. The New Deal also initiated numerous federal programs important to Vancouver, including the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration.

Columbia River Development and the Port of Vancouver

Among the New Deal projects initiated by President Roosevelt, Columbia River development had the most significant regional impact. In 1927, the Army Corps of Engineers surveyed the Columbia River and developed a comprehensive plan that would ultimately produce fourteen major dams on the river. At the same time, local trade and transportation developed with federal funding that widened and deepened the Columbia. Big dams, beginning with Bonneville and Grand Coulee, also provided construction jobs up and down the river for years to come. Each of the dams had multiple purposes – hydroelectric power, navigation, transportation, and irrigation, and each had its own particular justification. Bonneville, begun in 1933 as a hydroelectric project built by the Army Corps of Engineers, began operating in 1938. The Bureau of Reclamation began to build Grand Coulee, essentially a vast reclamation project, in 1934. They completed the dam in 1941. Critics of the projects included fish biologists and native people, who recognized the dams would impact anadromous fish runs.⁷³ Although the Corps of Engineers put fish ladders at the lower river Bonneville Dam, the upriver Grand Coulee Dam, “the biggest thing on earth,” went on line without them. The dam backed up a huge

⁷³ Anadromous fish spawn in rivers, swim downriver to the ocean to live for four to five years, and return to their birthplace to reproduce and die.

reservoir into Canada – Lake Roosevelt – eliminating more than 1,000 miles of fish habitat. Economic critics asserted that the Northwest did not have a high enough population to justify harnessing the power of the Columbia, a river with enough hydro capacity to supply forty percent of the nation’s hydropower.⁷⁴

However, dam building provided jobs and the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce quickly recognized that dams on the Columbia also provided economic opportunity for communities. People flocked from around the region to work on Bonneville Dam, and others came from around the nation. Meanwhile, Vancouver officials recognized the potential to create a significant link in what would become a vast shipping empire. While hydroelectric power provided the main justification for Bonneville Dam, Vancouver focused on transportation. The Bonneville sea locks would enhance shipping on the river and expansion of the port would allow newer, deeper water ships to come to Vancouver. By 1931, the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce demanded quick action by the Army Corps of Engineers on a local survey to deepen and widen the channel between Vancouver and the Willamette River and the federal government cut a twenty-five-foot deep, 300-foot wide channel to the port of Vancouver. In 1933, the artery extended to twenty-eight feet with two turning basins, 2,000 feet long by 800 feet wide, one in front of Terminal No. 1 and the other in front of the elevator dock area. Beginning in 1933, the port planned a new terminal, backed by \$190,000 in bonds and federal funds. As the channel deepened, the Port of Vancouver diversified its industrial base, entering the grain

⁷⁴ Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest*, 306-308. For more about the history and issues surrounding Columbia River Dams and the impact to Columbia communities, native people and fish, see Richard White, *The Organic Machine* (Hill and Wang, 1995); William Dietrich, *Northwest Passage: The Great Columbia River* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995). For a bibliography of Columbia River resources and community histories connected to the dams, see the Center for Columbia River History Website, www.ccrh.org. For a history of Grand Coulee, see Paul Pitzer, *Grand Coulee: Harnessing a Dream* (Pullman, WA: Washington State University Press, 1994).

business by 1933, and improving cold storage facilities, railroad spurs, and other warehousing projects throughout the decade.⁷⁵

In May 1934, five members of the U.S. Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors visited the Port of Vancouver as part of an inspection tour of the Pacific Coast to review all federal rivers and harbors projects. Colonel William J. Barden headed the party that toured Vancouver industrial sites and Vancouver Lake. They also visited a new grain elevator construction project and inspected dockage at the Port of Vancouver. Later in the day they visited the Bonneville power and navigation dam site on the Columbia. In July, the chief engineer recommended a channel 300 feet wide and 30 feet deep from the mouth of the Willamette River to the Interstate Bridge, with two turning basins at a cost of \$140,000 – \$75,000 for dike construction and \$65,000 for dredging.⁷⁶ By 1935, the channel bottom lowered to thirty feet and in 1936, the turning basin extended to serve a new terminal – No. 2, creating a basin about 3,000 feet long, 800 feet wide at the upstream end and 1,700 feet wide at the downstream end. By the end of November, the port completed a \$315,000 dock, “Declared to be without superior and with few peers in its class on this river system.” On December 3, 1936, a “coming out party” for Terminal No. 2 assembled transportation chiefs and political figures such as Governor Clarence Martin, Congressman Martin Smith of Washington, and Senator McNary of Oregon. The Port expected that the dock would increase industrial expansion and the volume of waterborne commerce. Its warehouse stretched under the biggest roof in Vancouver, 120 feet wide by 740 feet long – 88,000 square feet of floor space. This

⁷⁵ *VC*, 24 April 1931; Mockford, “Historical Currents,” 81.

⁷⁶ *VC*, “Army Engineers Visit Vancouver then Bonneville,” 31 May 1934, 1; “Chief Engineer Urges 30-foot channel,” 20 July 1934, 1.

was a huge cargo storage capacity by contrast with the 32,000 square feet Terminal No. 1 warehouse.⁷⁷ The Vancouver *Columbian* described the dock's significance:

Doubling in importance these many attractions [including 3,300 automatic sprinklers in the warehouse] is the fact that the dock stands upon deep water unobstructed by a single bridge all the way to the sea. A channel 30 feet deep at low water and 300 feet wide leads to it from the mouth of the Willamette, and before it lies a turning basin 30 feet deep, 3000 feet long, 800 feet wide at its upper end and 1700 feet wide at the lower end. Completely free from the danger and inconvenience of passing through bridges, ships may now call at the dock and steam away again under their own power and without assistance of tugs if they choose.

Proximity to railroad lines and main highway truck routes, and suitability for industrial use made the new dock "a towering figure of importance to Vancouver's future."⁷⁸

As the federal government provided relief work programs like the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration, private industry developed, grounded in the federal infrastructure. Port growth had been "huge" since 1926 when the port took over Terminal No. 1. In 1936, the *Columbian* described port development:

Less than 15 years ago, the port was virtually unheard of. Today it values its properties at one million dollars; it owns its own roads, railroad trackage and water system; it has over 2,000 feet of dock space available to ships of virtually any size plying the Columbia river; it offers over 100,000 square feet of roofed and protected warehouse space for cargo handling; and it boasts the most unimpeded modern facilities on the Columbia.

Cargo movements have responded in proportion. It is only 16 years since the first tonnage records were kept. The port was rather proud of 4,500 tons for the year 1918. In 1936 single ship cargoes at the grain elevator have surpassed that figure several times. Three hundred and eighty-seven vessels called in 1935 at the port dock and at the DuBois, DuBois-Matlack and grain elevator docks. The total tonnage swept up the 160,000 mark.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ *VC*, 21 November 1936, 9-10.

⁷⁸ *VC*, 21 November 1936, 16.

⁷⁹ *VC*, 21 November 1936, 9, 16.

The Milk Wars

By 1932, millions of workers were jobless and protests and violence erupted throughout the nation as farmers and industrial workers staged demonstrations. In Vancouver, economic woes manifested in various and seemingly unexpected ways: Clark County's "milk wars"; a call for a general walkout in the 1934 longshoremen's strike; and WPA workers demonstrating against cutbacks at the end of the decade. In April 1931, as the economy worsened, Clark County dairymen protested a milk grading process connected to a new Portland ordinance. The Portland regulation required a grading classification of A, B, C, or D, according to sanitation processes and equipment. Eighty percent of Clark County dairymen sold their milk in the "Portland milkshed" where the new ordinance brought a Battle Ground dairy man, E.F. Brock, to blows with Portland inspector Paul Richter on April 23, 1931 when Richter lowered the dairyman's grade to D standing.

The grading problem stemmed from increased mechanization and monitoring, decreased federal funding for tuberculosis testing, and surplus production. Most Clark County dairymen worked without refrigeration, using running water in their cooling rooms. Grade A milk required a temperature less than fifty degrees. Thus, many Clark County dairymen were automatically downgraded. Another problem stemmed from reduced federal funds. When TB levels successfully fell to less than one-half of one percent, federal testing funds stopped, yet the TB testing requirement remained. Untested milk received an automatic D grade. The crux of the milk wars that erupted during the summer of 1931 came from surplus milk production outside of Clark County. While the Portland inspector visited Clark County farms to grade the local milk, some Portland

distributors imported lower grade milk from outside of the region. The “bootleg” milk distributors placed grade A and B caps on lower grade milk, which they then sold for less. The Clark County dairymen who had maintained legal standards and achieved high standards had to charge higher prices in order to break even. For those receiving low grades, the combined demand for improvements and unfair practices made the milk bootlegging unbearable. The Brock trial brought this milk battle into public light. Brock garnered the support of so many farmers and dairymen “that even a sardine packer could not get half of the spectators into the small justice court,” reported the *Vancouver Columbian* on April 28, 1931. Because of the sensitivity of the milk situation, both sides reached an agreement and ultimately did not try the case.⁸⁰

Meanwhile, when Clark County dairymen banded together to form a Dairy Cooperative that summer the milk wars began in earnest. The cooperative association protested milk sales to Portland distributors and demanded one-half of the profits. During a five-day “milk war” begun on August 1, 1931, Clark County dairymen dumped thousands of gallons of milk alongside the highway and into the Columbia River from the Interstate Bridge where a blockade prevented transporting milk into Oregon. Hundreds of “determined dairymen, clad in overalls” guarded the Washington approach to the Interstate Bridge, with “railroad ties, cord wood and spiked planks...on hand to be thrown in front of any trucks, the drivers of which were brave enough to attempt to run the gauntlet.” As dairymen guarded the bridge the milk house on the Martin farm in Woodland exploded, with enough force to rattle windows in the nearby town. The explosion destroyed Martin’s cooling equipment and ruined seventeen cans of milk, or

⁸⁰ *VC*, “Dairyman Comes to Blows With Milk Inspector,” 23 April 1931; “Many Dairies Are Degraded,” 24 April 1931; “Court Crowded As Brock Case Given Muffler,” 28 April 1931.

eighty gallons worth. Martin, a “blacklisted” dairyman, was not part of the cooperative and had continued to sell milk in Portland. The organizers chased down other blacklisted milkmen on country roads when they tried to carry the liquid out of the county. Most milk scabs stood aside as the warring milkmen seized milk, pouring it onto county roads and into the river. Within a few days, the *Columbian* announced free milk to the poor and local creameries stepped up their butter production to avoid waste. On August 4, the milk war raged “fiercer than ever.” Someone hit cooperative member Claude Mariner on the head with a lead pipe during a battle to take over a milk truck on its way to Longview. When the Republican governor, Roland Hartley,⁸¹ threatened to send in the National Guard and deemed the dairymen “a bunch of hoodlums” community sentiment heightened in favor of the milk producers. Some community members sympathized so much that they provided coffee at the blockade and took turns as part of the patrol gang. Cooperative members became more determined than ever that they would not cease the blockade until Portland distributors met their demands. The local sheriff, R.E. McCrite, told the governor that Vancouver police had the situation under control.⁸²

During the same week, milk producers gained a victory when Commissioner Mann of Portland ordered the arrest of distributors using grade A caps on grade C milk, a practice that had contributed to the milk surplus and low prices. With Mariner in the Vancouver hospital in a coma, the violence continued and the governor sent in the state patrol to guard the Interstate Bridge. Meanwhile, the dairymen moved to the county

⁸¹ Carlos Schwantes describes Hartley as “a mean-spirited antilabor timber baron from Everett,” who “gave the period [his governorship lasted from 1924-1932] a rancorous political tone.” *Pacific Northwest*, 296.

⁸² *VC*, “Anti-co-op Dairy Blasted: Milk War is Raging in County: Contents of Several Trucks Dumped by Producers,” 1 August 1931; “Farmers Shut Out All Milk: Blockade in Force At Bridge, Portland’s Supply Is Stopped by Producers Despite Efforts to Break Through,” 3 August 1931; “Free Milk Given For Distribution at Fire Station,” 4 August 1931; “Hartley Assails Farmers: Federal Agents Disperse Bridge Blockades, Governor Calls Dairymen ‘Hoodlums.’ Producers Firmer Than Ever” 4 August 1931, 1.

roads. By August 4, several hundred Woodland community members voted to boycott all Portland products and turned back several bread trucks. Local bakeries stepped up production in support of the dairymen and the Portland boycott proved successful. By August 6, the *Columbian* announced: "It's Over Now, But It Worked." The milk war ended and Portland distributors agreed to the following: 1) A minimum price of \$2.17 ½ per hundred pounds of milk; 2) purchase of milk only from members of the Dairy Cooperative Association; 3) an administrator from Oregon State College to settle price differences; 4) payment to the association of the difference in price between non-member shippers and cooperative members while fulfilling existing independent contracts. Under the new agreement, the cooperative would control surplus milk and Portland would no longer be able to obtain milk from outside the area at a grade less than B. The following day the "hoodlums" thanked the *Columbian* for its support, and also "Governor Hartley for his despicable part in this fight...He has shown us just how he stands and when he starts campaigning for votes the 'hoodlums' in this county won't forget." Nor did they. The Democrat Clarence Martin won the race for governor in 1932.⁸³

The milk wars were just the beginning of the labor strife of the 1930s, both nationwide and locally. As the economy worsened during the summer of 1932, thousands of veterans of the World War I American Expeditionary Forces descended upon Washington D.C., demanding cash bonuses the government was holding until 1945. When Congress denied their request many left, but thousands remained, camped out with their families near the capitol. On July 28, 1932, District of Columbia Police attempted

⁸³ *VC*, "Milk Producers Gain Big Point"; "D Grade Dairies Must Mark Milk," 4 August 1931, 1; "Farmer Brained in Clash: Milk War Leads to Violence, Dairyman in Hospital With Broken Skull"; "Shotgun Fired in Mixup at Truck," 5 August 1931, 1, 4; "It's Over Now, But It Worked," 6 August 1931, 1, 7; "Clark

to forcefully evict the bonus marchers and a riot ensued in which two of the marchers were killed and police called in federal troops. At the head of the mounted cavalymen who descended on the marchers was Douglas MacArthur. The soon-to-be-famous soldier quickly exceeded his orders to capture the buildings and contain the marchers at their site on Anacostia Flats on the outskirts of Washington D.C. Riding in with bayonets drawn and tear gas, MacArthur's troops proceeded to oust the marchers from Anacostia Flats, then torched their makeshift shacks. Public outrage enveloped the nation as visions of the degraded veterans captured the American imagination. Something had to be done. The election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt brought some hope to the American public, but a decade of strained labor relations would be followed by a war before the nation would experience economic prosperity.⁸⁴

Organizing the Civilian Conservation Corps – Roosevelt's Tree Troopers

During his first 100 days in office, President Roosevelt created a series of national relief measures and new agencies with now familiar acronyms, such as the FDIC, WPA, PWA, CCC, and many more. The Emergency Conservation Work program (ECW), or Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) as it was later called, was among the first programs created in a special congressional session called in March 1933. The CCC had a two-fold goal. The program would “build men and forests” by addressing the nation’s conservation needs and putting men to work. On March 6, 1933, Roosevelt called a meeting of high government officials to create the CCC. He planned to put 500,000

Dairymen Thank Columbian,” 6 August 1931, 1, 7. Schwantes, *Pacific Northwest*, 311. Schwantes points out that Democrats swept the previously Republican state in the 1932 election.

⁸⁴ Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear*, 92. For more about the “Bonus Marchers,” see Studs Terkel, *Hard Times: An Oral History of the Great Depression* (New York: New Press, 2000).

unemployed youth to work in the nation's forests, parks, and rangelands within the next two months. The departments of Agriculture and Interior would provide work projects and personnel to manage the workers. The Department of Labor would coordinate enrollees and the U.S. Army, the only agency with the mobilizing power to organize such a large number of youth, would run the camps.⁸⁵ On March 21, 1933, President Roosevelt sent a message to Congress:

I propose to create a Civilian Conservation Corps to be used in simple work, not interfering with normal employment, and confining itself to forestry, the prevention of soil erosion, flood control, and similar projects.

More important, however, than the material gains, will be the moral and spiritual value of such work. The overwhelming majority of unemployed Americans, who are now walking the streets and receiving private or public relief would infinitely prefer to work. We can take a vast army of these unemployed out into healthful surroundings. We can eliminate to some extent at least the threat that enforced idleness brings to spiritual and moral stability. It is not a panacea for all the unemployment, but it is an essential step in this emergency...

I estimate the 250,000 men can be given temporary employment by early summer if you will give me the authority to proceed within the next two week.⁸⁶

Roosevelt received congressional approval on March 31 and by April 7, 1933 the first enrollee signed up.

The CCC enrolled young men, veterans, American Indians, African Americans, and even some women. It also provided employment for skilled craftsmen through the managing agencies, the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, the National Park Service, and the Soil Conservation Service. Initially, Congress authorized a call to enroll 250,000 "boys" by July 1, 1933. These young men would be unmarried youth between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five whose families were on relief. They would receive \$1.00 per day, retaining five for themselves with the remaining \$25.00 sent to their families by

⁸⁵ Stan Cohen, *The Tree Army: A Pictorial History of the Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942* (Missoula, Montana: Pictorial Histories Publishing Company, 1980), 6.

government allotment. The army would feed them, clothe them, and house them, while the managing agencies put them to work. On April 14, chronic unemployment and soil erosion on reservations led Congress to authorize enrollment of 14,000 American Indians. On April 22, Congress authorized enrollment of 24,000 Local Experienced Men, or “LEM.” The LEM had to pass a physical examination, but were not restricted by age or marital status and they “proved to be the backbone of the new companies.” Many CCC enrollees later credited these older men with teaching them not only about work, but also about life. On May 11, Congress authorized enrollment of 24,000 veterans of World War I, a partial solution to the Bonus Army trouble of 1932. These men, in their thirties and forties, would occupy their own conservation camps. African American enrollment was not authorized separately, but nearly 200,000 Blacks enrolled during the ten-year life of the CCC. Initially, integrated camps brought African Americans to the North and Northwest, but after the first few years of the CCC the military segregated camps. Although nearly all camps were male, the military established some women’s camps in New Hampshire and New York.⁸⁷

The first step in enrollment was induction and Vancouver Barracks became one of two regional induction centers, with the other at Fort Lewis. The War Department enrolled men selected by the Labor Department and the Veteran’s Administration and was responsible for “reconditioning, organization, administration, transportation, supply, sanitation, medical care, hospitalization, discipline, welfare and education.” The War Department also had responsibility for constructing work camps, including necessary

⁸⁶ Franklin Delano Roosevelt in Cohen, *The Tree Army*, 6.

⁸⁷ Vancouver Barracks, Ninth Corps Area, *Official Annual, Civilian Conservation Corps* (Vancouver Barracks, Washington: Vancouver Barracks Headquarters, Ninth Corps Area, January 1, 1938), 28; Cohen, *The Tree Army*, 8.

utilities, meaning that CCC boys constructed their own camps financed by the army. The boys had to pass a physical examination, and in the early days of the CCC they spent two full weeks training at an army installation. The army quickly lifted the two-week requirement, and the induction process slowed to between two and three days. After arriving at the induction center, the enrollee would receive army issue supplies. He would also receive basic personal supplies and most importantly for the newcomer, he would eat a hearty meal. As one former CCC boy recalled, “The main thing was to get a job. Get something to eat. I had been hungry. I mean I have been really hungry...When you’re really hungry, ain’t nothing else matters.”⁸⁸

As soon as Congress created the CCC in April 1933, Vancouver Barracks commander Brigadier General Stanley Ford went to work organizing the district headquarters. The administrative staff formed with Regular Army personnel and 7th Infantry commander Colonel Henry Wells prepared to supervise the reconditioning camps. The Ninth Corps area had responsibility for organizing three sub-districts, each with its own reserve commander, and decentralizing the “multitudinous” details of command. The Vancouver District CCC embraced a 44,100 square mile area in the states of Oregon and Washington. The Ninth Corps District housed more than thirty companies and more than 12 million acres of forest land during its nine-year existence. The Astoria sub-district included camps at Warrenton, Saddle Mountain, Cathlamet, Nehalem, Canby, Reehers, Trask, and Sunset. The Hood River sub-district included camps at Mill Creek,

⁸⁸ *CCC Annual*, 23, 25; Carroll Aust, interview by Donna Sinclair, 22 January 2001, Gifford Pinchot National Forest Heritage Collection, Trout Lake, Washington, Tape 1, Side 2, transcript page 14. Copy held by VNHRT. For more interviews with former CCC enrollees at Vancouver Barracks and on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, see Sinclair, Donna and Richard McClure, eds. *No Goldbricking Here”: Oral Histories of the CCC in the Columbia National Forest, 1933-1942* (Vancouver, Washington: Heritage Program, Gifford Pinchot National Forest and History Department, Portland State University, August 2003). Portions of this text have been adapted from the introduction to “*No Goldbricking Here.*”

Zig Zag, Hemlock, Goldendale, Cascade Locks, Frederick Butte, Sisters, Simnasho, Moro, and Beacon Rock. The Eugene sub-district included camps at Belknap, Reedsport, Woahink Lake, Mill City, Arboretum, Cascadia, Triangle Lake, and Silver Creek Falls.⁸⁹

During the initial organization, the chairman of Oregon's State Relief Committee announced that the state's CCC quota would be 2,000 men. Washington State would recruit 2,500. To make room in Vancouver for the incoming recruits, companies D and M of the 7th Infantry evacuated their barracks and the army set up tents in the Camp Hurlburt CMTC area to take care of the overflow. By the end of April, hundreds of young men had arrived at Vancouver Barracks where they were immediately fed, bathed and examined. After passing the physical examination, the army issued clothing. Their outfits came from re-conditioned World War I Quartermaster supplies, and included the following: "three woolen undershirts, three pairs of drawers, four pairs of wool sox, two pairs of shoes, two shirts, two pairs of denim pants, two denim jumpers, a hat, a belt, a raincoat, two woolen blankets, and the customary mess kits, barracks bags, pillow and so forth." Recognizing that many of the young men were indigent, the army also authorized credit at the PX for purchase of tobacco and toiletry items.⁹⁰ Processing continued, with hundreds of enrollees arriving in Vancouver daily. On May 5, 1933, 800 applicants enrolled and the army rejected thirty-seven. During the first enrollment period, there were twenty-seven companies in the district, most having come from Fort Sheridan, Illinois in the Sixth Corps District. Among the Illinois troops were a number of African

⁸⁹ *CCC Annual*, 25, 15-16.

⁹⁰ *CCC Annual*, 26; *VC*, "Detailed Instructions For Handling of Forest Workers At Local Camp Include Complete Outfitting," 11 April 1933, 1; "Barracks Selected As Training Camp For Eight Hundred," 10 April, 1933, 1, 2.

Americans who were stationed at camps throughout the region.⁹¹ During the following years, the number of camps waxed and waned as district boundaries changed, with as many as fifty-five camps in the Ninth Corps Vancouver District at one point in 1935.

Initially, Regular Army officers commanded the companies assisted by reserve officers. Gradually, the army placed reserve officers in command and appointed them to staff positions, so that by 1938 they composed almost the entire company and district staffs.⁹² General Stanley Ford officially assumed command of the district on May 9, 1933, but soon departed for the Philippines and Colonel Wells assumed command.

Organizing the CCC was a tremendous administrative feat. Officers of the 7th Infantry chose camp sites and supervised their construction, and through the spring and summer of 1933 CCC enrollees from all over the nation poured into Vancouver before heading by train and truck to new camp locations. The Finance Department also worked night and day. By July 1933, the Finance Office employed twelve CCC enrollees in its office, many of whom had never operated an adding machine or seen a treasury check. The regular army men in the Finance Department trained the young men, helping them to gain new and important skills. In addition to paying for CCC activities, the Finance Department disbursed funds to the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, National Parks, State Parks, the Bureau of Reclamation and Bureau of Biological Survey. On May 16, 1933 Local Experienced Men became eligible for enrollment in Vancouver. By June 3, 1933 over 4,000 men had joined the CCC in Vancouver, including 535 LEM. These first CCC

⁹¹ For more about African Americans and the CCC in the Pacific Northwest, contact Richard H. McClure, Heritage Program Manager, Gifford Pinchot and Mt. Hood National Forests.

⁹² *CCC Annual*, 27, 30. The District Commander, Executive Officer, Surgeon, and Finance Officer were Regular Army.

enrollees spent the summer in rapid construction activities, but a lumber shortage, lack of skilled workmen, and even a summer snow at one of the camps hampered building.

CCC administration so taxed Vancouver Barracks that within the first few years the army separated the Quartermaster department into five groups – the Sales Division, Administration, Procurement, Transportation Property, and Motor Transportation – to meet the imposing needs of thousands of enrollees. Difficulties included transporting lumber and supplies to the camps and the refusal of some contractors to deliver goods. During the first few months, the army relied on old World War I three and three-quarter ton trucks. The monstrous trucks moved slowly, making delivery of goods to far away camps very difficult. In May 1933 the army created a new District Motor Pool and by the following month shiny new O. D. trucks, capable of going at least sixty miles per hour, were sandwiched between nearly 700 Forest Service stake trucks. With the new trucks and CCC enrollees as drivers, “eating was no longer a matter of corned beef, canned tomatoes and hard bread,” recalled Captain Frederic Wolfer. Along with the new trucks came modern ambulances, speedy and painted with distinction, but without sirens.”⁹³

The first year of the CCC continued to prove a difficult administrative feat for Vancouver Barracks as a flood in Kelso, Washington, a blizzard at Camp High Rock, and camp organization taxed the army to extremes. By October, however, companies began moving to permanent winter campsites. The following month, the district staff reorganized making it independent of the post headquarters staff. Supplying food was the main challenge at the inception of the CCC. Through the years of the CCC (1933-1942), although the program adopted the army’s ration allowance to provide well-balanced

⁹³ *CCC Annual*, 43, 34.

meals, subsistence rations changed in accordance with the local economy.⁹⁴ As many recalled, the early days of the CCC were characterized by too much “canned Willie,” stewed tomatoes and hard tack because of irregular deliveries. Subsequently, as the CCC organization regularized and separated from the overload placed on regular army administration, the food became one of the things most fondly recalled by former CCC enrollees. At Camp Hemlock in the Columbia National Forest (now the Gifford Pinchot National Forest), CCC enrollees recalled how camp cook Dutch Halle could stretch a meal and make anything taste good. The food at Vancouver Barracks was good too. The 1935 Christmas spread consisted of oyster cocktail, combination salad, celery hearts, pickles, olives, roast turkey, oyster dressing, giblet gravy, cranberry sauce, candied sweet potatoes, Virginia baked ham, green peas, mashed potatoes, parker house rolls, lemon cream pie, mince pie, Neapolitan ice cream, fruit cake, coconut cake, coffee, beer, nuts, candy, fruits, cigars, and cigarettes.⁹⁵

CCC enrollees also benefited from medical and dental care. The army made arrangements for hospitalization in civilian hospitals when necessary, in Veteran’s Administration facilities, and at the Vancouver Post Hospital. Each camp had a doctor on site, but the medical corps worked from Vancouver Barracks and those with emergencies came to town. The army focused on preventive care, providing healthy food, sanitary quarters, and even pneumonia shots for the young men. Cleanliness was an important part of CCC moral training. Pat Sutherland, a CCC recruit from Vancouver worked in the woods, in an office, and as a dental assistant during his one year CCC stint. In a May 2002 interview, he recalled:

⁹⁴ *CCC Annual*, 42. Initially the army allotted .27 cents per day. The 1937 rate was .52 cents.

⁹⁵ *CCC Annual*, 41; “Seventh Infantry Program.”

If you had somebody that didn't like water or didn't take baths, didn't keep himself clean, they would go right to him and talk to him about that. And it was an essential part of living there...And dental hygiene was a part of that. The fellow would walk up to you and say, "Where's your toothbrush?" And you were expected to use it regularly.⁹⁶

Dentists spent approximately two weeks in each camp every six months so that each enrollee would have the chance for dental care and education twice yearly.⁹⁷

Although the army provided free dental care such as fillings, a charge existed for cleaning. Sutherland became a traveling dental assistant for Lieutenant Rogers, recalling that he received twenty-five cents per recruit for cleaning teeth. Rogers received the other half. One of his main tasks as dental assistant was pumping the foot-operated drill:

You pumped your foot up and down on it, and that was how you made the drill go. And one of my jobs would be to stand there and pump this thing. It was a series of cables and wires that went up, and you would pump that, and the doctor would say, "too fast" you know [or] "too slow." And then the other thing that he used that you wouldn't find now was a chisel. And he would drill into the tooth and the part that he would have to get rid of, you'd hold the chisel by that and then you'd tap it with this little tiny hammer, and you'd chip a part of the tooth away.⁹⁸

The army also provided religious opportunities, holding at least one service per week in camp and transporting CCC enrollees to various churches. Before meals, the men said grace, a custom the army gave southern enrollees credit for. Providing religious instruction was among the early difficulties faced by the CCC. With one army chaplain – Major J. Burt Webster – and twenty-seven camps, it quickly became clear that the chaplain would need help. Although he appealed to the Portland Ministerial Association for assistance, few replied because they lacked transportation and viewed the CCC as a

⁹⁶ Pat Sutherland, interview by Brent Allison, May 6, 2002 (Trout Lake, Washington: Gifford Pinchot National Forest Heritage Program), Tape 1, Side 2, transcript page 18.

⁹⁷ *CCC Annual*, 42.

⁹⁸ *CCC Annual*, 19.

temporary relief measure. By the end of the first CCC summer, August 1933, Webster received two assistant chaplains to help him. One ministered to the Catholic population and the other to the Jewish boys. After it became obvious that the CCC would be around for a while, volunteer ministers stepped in and the army transported the civilian clergy to far-off camps in their new trucks.⁹⁹

The army also provided education opportunities to CCC enrollees. They could take extension courses through the University of Oregon, Oregon State College, and the University of California. Most education courses, through the universities, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Soil Conservation Service, were practically based. The CCC provided opportunities for those without a general education to finish grade school, to learn to read, and to learn the fundamentals of agricultural engineering, agronomy, forestry, soil chemistry, and principles of soil and water conservation. The Vancouver District policy was “to use the available facilities to prepare enrollees for civic effectiveness, that is, for employability and citizenship.” The army articulated what it considered the most effective citizenship lessons:

The men learn to cooperate in work and recreation. They learn clean habits, learn to safeguard their health, learn to curb their personal desires in favor of the welfare of the group, they learn sportsmanship on the athletic field, learn respect for authority – in short, they learn to live with a minimum of friction in a community, the first requirement of citizenship, and learn it the best way, that is, by doing it.¹⁰⁰

The “boys” of the CCC were sent to work in the forests and pasturelands of the Pacific Northwest, and work they did. In addition to their “Tree-Trooper” nickname, the CCC boys were called the “We Can Do It” boys. They lived in 200-man army style camps where they learned cooperation and work skills. A typical day for a CCC boy

⁹⁹ *CCC Annual*, 44, 45.

would be to awake to the sound of reveille. After morning cleanup, he would eat breakfast, attend a flag-raising and head to his work assignment. The kinds of work performed by CCC boys varied according to need. The Department of Agriculture ran approximately seventy-five percent of the CCC camps, employing young men in national, state, or private forests under the U.S. Forest Service. Under direction of LEM, the CCC boys of the Northwest became known for their high quality, distinctive buildings marked by intricate rock work, and fine carpentry. Timberline Lodge, constructed by the CCC and WPA on Mount Hood remains a fine example of the craftsmanship and skill of the CCC. The variety of jobs conducted by CCC boys in the Pacific Northwest included building fire trails, bridges, recreation areas, beautification of state and national parks, water development, eradicating poisonous plants, dam construction, grading water courses, and planting grass on the Pacific coastline to halt sand dunes. Where the CCC boys encountered ponderosa pine forest, they peeled and burned beetle infested trees. At campgrounds, they built shelters, fireplaces, and pipelines for running water. On the open ranges, they stocked lakes with fish and built fences. Those involved with the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) worked in erosion control on both cultivated and range land, and on the beaches of the Pacific coast. At the Moro and Goldendale camps, the CCC boys constructed check dams and graded gullies, relocated fences and planted trees. The Simnasho Camp, located on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation dealt primarily with range improvement. Enrollees developed springs and water holes, built stock corrals and drift fences, and seeded a considerable amount of acreage. They also built a forty-five foot high, 450-foot long dam. At Warrenton, under

¹⁰⁰ *CCC Annual*, 46, 25, 44.

the SCS, enrollees stabilized drifting sand dunes, building picket fences and planting grasses.¹⁰¹

When the CCC boys arrived, they found a “virtual tinderbox of southern Washington forests” due to the Yacolt Burn of 1902. Many of the young men spent their CCC days felling snags, thus removing a major fire hazard while building character.

According to the 1938 Vancouver Barracks CCC Annual, the CCC met its two-fold goal:

Ample evidence exists to show that while the Forest Service work projects were producing roads and trails, they also were turning out men – men who often started with flabby muscles and flabby minds, but who somehow, through the well organized physical effort and the man’s treatment received through discipline, caught a vision of better things – gained a new grip on life – became real men.”¹⁰²

The process of turning out “real men” occurred through hard work such as the tree falling described by Pat Sutherland. To fell trees CCC boys worked in squads of three men, with a crosscut saw and two spring boards, and each with his own falling axe. They also used a sledge hammer and two wedges. The foreman assigned the falling area:

...So, you two fellows worked on the tree, the other guy stood back and watched, because snags were dangerous insofar as you didn’t know how rotten they were, and how much of that top, or how many limbs might come falling. So you were on the lookout....

The procedure for cutting the tree is, you first cut a face in it. That was a notch. You sawed into the tree maybe a third of the way through and then you used your axe to cut an angle in there, and that became the face. Then you put your saw in the back about three inches or four inches above the bottom of the face. And then you sawed the tree off. When it got close to being ready to go you stuck a wedge in, and pounded on the wedge to tip the tree up, and tip it over.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ John Salmond, *The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942: A New Deal Case Study* (Durham, North Carolina: University Press, 1967), 121; *CCC Annual*, 22-25. The Soil Conservation Service was created in 1935.

¹⁰² *CCC Annual*, 23.

¹⁰³ Pat Sutherland interview, Tape 1, Side 1, transcript pp. 9-10.

Other fire protection efforts included road building to make fire prone areas more accessible, staffing and building fire lookouts, and stringing telephone lines throughout the forest for communication purposes. According to the army, “It was not a case of a few miles of roads or telephone line or a handful of fire lookouts. The tree troopers...built telephone line enough to stretch from Vancouver Barracks to Chicago; enough forest roads to have extended from Vancouver to San Francisco and return.” Besides fire prevention, they acted as “combat troops to fight the fire demon when it broke loose.” By 1938, they had built forty-five lookout towers and ninety-three lookout houses.¹⁰⁴

CCC boys took their work seriously, but thoughts of romance, recreation, and entertainment were rarely far from the minds of most tree troopers. Many young men met their future spouses at dances in local communities near their camps. Others came regularly to Vancouver Barracks where they could visit nearby Portland or cut loose in a Vancouver pool hall or movie theater. Swimming on the sandy beaches of the Columbia and visiting the amusement park at Jantzen Beach on the south side of the Interstate Bridge provided additional summer entertainment. Vancouver Barracks held an annual athletic meet under direction of the district welfare officer. The meet included track and field events, baseball matches, and the opportunity for a three-day visit to Portland and Vancouver amusement parks and theaters at special rates, and to attend Saturday night dances. The army held weekly boxing matches in the Victory Theatre, with large crowds of civilians, enrollees, and soldiers in attendance. Basketball and boxing were similarly

¹⁰⁴ *CCC Annual*, 22-23.

organized, with sub-district leagues and winning teams or individuals of each sub-district playing in finals at Vancouver.¹⁰⁵

On December 10, 1933, Brigadier General James K. Parsons assumed command of the Vancouver District, where he remained for the next three years. During his tenure at the barracks, General Parsons took charge of post improvement. The *Columbian* reported in June 1934: “One of the first things the general did when he took command months ago was to look at the sparse open places all over the post and give a snort of disapproval. Now thousands of native trees and numbers of flowering shrubs dot the once bare spots where bareness is not essential.” General Parsons also changed the colors of the uniformly black and white post buildings. “His own home is white with green trim, and an adjoining house is cream colored, and others will have still other color combinations. The post is going modern,” declared the newspaper.

In many ways, the CCC prompted modernization at Vancouver Barracks. Most of the equipment at the barracks, such as the Liberty trucks and even office machinery, was pre-World War I. During the CCC era, the finance department received a “sinograph,” ending writer’s cramp for the finance officer who could then sign five checks at a time. Communications, too, were updated with an additional twenty-three telephones averaging 200 local calls per day and an additional long distance trunk connection from the army switchboard to Pacific Telephone and Telegraph facilities at Vancouver, Washington. Direct radio service with the corps area also increased use of the Army Signal Corps Radio Station, WTI, and CCC camps received more than sixty radio receivers.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ *CCC Annual*, 45.

Tragedy Strikes Again

The military airfield remained an active military airfield during the 1930s, as CCC reserve officers flew around the Pacific Northwest for camp inspection and training. In 1932, the 20th Pursuit Group arrived at Pearson Field. The group, led by Major Clarence Tinker, consisted of thirty-six of the army's fastest fighting aircraft, Boeings. For three days, large crowds gathered at the field to watch the Pursuit Group perform aerobatics and fighting maneuvers. In 1934 President Roosevelt ordered the army to take over airmail service when he cancelled all airmail contracts because of allegations of fraud by U.S. airmail contractors. Lieutenant R.C. Lindsay of Vancouver Barracks began service in the region when he loaded up with 257 pounds of mail from Swan Island Airport and flew to Salt Lake City, Utah. By mid-March 1934, the president suspended airmail deliveries when Lieutenant H.G. Richardson became the eleventh army flier to die. By early May 1934, the president rescinded his order for the army to take over airmail delivery due to "many crackups by the army fliers." None of the army mailmen from Vancouver had crashed, although one had landed his plane in the Columbia River.¹⁰⁷

However, tragedy hit Vancouver Barracks on Thursday August 29, 1935 when 7th Infantry captain Harry W. Killpack and Lieutenant Wistar Rosenburgh of Portland crashed in an army plane. Captain Killpack, who had been at Vancouver Barracks for over three years, and had been involved with CCC work from its beginning, was on duty as the supply officer of the Vancouver Barracks CCC District. He and Rosenburgh flew

¹⁰⁶ *CCC Annual*, 29, 43, 44; *VC*, "Hey! What's This? Living Quarters at Barracks Go Modern"; Color Scheme Allowed in House Painting," 28 June 1934, 1.

¹⁰⁷ Jones, "The Municipal Field," 320; *VC*, "Air Armada to Visit Here: 45 or 67 Planes From U.S. Army To Stop June 6," 1 May 1931, 1, 7; Sharon, *Vancouver and Clark County*, 84.

from Vancouver Barracks on a Reconnaissance and inspection tour, stopping at Bend, Oregon on August 28 to inspect a proposed site for a CCC camp. Rosenburgh, an air corps reserve pilot stationed permanently at Pearson Field, had been an all-around athlete at the University of Oregon and captain of the track team there in 1929. Two months before the crash, Rosenburgh married Kathryn Lynch of Portland. The barracks community mourned the loss of the two men when the plane, piloted by Lieutenant Rosenburgh, stalled about 150 feet in the air then came crashing to the ground. Rosenburgh's father, waiting at the Prineville airport, fatefully witnessed the accident in which both men died instantly.¹⁰⁸

The thirty-eight year-old, 5'7", blue-eyed Harry Killpack, had recently been promoted from lieutenant to captain when he died, leaving his thirty-three year-old wife and four children to fend for themselves in the depression era economy. Harry Killpack, Jr. later recalled that in the midst of mourning, the family was "invited to vacate" military quarters.¹⁰⁹ When the regimental commander announced Lieutenant Killpack's death, he commended his patriotic service and extended sympathy to the family:

It is with the deepest regret that the regimental commander announces the death of Captain Harry W. Killpack, 7th Infantry...

Captain Killpack was born in California on 8 April 1897. He first entered the army on 3 November 1916, serving as private, corporal, and sergeant in the 15th Infantry and the 31st Infantry. He was appointed a 2d lieutenant of infantry on 3 September 1918, was promoted to 1st lieutenant on 1 July 1920, and received his commission as a captain on 1 October 1934. Immediately following the World War he served with the 27th Infantry in the American Expeditionary Forces in Siberia and later in Hawaii with that same regiment.

Captain Killpack was transferred to the 7th Infantry at this station from the 29th Infantry at Fort Benning, Georgia, and arrived at Vancouver Barracks on 28 September 1931. During his services with the regiment he commanded Company B, then Company D, and later was a member of the regimental staff, until his detail with the Civilian Conservation Corps in April 1933. He assisted in the

¹⁰⁸ "Camp Killpack," VNHRT Retiree Collection, Box 9, File 2.

¹⁰⁹ Personal communication, Donna Sinclair with Harry Killpack, Jr., 9 January 2002.

organization of the Eugene CCC District and was its adjutant until his return to this station a year later. Since then and up to the time of his death he was assistant post executive officer and supply officer of the Vancouver Barracks CCC District.

In the death of Captain Killpack the country loses an able and loyal officer of wide experience.

The sympathy of the command and of the Vancouver Barracks CCC District is extended to Captain Killpack's family.

Signed by Henry Hossfeld, Colonel 7th Infantry, Commanding¹¹⁰

An investigation into the accident found that Captain Killpack's death occurred in the line of duty and that he had been authorized to make the flight from Pearson to Prineville and back again. Within the month, orders came through changing the name of CCC Camp Bonneville, A-6, to Camp Killpack, A-6. According to Brigadier General James Parsons, the name change would eliminate current confusion in mail and telephone service between the army rifle range – Camp Bonneville – and the CCC camp. In addition, it would be “tribute to an excellent officer...on duty with the C.C.C. since its beginning and who lost his life while on C.C.C. duty.”¹¹¹

The International Longshoreman's Association Strike

While President Roosevelt implemented numerous work relief programs, labor strife continued to sweep the Pacific Coast throughout the 1930s. In May 1934, the International Longshoreman's Association (ILA) struck in San Francisco, calling for higher wages, shorter working hours, and control of hiring halls. Longshoremen from Alaska to San Francisco, including those in Vancouver and Portland, stood squarely behind the strike. Although workers supported the longshoremen, Portland employers

¹¹⁰ “General Orders No. 11, regimental commander announces the death of Captain Harry W. Killpack,” VNHRT Retiree Collection.

balked immediately at the idea of negotiations. Many announced that they would remove the names of longshoremen who did not report for work from their employment lists, and many placed advertisements in Portland newspapers offering work to outside labor. While the Vancouver waterfront remained peaceful, strikers clashed with police up and down the coast and shipping came to a halt, while President Roosevelt appointed a federal mediation board. By the third day of the strike, the Vancouver *Columbian* announced that Vancouver's part in the strike remained that of "watchful waiting." Boats due to dock at Vancouver stayed in the Portland harbor with little likelihood of movement until the strike's end.¹¹²

By the sixth day of the strike, river boats operating along the Columbia joined the ILA and the Vancouver waterfront stayed bare. In Portland, thousands of striking longshoremen, augmented by river steamboat workers and some logging and timber organizations, patrolled the waterfront to keep strikebreakers from moving in. At the end of the strike's first week, the *Columbian* reported: "Booming truck and railroad business; bloody rioting at San Pedro, California; renewed efforts to have the Oregon and Washington national guards called out to restore order; and threats of a general strike entered its seventh day today." Nothing moved on the river except a river boat towing a barge of gravel to Portland. While the Northwest was peaceful, pistol fire erupted in San Pedro, California, killing one man and injuring twenty-one others. Governor Martin of Washington asked President Roosevelt to intervene in lieu of bringing in the National

¹¹¹ "Memorandum No. 171, Change of Camp Name," VNHRT Retiree Collection.

¹¹² *VC*, "All Stevedores on Pacific Coast in Strike Array," 9 May 1934, 1, 4; "Stevedores Wait Arrival of Ship to Try Strength," 10 May 1934, 1; "Boats Call Off Scheduled Visit," 12 May 1934, 1.

Guard. In Oregon, the threat of the National Guard by Governor Julius Meier prompted the specter of a general strike by the Central Labor Council at Portland.¹¹³

By May 16 Vancouver's port of call closed and two major Clark County lumber interests – Dubois-Matlack Lumber Company and the Columbia River Paper Mill – worried they would not be able to stay in business, although trucks continued to deliver sawlogs. On the 18th, employers recognized the Columbia River Ferryman's Union, and boats and tugs resumed their activities. However, the boatmen remained sympathetic to the longshoremen's stance and refused to handle any cargo typically the realm of longshoremen. Continued delivery of fuel and raw materials relieved county industrialists. One major construction project, the Columbia Memorial Mausoleum on the Evergreen Highway, halted temporarily when a coastal shipment of cement docked at Portland and became stranded due to the strike. Project directors ordered a carload of cement instead.¹¹⁴

President Roosevelt's mediation board presented a peace proposal on May 22 and the threat of a general strike heightened. The San Francisco ILA local demanded union recognition, a closed shop, a thirty-hour week, and increased pay. The proposal would grant recognition to the International Longshoremen's Association and joint operation of hiring halls at all ports. It was the one clause, "open shop," that prompted the 25,000 strikers along the coast to stand firm. The crux of the debate lay in employment control through the hiring halls. Employers wanted control, which the longshoremen felt put them at risk. Employers could, and had, hired itinerant laborers in lieu of union

¹¹³ *VC*, "Strike's Spread to River Boats Is Keenly Felt," 14 May 1934, 1; "Situation Grows Worse as Coast Strike Goes On," 15 May 1934, 1, 2.

¹¹⁴ *VC*, "Longshoremen's Strike Menaces Local Concerns," 16 May 1934, 1, 2; "Traffic on River Resumed; Strike Reins Loosened," 18 May 1934, 1; "Strike Holds Up Mausoleum Job," 12 May 1934, 1.

members. Although president of the International Longshoreman's Union Joseph Ryan urged the San Francisco local to accept the employers' terms, they stood fast, backed by Northwestern longshoremen up and down the coast. Like many government officials, Ryan asserted the strike stemmed from Communists and radicals, but the Oregon State Federation of Labor secretary, Ben Osborne, disagreed. He urged the longshoremen to vote against accepting the "olive branch" proposal. After conferring with Tacoma longshoremen for eight hours, even Joseph Ryan had a "new slant" on the situation, and supported the strikers. Like cities up and down the coast, Portland and Vancouver locals rejected the peace plan and one member of President Roosevelt's mediation board declared, "everyone will admit that sooner or later this strike of Pacific coast marine workers will be settled, but it looks right now as if it will be settled by bullets, guns and gas." The longshoremen absolutely refused to go back to work.¹¹⁵

Violence and disruption continued during the third and fourth weeks of the strike. In San Diego police constructed barricades. In Los Angeles armed guards escorted trucks to the L.A. pier. In Portland strikers prevented produce from moving, and in Seattle strikers beat a tug boat operator and his son until they were unconscious, then left their boat to sink. The operators had carried non-union longshoremen to man a tanker. Rationing was a big problem for isolated Juneau, Alaska where "even the dogs were reported short of bones," and six markets were without meat. However, Alaska shipping resumed on June 8 after striking longshoremen and Alaska shippers signed an agreement

¹¹⁵ VC, "Peace Officials Reach Deadlock," 19 May 1934, 1, 8; "Mediation Board Makes Proposal to Compromise," 22 May 1934, 1; "Strikers Ponder Mediators Plan to Handle Hiring," 23 May 1934, 1; "Portland Strike Situation Nears Dangerous Turn"; "Strike Committee Denounces Compromise Plan: Peace Offer of Mediation Board Draws Criticism," 29 May 1934; "Portland Local Plans to Reject Peace Proposal," 31 May 1934; "Prospects Dark For Settlement," 1 June 1934, 1.

at Seattle. Both Joseph Ryan and Seattle's mayor Charles Smith held high hopes that the agreement would hasten the strike's end among other shippers.¹¹⁶

By mid-June the mayors of both Seattle and Portland determined they would open docks to non-union workers, with the assistance of police forces. Mayor John Kiggins determined that if asked he would do the same, in accordance with the laws. On June 16, 1934 ILA president Joseph Ryan, head of the San Francisco teamsters Michael Casey, and representatives of the waterfront employers association and industrial association signed an agreement; however, the agreement could only be approved through a referendum of the entire coast membership of the ILA. The Northwest Strike Committee rejected the settlement pact. Meanwhile, in Portland employers worked on definite proposals to break the strike and the chief of police asked for authority to employ 500 or more special police if non-union workers went to the waterfront. Throughout the same week plans progressed for opening ports in Seattle and Portland, by force if needed. Portland's mayor Joseph Carson declared, "patience is no longer a virtue, and I am damn tired of it [waiting for peaceful negotiations] ... A small minority shall not be permitted to strangle an entire community... The police have their instructions as to what to do." If needed, reported the mayor, the National Guard would be called in. On June 20 the first ship since the strike unloaded fuel while 150 regular police readily stood guard, guns and clubs in hand. Outside the gates 150 pickets and longshoremen gathered, but did not advance. As preparations went forward to open the port, hundreds of strike sympathizers came to Portland from up and down the Columbia River. By then, the strike had caused

¹¹⁶ *VC*, "Another Effort Made To Effect Shipping Peace," 6 June 1934, 1, 5; "Tug Boat Men Beaten And Left To Drown," 6 June 1934, 1; "Leader of New Union Attacked: Vote Scheduled," 8 June 1934, 1, 3.

the loss of \$30 million in the Columbia River area, and commercial shutdowns extended through the entire region.¹¹⁷

For Vancouver, the strike's impact hit hardest at the end of June. The major impact came from sawmill closures. Twenty-three sawmills closed in the county due to lack of shipping outlets for their products and all millworkers were laid off. Vancouver's businesses had sustained a nearly fifty percent decrease in commerce, and banks and insurance companies noted severe declines. Vancouver felt an additional social impact when the strike threatened to halt the mid-Columbia Regatta, a long-planned event with multiple festivities, including a boat show and beauty contest. The British motorship *Elmworth*, the first ship to visit the port since May 6, berthed at the dock ready to load a cargo of railroad ties bound for China. The dock held 1.5 million feet of ties directly in front of the area where the Vancouver Junior Chamber of Commerce planned to build bleachers to seat the thousands of spectators expected at the Regatta. Mayor Kiggins went directly to Portland to discuss the situation with Portland union leaders. After two days of negotiations the Portland longshoremen agreed that the ties could be loaded, but only through volunteer labor. Since they, too, desired a successful regatta, the Portland union offered to furnish half the volunteer labor. On June 30, "Primed with a keg of free lager more than 40 members of the Vancouver lonshoremen union and an even dozen maritime workers from Portland juggled ties and lumber throughout the hot morning

¹¹⁷ VC, "Strikers in Battle Array: Mayors Want to Open All Ports Simultaneously," 15 June 1934, 1, 5; "Peace Pact Approved: Labor Leaders and Employers Sign Agreement," 16 June 1934, 1; "Seattle Mayor Hears of Plan to Reorganize," 18 June 1934, 1; "Portland Girds for 'War': Plans Progress to Open Port By Force If Needed," 19 June 1934, 1, 4; "500 Extra Cops Being Sworn In To Uphold Law," 20 June 1934, 1, 4.

hours.” The unpaid workers cleared bleacher space for 10,000 people, then ate lunch at Vancouver’s Bungalow Lunchroom.¹¹⁸

By June 28, 1934, the longshoremen’s committee proposed a major concession to President Roosevelt’s mediation committee – joint control of the hiring halls. The longshoremen asked that the hiring halls operate with three members chosen by the employers and three by the ILA, with the express provision that the hall dispatcher be an ILA man. In Vancouver at the same time men in overalls flanked Washington Street at the end of the Interstate Bridge, halting freight and moving van trucks in a supportive truck driver’s strike. By July 2, three had been killed in the maritime strike, negotiations in San Francisco remained deadlocked and the Bay City’s waterfront became a “powder keg.” On July 3 in Portland a crew of registered longshoremen unloaded the first cargo in fifty-four days. On July 4 while the mid-Columbia Regatta took place on the Vancouver waterfront, a group of strikers halted attempts to move oil and gasoline tank cars from the oil terminals at the Portland harbor.¹¹⁹

The July 4 celebration was marred by the death of Roland McCall, a twenty-six year-old member of the Vancouver Anchor Club Swimming Troupe who dove to his death from the top of the Interstate Bridge. His daring feat had been advertised as “one of the biggest thrills” the Regatta would hold. Both Governor Clarence Martin of Washington and Governor Julius Meier of Oregon attended the regatta races and

¹¹⁸ *VC*, “County Suffers Staggering Blow From Dock War,” 26 June 1934; “Effort Made to Agree on Plan to Load Vessel,” 21 June 1934, 1, 3; “Progress Made in Attempts to Remove Lumber,” 22 June 1934; “Strikers Agree to Clear Dock for Big Regatta,” 23 June 1934.

¹¹⁹ *VC*, “Strikers Offer Peace Proposal in Coast Strike,” 28 June 1934, 1, 2; “Trucks Halted in Fresh Strike,” 1; “Plans Made to Open Port at 3,” 2 July 1934, 1, 8; “Dock Cleared of Obstructions By Longshoremen,” 30 June 1934, 1, 4; “Cargo Moves in Portland First Time in Weeks,” 3 July 1934.

entertainment, watching from the ship *Elmworth*.¹²⁰ McCall's death was not the only event that blemished the spirits of Vancouver's citizens. Unemployment, already problematic due to the Great Depression, had raised the number of Clark County families on the Washington Emergency Relief Association (WERA) rolls from 1,073 on June 1 to 1,124 by July 1. At the same time, creating a re-unemployed population out of the recently employed, all work projects under WERA halted due to lack of funds. However, the local National Re-employment Service continued to find work for hundreds of people, both in private industry and on Public Works Association projects. And Vancouver's Grocer's Committee worked cooperatively with the local WERA to adopt relief price lists for all purchases by relief workers.¹²¹

The longshoreman's strike heated up through the month of July as violence erupted on the nearby Oregon City waterfront, National Guardsmen entered San Francisco, and the threat of a general strike continued. By July 7, the Portland longshoremen asked Vancouver's unions to join in a general strike. Despite hard times in the county, all but one of the sixteen unions agreed. The building trades union, one of the largest employers in Clark County, did not completely disagree. They said they would consent to a general strike, "if and when necessary." The first open violence occurred in Vancouver when a group of maritime strikers attacked and battered two protective policemen from Portland's Terminal No. 4. On July 11, police wounded four striking longshoremen with buckshot as they blockaded a railroad track. Vancouver received its "baptism of picketing" a few days later when strikers told operators of the Fletcher and

¹²⁰ A photo in the July 3, 1934 *Columbian* shows McCall in a practice perch at the top of the Interstate Bridge the day before his death. *VC*, "Way Up," 3 July 1934; "Continue Search for Body of Boy Killed in River"; "High Dignitaries Attend Regatta," 5 July 1934, 1.

Associated Oil companies not to permit movement of fuel from Vancouver to Portland. The oil companies complied. The recently formed Clark County Strike Strategy Committee reported that all favored a sympathy walk-out. The Clark County Strike Strategy Committee formed based on the assertion that some employers had not cooperated with the National Recovery Act's mandate that unions had the right to bargain collectively. The committee determined that the employers' failure necessitated that labor unions band together in support of the International Longshoreman's Association. As violence developed along the Pacific Coast, more than two months into the strike, on July 16 San Francisco finally called a general strike. As San Francisco community services shut down, armed tanks of the national guard arrived in the city and a thousand soldiers mobilized for action. Guardsmen set up machine guns and barricades, police forces swelled, and mobs destroyed some grocery stores while others faced a stampede of food purchases.¹²²

In Vancouver, the San Francisco general strike prompted a gasoline shortage, food stockpiling, and renewed determination to stand by the strikers. Although the ILA picketed Vancouver's oil and gas distributors, they remained for only one day because distributors agreed not to release fuel stocks to unfair markets. Despite a coast-wide gasoline drought, Vancouver remained a gasoline "oasis." Meanwhile, "The food rush of '34 descended on Vancouver grocers" when a general walkout appeared inevitable.

¹²¹ *VC*, "Longshore War Reflected Here In Relief Roll," 6 July 1934, 1, 2; "467 Placed on Jobs in Month," 10 July 1934, 8; "WERA Funds to Put 100 Men At Work In County," 14 July 1934, 5.

¹²² *VC*, "National Guard Preserves Quiet After Outbreak," 6 July 1934, 1, 2; "General Strike Vote Forecast"; "Reduced Allotment for State Forces End of County Projects," 7 July 1934, 1, 2.; "Labor Discusses Plan To Tie Up Portland Area," 9 July 1934, 1, 5; "Local Union Men Hold Off Voting," 10 July 1934, 1, 8; "Police In Café Beaten: Guns and Badges Removed," 12 July 1934, 1, 8; "Guns Ablaze in Portland: Police Shoot 4 Pickets: General Strike Possible," 11 July 1934, 1, 3; "Pickets Circle Oil Terminals in Vancouver," 14 July 1934, 1, 2; "General Strike More Likely As Violence Grows," 13 July 1934, 1, 2.

Flour, sugar, and dried commodities disappeared from grocery store shelves as the *Columbian* reassured readers that there was no fear of famine. With over 100,000 people participating in sympathy strikes throughout the country, and even in Vancouver B.C., Portland and Vancouver prepared for “zero hour” at 5:00 p.m. on July 18. Mounted policemen with protective goggles patrolled the streets in San Francisco carrying gas bombs and long sticks, and food moved into the city in guarded trucks. In Seattle 1,200 strike sympathizers stormed a pier, but were held back by tear gas. In response to violence along the coast, Washington’s Governor Martin urged the public not to accept a general strike “for the sake of Communism.”¹²³

Still, as a gasoline shortage heightened in Vancouver the strike strategy committee laid plans for general strike operations, obtaining agreement from the local WERA office that it would remain aloof from the strike situation. But, when President Roosevelt’s mediation board called for arbitration and the strikers agreed, labor leaders in Portland and Vancouver became hopeful that they would not need to participate in a general walkout. On July 19, plans for the mass walkout in San Francisco halted and everyone returned to work. At the same time, police and city governments along the West Coast lashed out at alleged Communist instigators. First in San Francisco and next in Seattle and Portland, raids and arrests put radical leaders in jail. Under order to purge Portland of Communism, police arrested thirty-five men for criminal syndicalism, finding that one man held a letter from a member of the Marine Works Industrial Union of Philadelphia, discussing the “gentle art of cracking skulls” used by the city’s strikers.

¹²³ *VC*, “County’s Union Workers to Act With Portland”; “Strategy Board Ready to Smash Portland Peace”; “Troops Rush to Bay District: General Strike Grips Whole San Francisco Area”; “Guard Entrains for Bay Area,” 16 July 1934, 1, 4; “Vancouver Food Stores Swamped By Buying Rush”; “Over 100,000

Heightened fear of radicalism prompted fourteen Portland policemen to accompany an oil truck delivery to the Vancouver Creamery on July 20. The *Columbian* reported that “without so much as a ‘by your leave,’ [the policemen] rolled into the city, up to the creamery, and back home.” Vancouver’s labor leaders and Mayor John Kiggins protested to the Portland police chief. A permit had been obtained for the delivery, and the Portland police had no jurisdiction in Vancouver. The mayor complained: “It made things look as if we are fighting the rest of the city and they have to run our embargo with guns, when instead we are on peaceful terms with other interests here.” The Portland police chief promised such an incident would not occur again. Demonstrating his faith in Vancouver’s workers, on July 21 Mayor Kiggins announced that if a general strike were to occur, responsibility for peace would lie in the hands of the strikers. Kiggins’ decision upheld Governor Martin’s “watchful waiting” stance, leaving control to local authorities. “Instead of fighting the unions, Kiggins will in effect give them the keys,” reported the local newspaper.¹²⁴ Kiggins declared:

There are some mighty level-headed men among the unions here, and as long as they live here and own their homes here I think we can let them do their own policing. We can try it anyway, if we have to. There will be more harmony that way. We will then let them pick their men and these fellows will see to it that the strikers keep out of beer places and things like that and that there is no violence.¹²⁵

While union men voted whether to accept arbitration, “red chasers” swept the coast and Vancouver longshoremen voted fifty-two to three to accept arbitration. A crew of

Go On Strike In Wide Area”; Portland Fears Start of Strike Tomorrow,” 17 July 1934, 1, 3, 4; “Shock Troops In General Strike”; “Seattle Police Fight Strikers,” 1, 8.

¹²⁴ *VC*, “Union Leaders Arrange For Aid If Strike Comes”; Seattle Police Fight Strikers”; “Arbitration At Once Advocated to End Strike,” 18 July 1934, 1, 8; “Gas Shortage Is Becoming Acute”; “Police And Union Men Smash Reds”; “Mass Walkout Halted; All Return to Work,” 19 July 1934, 1, 4, 7, 8; “Portland Police Guard On Truck Brings Protest”; “Martin Refuses to Rock Boat,” 20 July 1934, 1, 4, 7.

¹²⁵ *VC*, “Kiggins to Put Union Men On As Strike Deputies,” 1.

Vancouver longshoremen unloaded grain from the city's new \$1 million grain elevator in anticipation of "a golden flood in the months to come." On July 26, 1934 San Francisco's ILA men prepared to return to work as arbitration continued. The following day, the ILA unanimously voted to work during the arbitration.¹²⁶

On July 31 Vancouver's port opened for the first time since the longshoremen's strike began. The first job at the port would be to load the freighter *Elmworth*, still in the harbor, with the railroad ties bound for China. The following day the *Columbian* reported, "For the first time since May 9 all was NOT quiet on the waterfront today." Simultaneously, hundreds of other Clark County men returned to work as Vancouver Plywood, a 300-man operation, re-opened. Approximately twenty-five other saw and tie mills in the county prepared to re-open their doors.¹²⁷

Meanwhile, during the same months that the Pacific coast longshoremen were on strike, Vancouver Barracks geared up for its ninth annual Citizens' Military Training Camp. At the end of June 1934, army personnel put tents in place, cleaned mess halls, and prepared training schedules in readiness for 250 young men. By July 6, twenty-six Clark County youths joined others from Oregon and Washington as they swore an oath of allegiance to the United States, the first step in their training course. By the next day, seven more young men from Clark County joined the group, and the camp filled to capacity. The students, outfitted and assigned to companies, prepared to begin their training. The camp entailed the expenditure of thousands of additional dollars for food and supplies, but ran for the usual four weeks. The training included a basic course for

¹²⁶ "Strikers Vote for Arbitration," 25 July 1934, 1; "First Shipment of Grain Goes Into Elevator," 25 July 1934, 1, 7; "Hiring Plan Satisfactory to Workers Okehed," 26 July 1934, 1, 7; "Strikers Vote to Resume Jobs," 27 July 1934, 1; "Vancouver Port to Open With 4 Gangs Tomorrow," 30 July 1934, 1, 2.

¹²⁷ "Dock Active As Workers Resume Loading Vessel," 31 July 1934, 1.

first year students, and only a few Red courses for “veterans,” or second year students (a small group because there had been no basic course the previous year). A large number of Whites, or third year students attended, with graduating Blues also well represented.¹²⁸

During the third week of camp, the young men spent their time at the army’s Camp Bonneville Firing Range. Army trucks dropped them off half way to the camp for a seven-and-a-half mile practice march before they settled into shelter tent camps and prepared for daily artillery practice. When the 1934 camp ended August 2, the mayor of Vancouver and Governor Julius Meier of Oregon presented awards, and the army held a track and field meet at the barracks’ Kohler Field.¹²⁹

The U.S. continued to train its volunteer army and labor strife recurred throughout the remainder of the 1930s. During this period a poor economy and unfair working conditions repeatedly impelled workers to agitate. Just a few months after the end of the longshoreman’s strike, in October 1934 employees of the Swift Meatpacking Company of Portland went on strike. When dynamite exploded at the Anderson Food Market at Thirteenth and Main Streets in Vancouver, police attributed the attack to the fact that the market continued to sell meat from Swift & Company. Both the Anderson Market and the nearby Cascade Market had been peacefully picketed prior to the Halloween night bombing, and the Anderson blast was the third in a string of protests. In April 1935, the teamsters union halted beer delivery in a long-standing labor union fight in the brewing industry. The following month, the teamsters were blamed for blowing up a beer delivery truck at the Wineberg Bottling Works on West Fourth Street. Meanwhile,

¹²⁸ *VC*, “C.M.T.C. To Open In Another Week,” 27 June 1934, 4; “Annual Citizens’ Military Training Camp Started Today,” 5 July 1934, 1; “Allegiance Oath Taken By Youths,” 6 July 1934, 1; “‘34 CMTC Camp Quota On Hand,” 7 July 1934, 1; “Meals At CMTC Please Recruits,” 9 July 1934.

throughout the Northwest timberworkers struck and 10,000 men, from the Puget Sound to Portland, walked out. The Longshoremen and others promised to join them.

Strike banners fluttered on the streets of Vancouver in July 1936 when even Clark County's relief workers picketed road projects and staged a walkout. An estimated seventy-five percent of Vancouver's WPA workers laid down their tools in answer to a general relief strike call by the Workers Alliance. The strikers articulated two main protests – the failure of Clark County to maintain an adequate number of projects for the unemployed and a recently established prevailing wage for WPA workers. The WPA workers asked for the trade union scale of .75 per hour in place of the prevailing .50 per hour, pointing out that WPA legislation gave relief workers the right to have a voice in establishing the wage scale. Since the creation of the WPA work projects had begun and been repeatedly halted, creating economic instability even under the relief program. With yet another road project halting the week of July 20, county WPA employment hit an all time low of 550. As picketers gathered to heckle those who continued to work on the county projects, workers again supported each other. Truck drivers employed on WPA undertakings refused to drive their trucks through picket lines.¹³⁰

The WPA strike nearly led to cessation of all work relief projects, but by July 25 negotiations ended. An advisory committee formed to address the prevailing wage question and the WPA approved additional work projects. The Washington D.C. WPA administration approved enough projects to fulfill the 800-man quota set for the county.

¹²⁹ *VC*, "Students Learn to Handle Guns," 24 July 1934, 1, 4; "CMTC Awards Given Thursday," 31 July 1934, 1; *VC*, "CMTC Camp Now Has 594," 11 July 1938.

¹³⁰ *VC*, "Meat Market Dynamited: Bomb Explosion Shatters Glass: Heard Half Mile," 1 November 1934, 1, 4; "Beer Blockade Here Declared," 29 April 1935, 1; "Beer Delivery Truck Demolished: Teamsters Held Responsible for Vandalism Act"; "About One-Third of Workers Quit in N.W. District," 6 May 1935, 1, 8; "WPA Workers Here Strike: Pickets Out To Halt All Projects," 20 July 1936, 1, 2; "Projects Here Paralyzed By WPA Trouble," 21 July 1936, 1, 2.

There would be two major projects in the Vancouver area and another at Camas – the Camas-Washougal Recreation Park. Additional men would also be hired for the Lewisville Park recreation project. They also met the third demand, reinstatement of a WPA worker.

General George C. Marshall at Vancouver Barracks, 1936-1938

The following year, one of the most famous individuals to serve at Vancouver Barracks arrived. George Catlin Marshall, born December 31, 1880 in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, was a fifty-five year old colonel when he transferred to Vancouver, at long last advancing to brigadier general. Marshall climbed the military ladder slowly but steadily, skyrocketing after his Vancouver tour to Army Chief of Staff during World War II, Secretary of State in the post-war world, and Secretary of Defense during the Korean War. Marshall's experiences as a military instructor, infantry commander, and WWI aide de camp, first to Major General Hunter Liggett and later to General John Pershing, provided the foundation for his notorious later service. His command at Vancouver reinforced the major lesson learned in his early career – civilian and military elements of the community must cooperate. He put this knowledge into practice at Vancouver as commander of the CCC and impromptu ambassador to Russia, experiences which later served him well as a soldier and statesman.

When George C. Marshall and his family arrived in Vancouver on October 29, 1936 a band and honor guard arranged by two friends greeted him.¹³¹ The outgoing post

¹³¹ Roger J. Spiller, ed. and Joseph Dawson III, Assoc. ed., *Dictionary of American Military Biography*, Vol II, H-P (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1984), 733-734; Keith Peterson, "George C. Marshall At Vancouver – Preface to An Heroic Career," *Clark County History* 17 (1976), 24, 41; *CCC Annual*, 29.

commander Colonel Henry Hossfield had served with Marshall in the Philippines thirty-four years earlier, as had Oregon's Governor Charles Martin. When Marshall arrived, Martin declared:

General Marshall is the peer of any other officer ever to hold that command [of Vancouver]. He had the most brilliant World War record of any young officer, being General Pershing's key staff officer in charge of general operations, and has consistently proved himself one of the most able military men in the United States.¹³²

The Vancouver Chamber of Commerce also honored Marshall when he arrived. An avid outdoorsman, Marshall was elated about his new assignment and looked forward to the scenic beauty of the Pacific Northwest. His most recent three-year assignment as senior instructor to the Illinois National Guard, a duty he viewed as a setback to his career because it took him away from the troops, had left him unhappy. But as commander of the 5th Brigade at Vancouver and of the CCC in both Washington and Oregon, Marshall would come into close contact with troops on a regular basis. He would be active with both army soldiers and Roosevelt's Tree Troopers.¹³³ Marshall would also command reserve officers, the ROTC, and the students of the annual Citizens' Military Training Camps that had continued at Vancouver Barracks since 1926

While in Vancouver, Marshall also worked to improve Vancouver Barracks. According to historian Keith Peterson, the general believed that Vancouver and Camp Bonneville provided "one of the finest staging areas in the United States," a belief that led him to seek funds to construct new quarters and improve existing buildings. When the War Department would not fund Marshall's proposed improvements, he turned to a local attorney. D. Elwood Caples, then serving as a Democratic Committeeman, worked

¹³² Charles Martin in Peterson, "George C. Marshall," 24.

with Democratic senators and representatives to obtain funds from the WPA. In the spring of 1938, the WPA authorized an additional half-million work relief jobs, 130 for Clark County where the Vancouver Barracks improvement project employed 100 of the additional workers.¹³⁴ By the time Marshall left Vancouver in 1938, nearly \$400,000 in WPA funds had been spent at the barracks and for clearing and fencing at Camp Bonneville.

Although attending to physical improvements at the barracks, Marshall spent most of his time in the Pacific Northwest supervising the district's CCC camps. By the time he arrived, General Parsons had ironed out the initial administrative nightmare caused by CCC mobilization. A new motor pool and warehouse had been built, and truck convoys known as "candy wagons," regularly delivered canned goods, fire fighting supplies, and tools to regional camps.¹³⁵ The army also purchased fresh supplies from nearby communities, infusing money into the economy.

By 1938, the army had purchased three-quarters of a million dollars worth of goods for CCC operation. Captain Maurice Simmonds, head of the procurement department explained:

Shoe repair and laundry service contracts, not to mention renovation of such things as mattresses and comforters, are other matters which receive the attention of this section. Some 80,000 pairs of shoes have been repaired at an average cost of 60 cents per pair. This comes within shouting distance of \$5,000. Laundry services have amounted to approximately \$325,000.

¹³³ *VC*, 12 November 1936; Peterson, "George C. Marshall," 21-22, 24. Marshall had previously served with the CCC as a troop commander and director of the CCC at Fort Moultrie, South Carolina.

¹³⁴ *VC*, "WPA Officers Threaten to End All Jobs," 22 July 1936, 1, 2; "WPA Walkout Arbitrated: Workers May Resume Jobs Here Friday," 23 July 1936, 1, 2; "WPA Work To Get Underway Again Tuesday," 24 July 1936, 1, 2; "WA Members Vote Approval Of Strike End," 25 July 1936, 1, 2; "WPA Quota Here Raised By 130 Jobs," 1 March 1938, 1.

¹³⁵ Carroll Aust Interview, Tape 1, Side 1, Transcript p. 4; Lynn Hazen, interviewed by Donna Sinclair, May 1, 2002 (Trout Lake, Washington: Gifford Pinchot National Forest Heritage Collection), Tape 1, Side 1.

Transportation of enrollees and officers during the existence of the district has reached the sizable figure of \$2,987,000.

Such needed items as gasoline, coal, wood and oil are purchased on contracts...Some 2,100 tons of coal has been bought and consumed at headquarters and camps while the fuel bill for wood to the camps shows that approximately 7,500 cords of wood has gone up in smoke. It has taken over two million gallons of gasoline to keep the trucks, cars, ambulances, light plants, and water pumps of the district in operation. Oil to the extent of 120,000 gallons has, in most cases, kept them running smoothly.¹³⁶

More than 40,000 young men had come to the Vancouver Barracks District from every state in the union. More than 600 officers, including a large number of Regular Army officers had served on the staff and in the field. The construction of sixty-seven camps had cost \$1.2 million, and enrollees had been paid \$43 million. Others had also benefited. Railroads had received nearly \$3 million for transporting enrollees and officers, laundry service and shoe repair cost the military \$375,000.00, and subsistence contractors in the area acquired millions of dollars for food and services.¹³⁷ Overseeing such a major undertaking made use General Marshall's administrative skills, gained both in the field and in the classroom.

By the late 1930s, the CCC had become part of the social landscape, having been repeatedly re-authorized by Congress. CCC boys could re-enlist for up to two years, and some found later opportunities with the Forest Service, as civil service employees at Vancouver Barracks, or working on dams in the Columbia Basin. By the time Marshall arrived, the main CCC focus had turned to "morale, welfare, and education." Marshall addressed these areas by publishing a district newspaper, *The Review*. Other morale boosters included athletic competitions and publication of a CCC Annual in 1938. He appointed a new education advisor, Don Mace, and worked closely with him to improve

¹³⁶ *CCC Annual*, 35.

instruction in the camps. The General mailed letters of congratulations and recommendations to CCC boys and established a program to recognize outstanding CCC members. He began a competition to bring ten exceptional young men to Portland from various camps in the district. The young men spoke in front of the Portland Chamber of Commerce about their backgrounds and experiences in the camps, bringing an appreciation of the CCC to chamber members and reminding them of the homelessness and destitution in American society.

In addition to having a reputation as a strict disciplinarian, soldiers recall that they liked Marshall for his fairness and warmth.¹³⁸ He listened to his troops, visited CCC camps for inspection, and took advantage of the recreational opportunities of the Northwest. One former CCC enrollee recalled his association with General Marshall in a May 2002 interview:

I was a fisherman. My commanding officer decided he needed to make some points with General Marshall. I knew where all the good fishing holes were in the Washougal River, in the North Fork Lewis River, so I got assigned a two-month period of time to accompany the general, to show him where the fishing holes were...he talked. Not much. He was not a man who rattled along. If he said something, it had some meaning to it. And then he got transferred. He got sent to something bigger and better, I guess.¹³⁹

Marshall's association with the CCC was valuable not only to the enrollees, but also personally enriching for him. He later called working with the CCC, "the best antidote for mental stagnation that an Army officer in my position can have," and "the most instructive service I have ever had and the most interesting."¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ *CCC Annual*, 30.

¹³⁸ Peterson, "George C. Marshall," 25-27.

¹³⁹ Paul Grooms interview by Ari Binder and Donna Sinclair, May 1, 2002, Gifford Pinchot National Forest Headquarters, Vancouver, Washington (Trout Lake, Washington: Gifford Pinchot National Forest Heritage Program), Tape 2, Side 2, Transcript p. 19.

¹⁴⁰ George C. Marshall in Peterson, "George C. Marshall," 28.

Marshall and his wife Katherine often expressed their fond recollections of the time spent in Vancouver and even planned to retire in the area. The Marshalls participated in a wide variety of civilian activities, strengthening friendships between the military and between the leaders of Vancouver and Portland. Marshall worked closely with the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, staged regular military displays for the community and often spoke at local clubs. His Portland associations were enhanced by his long-standing friendship with Oregon's Governor Charles Martin, giving him and Katherine entry into Portland society. Katherine shopped in nearby Portland, attended tea parties, and developed long-term friendships with people like Harriet Corbett, among Portland's "First Families." Unlike his predecessor, who found the Portlanders "standoffish," George and Katherine Marshall encountered a welcoming community and they in turn received others warmly, even hosting such events as a "Forty-niners" costume party at their home on Officer's Row.¹⁴¹

General Marshall and the Itinerary of Stalin

Although General Marshall is best recalled in Vancouver for his community role during this period, there was one memorable event that brought national attention to the town and also contributed to the re-assignment that sent Marshall on his famous trajectory. In a unique turn of events, both Marshall and Vancouver entered the international limelight when the Soviet airplane, *Itinerary of Stalin* landed in Vancouver on the morning of June 20, 1937. Although the flight was expected to end in Oakland, California, when the pilots ran short of fuel they had to make an emergency landing.

¹⁴¹ Invitation to Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton Corbett, Letters Belonging to Corbetts from Mrs. George C. Marshall, Oregon Historical Society, MSS 1110-1, Portland, Oregon; Carroll Aust Interview; Peterson,

While thousands waited at nearby Swan Island where Charles Lindbergh had landed, bypassing Vancouver ten years previously, the Soviet plane swooped into Pearson Airfield and made aviation history. One of the pilots later recalled, “As we flew over Portland, we recalled that after (Charles) Lindbergh crossed the ocean, thousands of Parisians meeting him tore off parts of the plane and his clothes for souvenirs.” Not desiring such a greeting, the Soviet pilots instead decided to land at Vancouver’s military field. The three aviators, Valeri Chkalov, Georgii Filippovich Baidukov, and Alexander Belyakov had completed the first nonstop transpolar flight. The pilots ate oranges, lemons, and drank tea in the ANT-25, a single engine Soviet Aircraft, as they flew over 5,288 miles of icy tundra.¹⁴²

As the plane loomed on Vancouver’s horizon, Lieutenant Pat Reynolds, assistant to Major Paul Burrows went to work. He notified reporter Edwin Rieger of the *Columbian* who “scooped” the story while most of Portland’s reporters waited at Swan Island. The *Itinerary of Stalin* “skimmed in under the overcast at Pearson field” in Vancouver at 8:22 a.m. after sixty-two hours and twenty-two minutes in the air. The plane rolled up in front of headquarters after what bystanders called “a perfect three-point landing.” According to Paul Spitzer, General Marshall “grabbed his uniform and overcoat, pulling them on over his pajamas while the chauffeur backed his 1936 Packard out of the garage.” They drove across the parade ground in front of his home to Pearson Field. George Kozmetsky, an ROTC student fluent in Russian, already stood by to act as interpreter if needed. Caroline Stanek, whose husband Frank stood guard on the Russian plane that day, later recalled: “General Marshall was not the only one who was roused from bed that

“George C. Marshall,” 29-30.

A.M. The men who were sleeping in on that Sunday morning in M Company, 7th Infantry were ordered up and to fall out for Guard Duty. A Russian plane had landed at Pearson Field!”¹⁴³ Valerii Chkalov greeted the army guards and personnel while Baidukov and Belyakov remained in the plane:

The fliers were driven to General Marshall’s home. His cognac is said to have disappeared that morning and extra supplies were called in from officers’ homes on the row. The fliers gave up their clothing for laundry and were treated to a bath and a shave. Portland clothier Julius Meier gladly supplied three new suits in exchange for one of their fur-lined flying suits, which was displayed in a window of the Meier & Frank department store. But the fliers would not give up their long underwear. After all, Baidukov recalls, it was made of silk – the finest long johns they had ever known.¹⁴⁴

Photographers and newsmen mobbed General Marshall while the aviators slept and the general took congratulatory messages for the pilots from President Roosevelt, Secretary of State Cordell Hull, and Joseph Stalin. Marshall ordered the area where the plane stood secured, and he fended off reporters, becoming “testy” when the media continued to insist on speaking to the aviators. Marshall let the pilots sleep and awaited the arrival of Russian Ambassador Alexander Troyanovsky who had been in Oakland planning to greet the heroes. Troyanovsky arrived in Vancouver at 3:00 p.m. and was officially greeted with a military escort of honor and a nineteen gun salute. The Russian ambassador explained to reporters that the fliers would remain in the U.S. for about a month, to view American planes and facilities. “These fliers are among our most outstanding aviators and are familiar with non-stop trips of this nature, having made particularly long flights to the eastern section of our country. They hold the official title

¹⁴² Peterson, “George C. Marshall,” 32; Baidukov Speech, Moscow, 1987, File, “Papers About Chkalov,” Clark County Historical Museum, Vancouver, Washington.

¹⁴³ Letter from Caroline Stanek to the City of Vancouver, in File, “Papers about Chkalov.”

¹⁴⁴ Paul C. Spitzer, “When the Russians Landed in Vancouver” *Columbia Magazine* 1, 2 (Summer 1987), 6.

of heroes of the Soviet Union,” declared the ambassador. In the morning several Russian families called at the army reservation and spoke with the fliers. Troyanovsky then joined the aviators in a round of parades and dinners in Portland and Vancouver, after which they were escorted to San Francisco where they met Hollywood film stars, and then to the White House to meet President Franklin D. Roosevelt. After traveling to New York City, the aviators headed to France and then the Soviet Union for further accolades and Vancouver became known as the official terminus of the polar flight – Moscow, Russia to Vancouver. The “mighty red-winged monoplane” was dismantled in Vancouver and sent back to Russia.¹⁴⁵

The Soviet transpolar flight was a historic moment in American Soviet relations. In 1987, President Ronald Reagan commemorated the flight in a letter to the city of Vancouver, identifying the flight as: “a bright event in a grim time. Americans were suffering from the Great Depression. Soviet citizens were experiencing traumatic and tragic developments in the life of their country. Heroes were needed by the people of both countries.”¹⁴⁶ As historian Edward Bennett pointed out in a commemorative presentation at Washington State University in 1987:

Mutual interests coincided and both Americans and the Russians expected some positive results from their coordinated effort at drawing closer together. The Trans-Polar flight was a step in a diplomatic process which had broader ramifications to it than any of the participants in the flight or any of the group of

¹⁴⁵ Peterson, “George C. Marshall,” 6, 33-34; Spitzer, “When the Russians Landed,” 7; *VC*, June 21, 1937, 1, 2.

¹⁴⁶ Valeri Chkalov died in a plane crash in 1938. Navigator Alexander Belyakov died in 1983. A transpolar flight monument was established near Pearson Airpark in 1974, the only tribute to the Soviet heroes in the United States. Georgii Filipovich Baidukov, copilot on the three-man crew greeted delegates from the city of Vancouver to Russia for 1987 commemorative ceremonies. Baidukov died in 1988. *VC*, 29 December 1994; *Oregonian*, 29 December 1994.

Vancouver citizens who gathered to meet that Soviet military plane breaking through the clouds on that June day in 1937 ever imagined.¹⁴⁷

The flight, nicknamed “The Handshake Across the Arctic,” made Vancouver the “capitol of the United States in the eyes of Russians.”¹⁴⁸ The fact that the Soviet plane accidentally landed at the military field in Vancouver rather than the civilian field at Swan Island added to the impression of the flight’s military importance. It also brought recognition to the diplomatic abilities of George C. Marshall: “He, like the City of Vancouver, was thrust into the world spotlight. The striking way in which he handled his job was important to his military future.” It put him in the news and proved that he could handle a difficult situation. Marshall became the American contact for the “double message” of the Soviets and Americans. The Soviets demonstrated military potential through their long-range air capacity. Americans exhibited friendliness by greeting the Russian fliers and taking them to military installations throughout the nation, and introducing them to the American president. Bennett deemed the Soviet Trans-Polar flight of June, 1937 a “media-event.” The *New York Times* and several other major American newspapers recorded the flight, indicating its importance. The Soviet *Pravda* reported that, “The Soviet people admire US business abilities and technical progress. The United States, we recently saw, also likes us.”¹⁴⁹

General Marshall remained in Vancouver after the Russian landing, but another turn of events soon hastened his rise to fame. John J. Pershing had designated Marshall,

¹⁴⁷ Edward M. Bennett, “The Diplomatic Significance of the Soviet Trans-Polar Flight,” Washington State University, June 4, 1987. Presented as part of the City of Vancouver’s Celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the 1937 Chkalov Transpolar Flight from Moscow, U.S.S.R. to Vancouver, Washington, in File, “Papers About Chkalov,” 13.

¹⁴⁸ General Georgi Filipovich Baidukov, on the cover of *Chkalov Transpolar Flight 55th Anniversary Final Report*, June 1992, in File, “Papers About Chkalov.”

¹⁴⁹ Bennett, “Diplomatic Significance,” 7, 8; Peterson, “George C. Marshall,” 37; *Pravda*, “Greetings to the American Visitors,” 29 July 29 1937, in Bennett, “Diplomatic Significance,” 9.

his former aide de camp, to make his funeral arrangements. When Pershing became seriously ill in February 1938, Army Chief of Staff Malin Craig called Marshall to Washington D.C. for a conference, then ordered him to Tucson, Arizona to be near Pershing who saw Marshall and vowed to recover, a promise he kept by living another ten years. The moment was pivotal because it again brought Marshall to the attention of Malin Craig and other high level Washington officials. Within two weeks of his return from Tucson to Vancouver, Craig notified Marshall that his days in the Northwest were numbered. He would soon be ordered to return to Washington D.C.

General Marshall left Vancouver in June 1938 eighteen months after his initial arrival. A number of prestigious speakers commended him as they bid farewell at a banquet arranged by the senior and junior chambers of commerce in Vancouver. Horace Daniels of the senior chamber presented him with an engraved wristwatch, which read, "A token of esteem from Vancouver citizens." By October 1938, General Marshall had been appointed Deputy Chief of Staff, and eight months later when Malin Craig took a leave of absence Marshall became Acting Chief of Staff. Just a little over a year after his departure from Vancouver, on September 1, 1939 – the day Germany invaded Poland – Marshall became the new Army Chief of Staff.¹⁵⁰

In the following difficult years, the Marshalls looked back to Vancouver as a refuge from the toils of the world. In January 1941, less than a year before the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Katherine Marshall sent a letter to Portland's Harriet Corbett. George Marshall had given a speech in the House, received in "stony silence" by "one-half of the members." Mrs. Marshall feared a "bitter struggle ahead," and wished they "could drop all this for a few months and once more drive and fish and picnic on the West Coast.

Sometimes,” she wrote, “I look back on our stay there as something I have dreamed about, it all seems so far away in these last strenuous years.” George Marshall echoed his wife’s sentiments the following year when he wrote to Hamilton Corbett of “so many agreeable memories – of happy days, grand fishing, and other things that have occurred in another incarnation, they seem so far away.” The Marshalls did return periodically to the Northwest. At the height of WWII General Marshall flew to Portland to visit Erskine Scott Wood and to fish on the Metolius River. Although the magnificence of the mountains and rivers of Washington and Oregon continued to call to the Marshalls, national events prevented their planned retirement in a home on Vancouver’s Buena Vista Drive.¹⁵¹

Impending War: the End of an Era

As newspaper headlines flashed Nazi atrocities, despite its purported isolationist stance America prepared for war. Many of the programs that took place in Vancouver at the end of the decade contributed to that preparation. The Citizens’ Military Training Camps and Reserve Officers Training taught men to be soldiers. The Civilian Conservation Corps, although it did not provide direct military training, taught more than 3 million young American men the discipline, uniformity, and job skills they would need to weather coming battles. The CCC also provided a vast pool of trained army officers.¹⁵² As the CCC boys worked in the woods and rangelands of the Pacific Northwest, they unwittingly prepared to become soldiers. One former LEM recalled,

¹⁵⁰ Peterson, “George C. Marshall,” 37-38; *VC*, 9 June 9 1938.

¹⁵¹ Letter from Katherine Marshall to Harriet Corbett, January 7, 1941; Letter from George C. Marshall to Hamilton Corbett, January 7, 1942, OHS, MSS 1110-1.

¹⁵² Cohen, *The Tree Army*, 96.

“Hitler had a youth corps. The treaty of Versailles wouldn’t let him have an army... Well, I guess old Roosevelt thought that was a pretty good idea, so he decided he’ll have a 3C... ‘I’m not going to go to war, though’ he said. But at the same time, you could see military all over the 3 Cs.”¹⁵³ Many former CCC enrollees recalled their CCC training as preparatory for World War II. Army administration and its accompanying jargon, such as mess hall, infirmary, and canteen, created a military atmosphere, as did daily drills, reveille, government allotment checks, and working with army administrators and civil service employees. By 1940, most CCC projects generally had a national defense orientation.¹⁵⁴ George Griffith, public relations director for the Forest Service in 1938, felt the CCC period would be a bright spot in the nation’s history and he was correct. Most CCC boys later remembered their work as valuable and character building. For the young men coming from depression era circumstances, the CCC provided an honorable way to earn a living and to learn valuable skills, while assisting their families financially to provide relief by giving them an income as well as one less mouth to feed.

The CCC had long-term impacts for most of those who served in the public works program. Many of the young men went on to work for the Forest Service and in private industry as fallers and choker setters, clerks, carpenters, truck drivers, caterpillar operators, powdermen, gas shovel runners, jackhammer men, mechanics, and ambulance drivers. Many also went to work on dam building in the Columbia Basin, laboring in dam construction and/or as linemen for the Bonneville Power Administration. Many also went on to serve in World War II, looking back at their days in the CCC as a time of

¹⁵³ Don Fechtner interview by Arend Hall and Richard McClure, May 8, 2002, Hodsgon-Lindbergh Training Center, Carson, Washington (Trout Lake, Washington: Gifford Pinchot National Forest Headquarters Heritage Program), Tape 2, Side 1, Transcript p. 14.

¹⁵⁴ Cohen, *The Tree Army*, 96.

innocence and of developing character. Not everyone agreed with the CCC's military orientation, and ironically when conscientious objectors camps were established during World War II, many were located at the sites of former CCC camps, such as Camp Wyeth in the Columbia River Gorge and Camps Reedsport and Waldport on the Oregon Coast.

The public works projects in the Columbia Basin had changed the region immensely by the end of the 1930s. Bonneville Dam went on line in 1938, providing electricity for industrial production distributed through the Bonneville Power Administration, which located its J.D. Ross Substation in Vancouver for power distribution. Civil and city works projects in Vancouver had modernized the community. In 1937 the people had voted to form a municipal public utility district to distribute BPA power. By 1939, the water supply had increased to nearly 10 million gallons daily, new roads made automobile travel easier, and over 4,000 telephones with nationwide and international capabilities were in service.¹⁵⁵

When Hitler invaded Poland in 1939 military spending strengthened the U.S. economy and unemployment decreased significantly. Lumber continued as the big industry along the entire Pacific Coast, although state production fell from over 7 billion board feet of lumber in 1929 to 4 billion by the end of the 1930s. In 1939, Clark County housed some of the largest sawmills on the Pacific Coast, three of them in Vancouver. The Dubois Lumber Company, organized in 1906 and located on West Seventh Street on the Columbia River waterfront, supplied both local and overseas markets, and had an annual output of 16 to 20 million board feet of lumber. Dubois employed approximately seventy-two people and the Vancouver Plywood and Veneer Company employed even

more, with 350 men and women working at the old war-time shipyard district.

Vancouver Plywood supplied the Pacific Coast, and also shipped its products east and overseas. The Dubois' owned another waterfront industry, the Columbia Paper Mills located on west 5th Street, where they employed another 350 people with an annual output of \$3 million. An additional lumber company, the Dubois-Matlack Lumber Company employed a work force of forty-five with an output of approximately 10 million board feet annually.¹⁵⁶

The dairy industry, too, continued to provide significant income to the county. The lowlands along the Columbia and miles of pasturelands north of the river held twenty-five dairies in 1939, with six creameries in Vancouver alone. The Holland Creamery, owned by J. Propstra operated on Main Street, as did the Vancouver Creamery which brought eggs, milk, cream, cottage cheese, and buttermilk to the military post. Raising flax, poultry, eggs, and turkeys were also profitable. The fruit industry and truck gardening provided income for small farmers, and three packing and canning plants in Vancouver employed between 1,500 and 1,700 men and women annually. The Washington Canneries Cooperative, organized in 1927 for fruits grown in Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Skamania, and Yakima Counties, had an average annual output of 13 million pounds of canned goods. Clark County prune growers organized the Washington Growers Packing Corporation in Vancouver in 1919 and marketed between 1 and 1.5 million dried prunes annually to the east coast and overseas.¹⁵⁷

As the economy turned to defense spending and employment levels rose, Congress began to cut funding to public works programs. During the summer of 1939,

¹⁵⁵ Sharon, *Vancouver and Clark County*, 39, 72.

¹⁵⁶ Sharon, *Vancouver and Clark County*, 93-96.

WPA workers held a three-day demonstration strike to protest new WPA regulations and because of cuts in the 1940 congressional appropriation. Workers asserted that Congress had not allocated enough money to provide relief laborers with the newly required minimum monthly hours – 130 – to receive subsistence wages, essentially lowering wages by requiring WPA workers to work longer hours for the same amount of money. In addition, they protested a forced one month unpaid vacation for those employed for eighteen months on the WPA payroll. The wage reduction immediately induced a nationwide WPA workers' strike, and nearly halted Vancouver's water works project. Ten thousand WPA workers walked off the job in Washington State, and nearly 80,000 participated in the strike throughout the country. Meanwhile, the Bonneville Camp clearing project and a Camas city street project slowed, but none of Clark County's projects closed altogether. Clark County workers protested for three days, July 10, 11, and 12, 1939, with traveling pickets moving from project to project. However, strike leaders refrained from picketing Vancouver Barracks, declaring an imaginary picket line instead. Although the more than 700 Clark County WPA workers who participated in demonstrations returned to their jobs without penalty, thousands of workers around the nation received dismissal notices for staying off the job more than five days. Senator James Murray of Montana immediately proposed a bill to put the prevailing wage back in place.¹⁵⁸

As the nation geared up for an unwanted war, the regional public works projects and the town's ideal location on the lower Columbia River put Vancouver into the

¹⁵⁷ Sharon, *Vancouver and Clark County*, 97-103.

¹⁵⁸ *VC*, "WPA Walkout Cripples Projects Here: Water Line Job Feels Strike Effect"; "WPA Projects Crippled By Walkout Here," 10 July 1939, 1, 2; "WPA Jobs On Skeleton Basis Here," 11 July 1939, 1, 2;

spotlight yet again. While the probability of a Second World War increased and Bonneville Dam began producing electric power, the need for aluminum increased. The expanding Aluminum Company of America (ALCOA) looked for an available power source, and found it in Vancouver. On December 20, 1939 ALCOA signed an agreement with BPA to provide power for a new smelter to be built in Vancouver, the first ALCOA smelter west of the Mississippi. When officials announced ALCOA's Vancouver arrival in December 1939, the *Columbian* headline called the \$3 million aluminum reduction plant "The greatest Christmas present in the history of the northwest's oldest city." The site would be located two-and-a-half miles downriver from Vancouver and would employ 300 to 400 men. A twenty-year contract with BPA provided what Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes called "a factual answer" to "skeptics" who decried the building of Bonneville Dam. Not only could the Northwest make use of the power provided by the dam, but businesses like ALCOA would pave the way for a new industrial future, one of expansion that meant "new markets for the merchant and farmer. This is only the beginning," claimed Ickes. The newspaper went on to say that the economic stimulus provided by Alcoa could mean shipment of an additional 50,000 tons of freight and more jobs for longshoremen and railroad workers.¹⁵⁹

By the following December, thousands flocked to the company's dedication of the \$4.5 million alumina reduction plant "which hundreds of workmen have raised in less than eight months from a former cow pasture." Willing labor and cheap electricity made the site ideal. Oregon Governor Charles Sprague attended, confirming the event's

"Strikers To Return To WPA Jobs," 12 July 1939, 1; "WPA Work On Normal Basis Again," 13 July 1939, 1, 2.

¹⁵⁹ Judy Chipman, "ALCOA: 1939-1987," *Clark County History* 36 (1995),70; Michael Woodruff, "Vancouver Alcoa Smelter, 1939-1986," *Clark County History* 27 (1986),54, 56-57.

significance. He jokingly remarked that he felt like the bridesmaid at a wedding – “What has she got that I haven’t got?” – later hailing the benefits to the entire region: “After all...there’s just the river and the sales tax between us,” he joked. Construction of the ALCOA plant downstream from Vancouver heralded economic and technological diversification for the city and brought a boom to the homebuilding industry as well. When the U.S. entered the war less than a year after ALCOA produced its first ingot, aluminum production soared. By 1943 the plant produced enough aluminum for 1,600 bombers, many constructed by the Boeing Company of Seattle.¹⁶⁰

Vancouver Prepares for War

Pre-World War II Vancouver was a significantly different place than it would be four years later. The town had grown by only 3,000 in the previous decade, reaching a population of 18,788 in 1940. By 1944, there would be 95,000 in the community and by 1950 the population would stabilize at 41,664, a 121.8% increase. The city of Vancouver in 1940 remained primarily Caucasian. Only four American Indians, sixteen Chinese, one Mexican, ten African Americans, and ten Japanese people lived in the city. The immigrant population was fairly small, with only 651 foreign-born members of the community, less than half the number in the previous two decades, 139 of them German and twenty-four Italians. The average man had completed an education of grade nine, and the average woman had gone to school through grade ten.¹⁶¹ Vancouver public

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*, Woodruff, “Alcoa,” 54, 57; Mockford, “Historic Currents,” 82.

¹⁶¹ United States Department of Commerce, prepared under the supervision of Dr. Leon E. Truesdell, Chief Statistician for Population, *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population, Volume II, Characteristics of the Population, Sex, Age, Race, Nativity, Citizenship, Country at Birth of Foreign-Born White, School Attendance, Education, Employment Status, Class of Worker, Major Occupation Group, and Industry Group, Part 7: Utah-Wyoming* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1943). “Table 24-Washington, Foreign-Born White, By Country of Birth, By Counties, And For Cities of 10,000 To 100,000: 1940-Con.,” 345;

schools included one high school, one junior high school, and seven grade schools for approximately 3,800 school age children. The Catholic Providence Academy offered a basic instructional program to its nearly 300 students. The Vancouver Public Library, located at Main and 15th Streets held over 20,000 books, pamphlets, magazines and other reading materials.¹⁶²

In 1939, The *Oregon Journal* hailed the importance of Vancouver Barracks as a site of “Good Defense and Good Business.” By 1940, wartime preparation occupied Vancouver Barracks and government and construction provided the highest employment rates in the county. Only seven new buildings had been built at Vancouver Barracks, the “orphan child” of new construction, since World War I. But by the end of the 1930s Vancouver Barracks was bringing millions of dollars into the region and congressional appropriations for the 1939-1940 year reflected both its military and economic significance. Not only did Congress allocate new construction funds, but funding increased for a little known and oft-neglected arm of the service, the Regular Army Reserves, eligible to honorably discharged veterans up to age thirty-six. The War Department planned to increase national reserve numbers to 75,000 in the coming year, adding to a military establishment that included: 13,000 officers and 165,000 enlisted men in the Regular Army; 205,000 officers and men in the National Guard; 30,000

“Table 25-Characteristics of the Population: Indians, Chinese, and Japanese, By Sex, For Counties, And For Cities of 10,000 to 100,000: 1940 and 1930,” 346; “Table 28-Characteristics of the Population: Race and Age By Sex, With Rural-Farm Population, For Minor Civil Divisions, By Counties: 1940-Con.,” 356; “Table 31-Washington: Composition of The Population, For Cities of 10,000 to 100,000: 1940,” 393; “Table 32-Washington: Age, Race, And Sex, For Cities of 10,000 To 100,000: 1940 And 1930 – Con.,” 395; *Idem*, Prepared under the supervision of Howard G. Brunsman, Chief, Population and Housing Division, *A Report of the Seventeenth Decennial Census of the United States: Census of Population: 1950, Volume II, Characteristics of the Population, Number of Inhabitants, General and Detailed Characteristics of the Population, Part 47, Washington* (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1952), “General Characteristics, Table 10-Summary of Population Characteristics, For the State (Urban and Rural), Standard Metropolitan Areas, Urbanized Areas, and Urban Places of 10,000 Or More: 1950,” 47-43; Housing Authority of the City of Vancouver, “50 Years of Progress Dedicated to People,” Pamphlet, 4.

reserve officers who received two weeks training; and 30,000 Citizens' Military Training students who trained for thirty days annually.

Government planning in 1939 and 1940 reflected knowledge of impending U.S. involvement overseas. Wartime preparations kept soldiers busy and occupied the thoughts of civilians. As the 7th Infantry trained at Camp Ord, California where war games engaged them until late spring, men around the nation registered for the draft. The *Columbian* published the names of 6,000 eligible Clark County men, and in nearby Portland some objection surfaced. Two men – a college professor and a minister – went before Judge Alger Fee in the Oregon District Court. Both claimed they had “conscientious scruples against the war and military service.” The same month, as part of the U.S. Defense program, the army announced plans to construct Barnes General Hospital in connection with the military reservation at Vancouver. The hospital would have entertainment and mess halls, a PX, infirmary, morgue, cold storage plant, fire station, motor repair shop, barracks for the medical detachment, eighteen standard thirty-three-bed wards, service buildings, and dental, eye, ear, nose and throat clinics.¹⁶³

Military preparations continued into 1941, the “most bustling year since World War I.” The 7th Infantry played war games at Camp Bonneville in early January, then left Vancouver permanently in late January and early February for general concentration of the 3rd Infantry at Fort Lewis. An advanced cadre of the 18th Engineers, the “See America First” regiment, performed routine post duties while awaiting the arrival of the

¹⁶² Sharon, *Vancouver and Clark County*, 57, 63, 87.

¹⁶³ *Oregonian*, “Two to Face Draft Charges,” 28 November 1940, 1; *Oregonian*, “Hospital Plans Made Known,” 28 November 1940, 1; Van Arsdol, “World War II in Vancouver,” *Clark County History* 19 (1978), 5-6; *VC*, 29 October 1940; 25 March 1940; 2 April 1941; *The Bo's'n's Whistle* 19 September 1942, 7.

main body of the regiment.¹⁶⁴ The 18th, commanded by Lieutenant Dabney O. Elliott, had formed in 1939 at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, its job to protect the Pacific Coast from invasion and air raid. On February 14, 1941 the kitchen cadre rolled over the Interstate Bridge followed by two more groups of convoy trucks. The 665 arriving troops encountered a military post under general rehabilitation through a joint WPA-army modernization program that included painting virtually all post buildings and overhauling their interiors at a cost of \$90,185.00.

By March, the Selective Service increased troop strength in the 18th Engineers to nearly 1,100 men. Mock war games in Vancouver provided military training for the 18th and other soldiers. When the Engineers arrived they brought in pontoons for bridge building and other heavy equipment to launch assault boats into the Columbia and build pontoon bridges on Vancouver's waterfront. The Interstate Bridge was considered a strategic point, and soldiers guarded it during wartime with a ring of spotlights and machine guns. Ten thousand troops, some from California, played war games in the Pacific Northwest, including mock defense at the mouth of the Columbia. That spring, the troops of the 18th traveled to William Randolph Hearst's San Simeon estate for spring training maneuvers.¹⁶⁵

National Defense preparation continued throughout the remainder of 1941. The Portland *Oregonian* reported in April 1941 that Washington and Oregon had more than forty establishments, army, navy, air, marine, and civilian, "operating full tilt in the business of bolstering the armed might of the United States." At Fort Lewis 35,000 soldiers concentrated, with 50,000 expected by the end of June. Shipbuilding contracts,

¹⁶⁴ *VC*, 7 February 1941.

¹⁶⁵ Van Arsdol, "WWII," 6-8; *VC*, 14 February 1941.

airport preparations, industrial partnerships with businesses like ALCOA and Boeing, and new military construction formed part of the preparations. The Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation began construction north of the St. Johns Bridge and expected to employ between 6,000 and 7,000 men. ALCOA contracted with BPA for 162,500 kilowatts of power. The original \$4.5 million expenditure to build and equip ALCOA climbed to \$10 million so that it could turn out enough aluminum for 3,000 military planes each month. The value of Pearson Field as an intermediate landing station became evident. Not only did it have a large pool of army reserve fliers, but it was also located next to fuel stations at Portland and Vancouver and could serve the newly-built Barnes Medical Center as a landing station for hospital transport ships. As many as 1,000 workmen had been hard at work completing the \$1.2 million, 750-bed Barnes Hospital. In April, with sixty-five buildings completed, nearly 100 medical corps members began moving into barracks at the hospital. Colonel Sidney Chappell commanded the “modern military medical center,” a city within itself where nearly 1,000 recruits and draftees, nurses, officers, and enlisted men would live and work. By the same month, more than 200 Clark County residents had already been drafted into the military.¹⁶⁶

As Vancouver Barracks prepared for war, it became clear that the military post would be significant to the war effort. Services for soldiers would be needed, and funds were finally available to make them possible. In the fall of 1941, the Vancouver USO opened its doors. The *Columbian* reported that the “First boys to play ping pong and to enjoy coffee and doughnuts in the game room were members of the Eighteenth Engineers band and color guard who were given special leave from rifle practice at Camp

¹⁶⁶ *Oregonian*, “National Defense In Washington and Oregon,” 6 April 1941, 1; “Index of Northwest’s Arms Drive,” 1; “Army Hospital Sped To Completion,” 2; “Pearson Field...Trains Reservists,” 5; Portland

Bonneville to provide music for the [opening] ceremonies and to hoist the flag over the center.” The newspaper pointed out that the USO was a gathering place for soldiers, rather than townspeople, a place where soldiers could meet their girlfriends and drink coffee, eat donuts, sing songs, and make use of the available recreation. Colonel E.H. Bertram, commander of Vancouver Barracks expressed pleasure at the center’s opening, saying it filled a “great need” from a moral standpoint.¹⁶⁷

Wartime in Vancouver: The Kaiser Shipyards

When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 Mayor Stanley of Vancouver declared a state of emergency. The city’s strategic location – vital to north-south troop movement made it a potential “powder keg.” Washington and Oregon civic leaders immediately put the Washington State Patrol and Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office on guard at the Interstate Bridge, and many community members volunteered for civil defense. World War II had arrived, the four war years that would inaugurate the modern era in the Pacific Northwest. Vancouver’s tactical location assured the community an important role and Vancouver Barracks again became a training and movement center to and from areas crucial to the war effort. One example was the transfer of the 18th Engineers to Alaska where they were involved in construction of the Alaska Highway.¹⁶⁸ As Pacific Northwest historian Carlos Schwantes asserts, “Although no region of the United States escaped the impact of war, few if any experienced more rapid and intense changes than the Pacific Northwest. Wartime social and economic pressures scarcely left a corner untouched.” The war impacted communities small and

Shipyards...Oregon’s Largest,” 9; “ALCOA: Warplane Metal,” 10.

¹⁶⁷ *VC*, 23 October 1941, 1, 2.

large, but nowhere in the Northwest, other than Seattle, did it so completely restructure community as in the Vancouver-Portland area where one of the region's best-known war industries – the Kaiser Shipyards – found a home.

Many of the changes that occurred during the war – increased population, building community services, and an altered social structure – took place because Vancouver was an ideal site for shipbuilding and overseas embarkation. In September 1942 Vancouver Barracks established Camp Hatheway at the present-day site of Clark Community College as a staging area and processing center for the Portland Port of Embarkation. The camp processed thousands of soldiers, and housed prisoners and supplies.¹⁶⁹ Vancouver's riverside location, only 120 miles inland and with its deep-water port, available land and growth potential made the city one of three prime shipbuilding locations in the region. The Kaiser Company built two shipyards in Portland – Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation and Swan Island. On January 9, 1942 Henry J. Kaiser signed a contract with the U.S. Maritime Commission for management of a new shipyard in Vancouver. Three days later, the company leased part of a dairy farm for construction, a 157-acre tract of land near Vancouver Barracks, about three-quarters of a mile above the Interstate Bridge. By January 14 the *Columbian* reported on the Kaiser contract, and the following day transformation of the site from pastureland to industrial site began with cleaning and dredging. Over 3.25 million cubic yards of sand were dredged from the Columbia River to form the fill along the Columbia's shoreline.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁸ Van Arsdol, "WWII," 8.

¹⁶⁹ Camp Hatheway, activated September 18, 1942, was torn down in the late 1940s. The camp was described by Dick Spiro, one of the arrivals (and later a reporter for the *Longview Daily News*) as "quite a little complex," with facilities that duplicated "those at the lower end – movie, mess hall, fire station, jail, motor pool." Van Arsdol, "WWII, 14; Pollard, "Presence and Missions," 37.

¹⁷⁰ Schwantes, *Pacific Northwest*, 326, 328-329; *VC*, 14 January 1942, 1; *The Bo's'n's Whistle*, 27 September 1942, 11.

Work at the shipyard proceeded rapidly. By January 18, road construction to the job site began. Two days later the foundation for the administration building was poured and the first power lines were underway. Shipyard construction halted temporarily as the army and Kaiser officials held a conference about the use of towering construction cranes at the shipyard site and potential air traffic conflict at Pearson field. Vancouver officials were concerned since the plant was expected to bring \$150,000 daily in payroll. Construction continued after a brief half-day halt on Jan. 19, 1942. By the end of February, the yard was nearly ready and Kaiser had announced a contract for four additional ship ways.¹⁷¹ By March, the Kaiser Company yard at Vancouver was going “full blast,” with construction ahead of schedule. Shipyard workers completed Vancouver’s first Liberty Ship, the *George Vancouver*, by July 4, 1942. That summer work began on a type of landing craft called an LST and President Roosevelt commissioned the Kaiser Yard to build baby flat-tops or CVEs (aircraft carriers). Eleanor Roosevelt came to the Vancouver Shipyard to christen the first CVE, the *U.S.S. Alazon Bay*. The *Alazon Bay* was the first of the Kaiser-class CVEs launched from Vancouver and the first all-welded carrier, very light and maneuverable. They would later prove their use through battle, earning the Vancouver Shipyard commendation by Admiral Howard Vickery for turning out fifty baby flat-tops with less man hours than other yards spent building simpler Liberty-type ships.¹⁷²

Building so many ships took a lot of labor. At the end of September 1942, 12,000 people worked at the Vancouver Shipyard, and the Kaiser Shipyard newspaper, the

¹⁷¹ A “way” is the site where ships are built and where the hull slides when a ship is launched.
¹⁷² *VC*, 20 January 1942, 1; *Bo’s’n’s Whistle*, 26 February 26, 1942, 10; *Bo’s’n’s Whistle*, 26 March 1942 in Van Arsdol, WWII, 9; Crowell, “Baby Flat-Tops: Clark County Roots in Naval History” *Clark County History* 36 (1995), 74-75; Van Arsdol, “WWII,” 9-10; Mockford, “Historic Currents,” 82.

Bo's'n's Whistle predicted that thousands more would soon arrive. Kaiser recruiters scoured the country soliciting workers. The first "all-Kaiser" train to the Northwest arrived in Vancouver at 8:45 a.m. on September 30, 1942 and brought 500 potential shipyard workers from New York City. The Kaiser Company provided transport then took the fare out of later paychecks. New recruits were taken to the personnel building, signed up for employment, photographed for identification then returned to buses. Next, they were taken to the newly-built Hudson House, a dormitory about a quarter-mile east of the shipyard that by late 1942 could provide room and board for up to 4,000 men. The second train arrived in Vancouver the following day, with the third scheduled to take new workers to Swan Island. The "K-6" train, the sixth Kaiser Special to head west, brought 486 workers to Vancouver. According to the *Whistle*, "Many races and ages were represented. But they were all Americans, anxious to take their place in the war program, eager to work and live in the Pacific Northwest." Among those highlighted in the *Whistle* was Ben Brown, a thirty-eight year-old African American man, ex-captain of life-guards at a New York beach, graduate of Howard University, Washington, D.C., who had doubled for Paul Robeson¹⁷³ in a film and also played college and professional football.¹⁷⁴

Some African Americans like Ben Brown worked in the Vancouver Shipyards in 1942; however, most lived across the Columbia River at Vanport, one of two Portland housing projects that accepted Blacks. Vancouver would not experience a major influx of African Americans in the community until the spring and summer of 1943 when African American workers moved into semi-segregated housing projects at Bagley

¹⁷³ For a biography of Paul Robeson, the African American scholar, performer, and activist see <http://www.scc.rutgers.edu/njh/PaulRobeson/>.

Downs and Burton Homes. Housing projects in Portland and Vancouver housed people of many races, but in most cases Blacks and Whites lived in separate areas within the projects.¹⁷⁵ Meanwhile, African Americans in the Kaiser Shipyards faced discrimination as local unions excluded Black workers. The Shipyard Negro Organization for Victory issued the following statement in November 1942:

We the Negro people employed by the Kaiser Company maintain that under false pretenses we were brought from east to west to work for defense, and we demand with due process of law, the following rights: (1) to work at our trades on equal rights with whites; (2) to go to vocational school or take vocational training on equal rights with whites.

One union leader said he would “pull the place down” rather than provide Black people with equal rights at the Kaiser Shipyards. African Americans responded by forming an auxiliary union, but it remained un-chartered and exclusionary practices continued.¹⁷⁶

Tension heightened by fear induced other discriminatory responses to the war. In February 1942 President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 requiring all Japanese on the West Coast to relocate to inland areas. In March 1942 the *Columbian* reported: “Japanese, German and Italian aliens and American Japanese are forbidden hereafter to live in southern and western Clark county, it was revealed today in army orders establishing prohibited zones, as itemized by Associated Press reports. An area around Bonneville dam also is in the same category.” The orders were part of a sweeping pronouncement that a wide border along the Pacific Coast, from ninety-five to 250 miles

¹⁷⁴ Van Arsdol, “WWII,” 10; *Bo’s’n’s Whistle*, 8 October 1942, 9; *Bo’s’n’s Whistle*, 22 October 1942, 5.

¹⁷⁵ At the end of September 1943, Vancouver housed 124 Black families. When Burton Homes opened up in October 1943, the number of Black families increased to 375. By January 1945, the number of Black families peaked at 1,730. Housing Authority of Vancouver, conducted under the direction of Milton Bona by E. Shelton Hill, Lou M. Smith, Floyd L. Standifer and Juanita Harris, *A Survey of Negro Tenants* (November 1945), 1, 5; VHA, “50 Years,” 5-6.

inland and reaching along the Arizona-Mexico border had been designated Military Area No. 1, "from which enemy aliens and American Japanese may be excluded or their movements restricted." Lieutenant General DeWitt announced that his first evacuation order would deal with Japanese aliens and American citizens of Japanese descent in the military area. German and Italian aliens were slated for later evacuation. Exceptions would be made for aging Germans and Italians and those with children in the armed forces. DeWitt declared that immediate evacuation was impossible, and those Japanese who moved into the interior likely would not be bothered. All aliens in Washington, Oregon, California or Arizona were required to register at a post office whenever they changed their place of residence. DeWitt also emphasized that his evacuation orders did not lessen restrictions imposed by civil authorities that aliens register changes of address with U.S. attorneys, the FBI, and the commissioner of immigration.

Prohibited areas ranged from thirty to 125 miles deep along the Mexican border and ninety other small sections included surrounding radio stations, power plants, telegraph, and telephone offices, reservoirs, armories, railroad bridges, and dams. The remainder of military area No. 1 comprised half of Washington, Oregon and California and the southern half of Arizona. These were designated restricted Zone B where some aliens would be permitted to live within certain restrictions. The rest of the four states were described as Military Area No. 2. The demarcation line ran thirteen miles north of Vancouver to Battle Ground and thence south to Orchards and Camas where it crossed the Columbia River. Everything south or west of the line lay in the prohibited zone. Sixteen additional zones in Clark, Skamania, and Klickitat counties were named

¹⁷⁶ Donna Sinclair, "Drawing the Color Line," Center for Columbia River History Web Site, Columbia Slough Community History, <http://www.ccrh.org/comm/slough/afampdx1.htm> [accessed June 1, 2002].

prohibited zones in Military Area No. 1, including the Spokane, Portland, and Seattle railroad properties, and various bridges throughout the counties. Not only were “enemy aliens” forbidden to live in the zone, but they were also forbidden to travel the highways running through it. The uprooting process was expected to be gradual, reported the *Columbian*. Although many Germans and Italians had registered as county residents by March 1942, some had since been naturalized and others had moved.

At the end of March, Clark County’s more than forty Japanese aliens and Japanese Americans received less than a week to evacuate their homes voluntarily. W.A. Lund, field agent for the Farm Security Administration (FSA) informed Japanese people at twenty-four farms in the county that they should report to the FSA in Portland, and were not to go beyond the five-mile limit imposed on their actions by federal authority.¹⁷⁷ In May 1942 Japanese in the Portland area were rounded up and taken to the Portland Assembly Center, the site of the Pacific International Exposition Center and stockyards. Mae Ninomiya described the experience in a summer 2000 interview:

We were housed in a barn where the animals had been placed for the exhibition show...our endurance throughout the hot summer days, with the penetration of animal odors and our anxiety over our future, finally came to a close in September. We were all herded into trains for our next home [Mindidoka Internment Camp], Hunt, Idaho.¹⁷⁸

Anxiety continued along the West Coast throughout the war as a fear of bombing, air raids, and Japanese and German espionage took hold. In the fall of 1942, President Roosevelt went on a secret coast to coast inspection of war industries. Newspapers remained voluntarily silent about the tour, but later reported once the president had

¹⁷⁷ *VC*, 3 March 1942, 1, 2; 17 March 1942; 27 March 1942.

¹⁷⁸ Mae Ninomiya, interviewed by Stacey Lambach, August 15, 2000, Portland, Oregon. <http://www.ccrh.org/comm/slough/japanese.htm> [accessed June 1, 2002].

returned safely to Washington D.C. While in the Northwest, President Roosevelt visited the Kaiser Shipyards and the Aluminum Company of America at Vancouver. Roosevelt attempted to encourage workers at Oregon Ship, telling them, “You are doing a wonderful piece of work for your country and for civilization. With the help of God we are going to see this thing through to the end.” His visit to ALCOA startled the pot men who had no idea he was coming. While at the plant, the president talked to plant superintendent C.S. Thayer about the details of the aluminum process and the importance of the metal to the war effort. Later that afternoon, the president and his party went to Swan Island to witness the launching of the Liberty ship *Joseph N. Teal*. Six months later, the president visited with Henry Kaiser at Vancouver as more than 7,000 people witnessed the launching of the aircraft carrier *Alazon Bay*. Construction of Liberty Ships and ATL Tank Landing Vessels proceeded rapidly at the Vancouver Shipyard throughout the end of 1942, and the shipyard continued to expand. By November 1942, the *Columbian* reported that the Kaiser Yard dunked another tank-landing aircraft into the water, “like shelling peas.”¹⁷⁹

The Housing Crunch

For the small town of just under 19,000, the Kaiser Shipyard boom came like a thunderstorm, and it was pouring down people. Never before in Vancouver’s history had the community experienced such rapid population growth. With Kaiser Specials daily bringing hundreds of workers, something had to be done about housing. Vancouver officials rapidly determined that they must apply for federal aid as they anticipated the

¹⁷⁹ *Bo’s’n’s Whistle*, 8 October 1942, 16; Bona, “U.S. Presidents,” 69-70; Mockford, “Historic Currents,” 82; *Bo’s’n’s Whistle*, 22 October 1942, 4; *VC*, 23 November 1942, 1.

storm of shipyard workers in the city. By September 1942 the *Bo's'n's Whistle* ran a column encouraging private individuals to create Victory rooms in their homes. By then an urgent need for space existed. People slept in cars, trailers, barns and sheds. Families were separated because they could not find housing, and community services couldn't meet the needs of the bursting population as thousands arrived to work in the Vancouver Shipyards. The city solicited the federal government for \$635,000 worth of federal aid projects to expand and improve the water system, build a new fire station, and to build a community pool at Leverich Park and a bandstand at Esther Short Park.¹⁸⁰

The city responded to the housing crisis on February 5, 1942 by creating the Vancouver Housing Authority. Mayor Stanley appointed the first five-member board to the housing authority, consisting of D. Elwood Caples, Edwin Wintler, Fred Ward, Walter Givens, and Earl Anderson. The volunteer board faced a host of problems, with their main task to find solutions to the drastic housing shortage. They also had to meet many other public service demands, including development of new utilities, sewer and water systems. Public safety needs increased, as did the need for schools, hospitals, and recreational facilities. In short, the new housing authority would have to “deal with the monumental problems facing a community...about to triple its numbers almost overnight.”¹⁸¹

To meet the requirements of the thousands of single men coming to town, the housing authority built Hudson House, located just south of present-day Portco. Rooms at Hudson House rented for \$3.50 a week double occupancy and \$5.00 single occupancy. The Housing Authority also managed the dining hall at Hudson House where a person

¹⁸⁰ *VC*, 20 January 1942, 2; *Bo's'n's Whistle*, 19 September 1942, 9.

could eat two meals on-site and take a box lunch to work for \$1.45 a day. “World famous” chef, Henry Thiele, operated the dining room where workers ate family style with “attractive waitresses” serving, and as much food as a man could want. By September 1942, four of the ten units, each with 400 rooms had opened. When completed the Hudson House would occupy a 45-acre tract, landscaped, with roads and parking facilities. Outdoor recreation facilities included softball diamonds, horseshoe courts, swimming and boating accommodations. The Housing Authority planned a new administrative and commissary building with a post office, fountain bar, store, library and other service facilities. The Clark County Library Association furnished a temporary library of 5,000 free books. Men could go to Dormitory D and check out books from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the evening. New employees moved in immediately without any money down since an arrangement with the Federal Housing Authority and the Kaiser Company allowed for paycheck deductions for housing. “To insure proper rest and privacy for workmen on the three shifts, graveyard, swingshift and day men [were] housed in separate dormitories.” By the beginning of 1943, 3,364 men occupied Hudson House and more units were under construction.¹⁸²

In February 1944 the Housing Authority published their annual report, “A Tale of 6 Cities.” The report described the rapid development “with which raw land was conjured into cities, complete with their own water, sewage and electric distribution systems, their own stores and public buildings.” McLoughlin Heights was the first community planned by the housing authority, with Ogden Meadows not far behind. However, when the time came for occupancy, while Ogden Meadows lacked cooking

¹⁸¹ VHA, “50 Years,” 2-3.

¹⁸² VHA, “50 Years,” 4; *Bo’s’n’s Whistle*, 19 September 1942, 6; Van Arsdol, WWII, 10.

facilities McLoughlin Heights lacked something even more significant – plumbing. Ogden Meadows opened August 24, 1942 and Mr. And Mrs. F.J. Mendenhall of Nebraska received the first emergency housing, with fifty families following the same day. The Mendenhalls and others moved into the 1,192-unit emergency housing complex without ceremony. Thirty days later, the first tenants occupied McLoughlin Heights, which later became the nation’s second largest federal housing project. Only the 9,942-unit Vanport, just across the Columbia River in North Portland, would be larger than the 6,086-unit project at McLoughlin Heights. The remaining Vancouver Housing projects that ultimately held nearly 60,000 people remained under construction throughout 1942.¹⁸³

Work at McLoughlin Heights was well underway on 1,000 acres of unincorporated land by the summer of 1942. The Housing Authority planned 4,000 temporary homes and 1,000 homes “that would become an asset to the post-war community.” Completing the planned community was no easy feat. The wartime town would be larger than the city of Vancouver, but only two narrow country lanes led to McLoughlin Heights – Mill Plain, running east from the city and Andresen Road crossing south. First, contractors improved the existing roads and then built side roads into the project. The city dug wells, laid water and sewer mains and power lines, and built water towers. War workers moved into the first “demountable” temporary houses on September 23, 1942, with a formal dedication. While the Vancouver High School band played the national anthem, a color guard from Vancouver Barracks raised “Old Glory”

¹⁸³ VC, 24 August 1942, 1; Housing Authority of Vancouver, *A Tale of 6 Cities: The Annual Report of the Housing Authority of Vancouver, Washington* (Vancouver, Washington: February 1944), 2, 3; Vancouver Housing Authority, “Howard J. Barnham’s copy of MIRACLE CITY: The Amazing Story of the Building

at the conclusion of a brief program at which governmental and civic officials spoke. Elwood Caples, chairman of the Vancouver Housing Authority, was master of ceremonies. By October, 4,000 temporary homes were completed, with permanent homes and row housing under construction. The additional housing facilities would not be available until the following year, nor would the impending shopping center, community center, medical center, three schools, and other community facilities. When completed, McLoughlin Heights covered 1,098 acres, contained sixty miles of streets, and could hold 25,000 people.¹⁸⁴

Materials shortages and delivery problems due to a focus on war materials rather than housing caused construction difficulties for the contractors, Haddock Construction Company and the Vancouver Contractors. The pipe for the McLoughlin Heights water system came from an abandoned Wyoming oil town, a temporary arrangement since crews knew it could only last twenty years. Additional problems arose, such as no water faucets for bathrooms, and toilet seats delivered without bowls. A California project had bowls, but no seats, a seemingly amusing situation that was not funny to war workers living in stables. During early construction, some received furnished homes, but as materials became scarce, furnishings became more basic. Temporary homes often had coal ranges and ice-boxes constructed of paper fabrics rather than electric ranges and refrigerators. "Ice stations dotted the housing developments and coal burning heaters were the only source of heat. On windless winter days thick soot darkened the sky."¹⁸⁵

of a New City of 25,000 Persons on McLoughlin Heights, Vancouver, Washington," Housing Authority File, Clark County Historical Museum, 1.

¹⁸⁴ *VC*, 29 September 1942, 1; VHA, "50 Years," 3; VHA, "A Tale," 2.

¹⁸⁵ *VC*, 29 September 1942; VHA, "50 Years," 3-4.

It soon became clear that the 6,000 homes planned by the housing authority would not be enough, so they decided to build more housing at Fruit Valley, and in the Fourth Plain Road area at Ogden Meadows and Burton. Work on the housing projects progressed rapidly. During the winter of 1942-1943, workers constructed 1,200 homes in a three-week period. By December 1942, war workers moved into public housing at a rate of 250 families per week. By January 1943 the Vancouver Shipyards employed more than 27,000 war workers. Other areas boomed as well, in support of defense. The ALCOA plant employed enough people to produce aluminum for tens of thousands of airplanes, while the J.D. Ross BPA Substation employed hundreds of people “facilitating the flow of electric energy to...war industries.” And the lumber and construction industries exploded.¹⁸⁶

Wartime Community

The Kaiser Company attempted to address the many needs of incoming workers, providing housing, medical care, transportation, and even education. Many of the solutions to shipyard community dilemmas contributed to modernizing Vancouver. Henry J. Kaiser, Edgar F. Kaiser, and associates organized a charitable organization to build a hospital for Kaiser employees. Northern Permanente, built on a hill above the shipyard area, contained brand new state of the art technology such as a speaker system to connect patients with nurses, modern operating and lighting equipment, and central sterilized glass and brick work areas. The hospital offered medical care to employees and their families on a prepaid plan basis and workers could receive physician’s services,

¹⁸⁶ VHA, “50 Years,” 4; Van Arsdol, “WWII,” 16; VHA, “A Tale,” 1.

hospital care, ambulance service, laboratory studies, x-rays, drugs, etc., as needed for non-industrial injuries and illness for less than .10 cents per day. In Portland, the medical plans included a choice of medical facilities, but in Vancouver treatment was provided only at Northern Permanente. The Kaiser shipyards also had first aid stations and a yard field hospital. The smaller field units were open 24 hours a day, with registered nurses working three shifts. The field hospitals were slated for location at strategic places throughout the yard, and employees were advised to use the field hospitals first when in need of first aid treatment.

Transportation was a serious problem at the Kaiser yards. The wartime rubber shortage placed a heavy load on public services as people put their private autos away for the duration of the war. With housing at a minimum, many Vancouver workers initially lived in nearby Portland where Vanport, the nation's largest housing project, stood. While public housing projects remained under construction, nearly 2,000 employees daily crossed the river by ferry to work in the Vancouver Shipyard and Kaiser planned special train operations on the SP&S Railroad from downtown Portland. City of Vancouver and U.S. Maritime Commission buses also provided transportation, both for workers in the housing projects and those living in outlying rural areas. Under the government gas rationing plan, each passenger car except commercial vehicles received a basic "A" gas ration book permitting a maximum mileage of 240 per month or 2,880 miles per year. Application forms for ration books were available in the Kaiser shipyards. If anyone had more than five tires, they were expected to turn them in to government agencies. The Railway Express Agency collected tires and the government determined individual reimbursements. Within the shipyards bicycles became an important mode of

transportation, particularly at Vancouver where there was more distance between buildings than at the other shipyards. The Vancouver Yard used 175 of the 283 bicycles used in Kaiser shipyards in 1942. Because of the distance between buildings in the large shipyard, telephones provided the best means of communication and the Vancouver Exchange handled more calls than the other two yards. Eight operators maintained twenty-four-hour service and handled an average of 21,500 calls daily. The first telephone service at the Vancouver Yard began in January 1942 in the dairy barn on the site of the original shipyard.¹⁸⁷

The tremendous population explosion in the first year of World War II rapidly changed Vancouver and Clark County. Existing social services could not accommodate the tremendous population increase. Schools almost immediately faced classroom shortages and in 1942 a program of school construction that would add eight new schools to Vancouver was underway. The public school system would also direct the daycare centers that cared for the children of working parents. In addition, the school district managed a food take-out program to provide hot dishes to working parents. Each housing project had a recreation center where events like craft fairs, kite flying contests, sports events, talent shows, and music classes took place. They also provided Saturday movies, held interdenominational religious services, and made medical and dental services available. One of the problems encountered by residents was that the identical houses on look-alike streets caused confusion. School bus drivers finished their days with students on board and workers could not find their homes in the dark. “A simple problem, a simple solution,” determined the housing authority – “paint the houses

¹⁸⁷ *Bo's'n's Whistle*, 19 September 1942, 7; *Bo's'n's Whistle*, 27 September 1942, 19, 26; *Bo's'n's Whistle*, 5 November 1942, 6, 7, 9, 10.

different colors. Painting progressed so quickly that family members left their homes only to find a whole new look and get lost all over again.” The housing authority also organized Victory gardens and home beautification projects. The vegetables were necessary, and flowers were viewed as “food for the soul.”¹⁸⁸

Another major change began to occur in 1942 as women entered the labor force in droves. The *Whistle* reported that the previous year (1941) “shipbuilding would have stopped at the sight of a woman on the ways.” By September 1942 the picture had changed. Over 770 women did “men’s work” in the yards and the paper predicted that number would multiply many fold in the coming year. In May 1942, the Vancouver Yard employed only 382 women, all office workers. In August 1942, the Kaiser Shipyard requested women welders “then one craft after another began to accept women.” In September 1942, the *Whistle* sent a contradictory message. Women should encourage their husbands to come to the shipyards, while they take over non-essential jobs and maintain the home life of their communities. At the same time, the paper reported that the Portland area needed to speed up production. The *Whistle* called for: “60,000 more men and women who will have to make sacrifices and endure discomforts foreign to the accustomed mode of living, and at the same time keep alive the home and community life which is one of the foundations of our democracy. We must have these ships – without them we will lose the war.” Although the Vancouver yard could employ over 40,000 men, only 12,00 were on the payroll in the summer of 1942. Swan Island, where 30,000 could work at the tanker yard, had only 8,000.

¹⁸⁸ VHA, “50 Years,” 5; VHA, “A Tale,” 4-5.

Women in the Kaiser yards worked as welders, electrician's helpers, prefabrication trainees, riveters, loftsmen, in the warehouse, as clerics, in offices, as messengers, and as IBM operators. With the exception of certain office, clerical, technical and engineering occupations, a master contract between the management of the yards, the U.S. Maritime Commission, and the Metal Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor covered the principal jobs at the Kaiser Shipyards. Rates of pay ranged from .93 per hour for warehouse work, tank scalers and cleaners who were usually women and often African American, to \$1.33 per hour for electric crane operators, twenty tons and over, and weld examiners. Most jobs paid between \$1.00 and \$1.20 per hour for the day shift, with a ten percent increase for swing shift (4:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m., and fifteen percent more for graveyard shift (12:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.) Most worked a six-day work week, with overtime paid at time-and-a-half for a seventh day or more than eight hours in a day.¹⁸⁹

By 1944 the Vancouver Yard would employ 10,600 women, thus effecting major changes in community life and in women's roles. The *Whistle* admonished women to dress for work:

... Taking a tip from the men on the job, the wise feminine shipbuilder wears working clothes for comfort and safety.

She wears a man's type shirt with a close fitting collar for protection, her hair is up, closely covered to protect it against sparks and machines. She wears strong serviceable jeans or overalls without cuffs, heavy low-heeled work shoes and a closely fitting jacket for comfort.

She will leave her necklace and rings at home along with her high-heeled open-toed shoes and inflammable cellulose or silk slacks and jackets. For these things are downright dangerous. Preferred colors are dark and subdued."¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ *Bo's'n's Whistle*, 27 September 1942, 3-5, 18; Van Arsdol, "WWII," 20.

¹⁹⁰ *Bo's'n's Whistle*, 19 September 1942, 13.

The article in the shipyard newspaper revealed only a glimpse of the colossal changes that would soon arrive. As men and women worked in the shipyards, on the docks, and on the farms, little did they realize how very different their lives would be by the end of the war.

An Era of Modernization

Americans entered World War II even as they battled against the Great Depression. Wartime work was as much an opportunity to make good wages and get a headstart as it was a patriotic duty. By its end, the war would completely restructure communities, while revolutionizing the nation's global role.¹⁹¹ The period between the wars had been both hopeful and difficult, and more than ever before Vancouver's destiny had linked to outside forces, re-shaping the national character as well as its own. Aviation at Pearson Field was integrally linked to modernizing efforts that would forever change communications and warfare. Depression era programs like the Civilian Conservation Corps built a partially trained populace ready to face the future at the same time that it modernized equipment and opened forests to the economic future. Columbia River development provided the hydroelectric power that fueled the war effort. And federal funds helped to build the infrastructure that would maintain a vital post-war community and strengthen regional ties.

In October 1942, Henry Kaiser addressed shipyard workers in the *Bo's'n's Whistle*. The entrepreneurial patriarch looked ahead, asking: "After the War ... What?" He hailed the new industrial technologies and developing transportation systems that had come to wartime communities. Americans had the potential to learn how to build

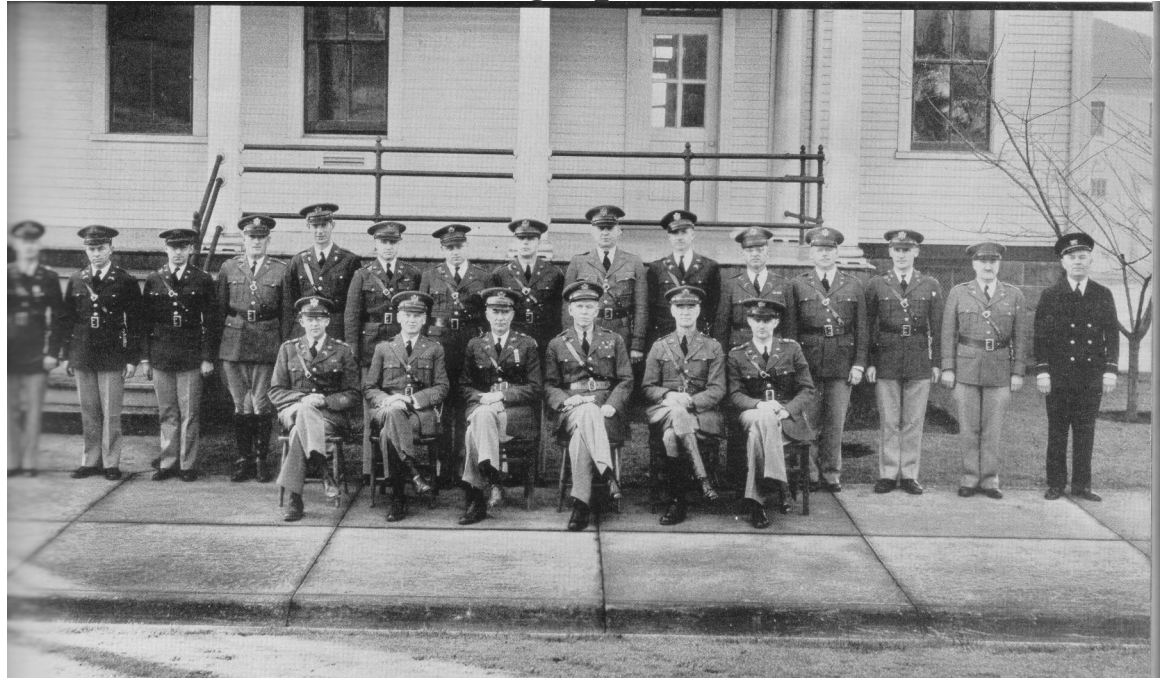
modern communities through their wartime experience, declared Kaiser. Between January 1943 and the end of 1944 the number of workers in the Vancouver Yard would range from 27,000 to nearly 39,000 at times. At war's end in 1945 10,000 workers continued at the Vancouver shipyard, and by that time Vancouver had launched ten Liberty vessels, thirty landing crafts (LSTs), fifty escort aircraft carriers (baby flat-tops), thirty-one attack transports, twelve C-4 troopships, eight C-4 cargo vessels, and two 14,000-ton drydocks.¹⁹²

The first year of World War II was a watershed time for the nation and for Vancouver. Like Seattle, Portland, and other Pacific Coast cities, Vancouver burst out of its seams. Never again would it be the sleepy little town that had witnessed early aviation feats, seen farmers pour milk into the Columbia River, hosted the Civilian Conservation Corps, and requested the movement of railroad ties by strikers for a community festival during a time of strife. This was the modern era, when roads, highways, airports and telephones became commonplace and isolation ended. During the war, the Vancouver Shipyard received accolades for its rapid production. World War II brought workers to the Northwest from throughout the nation and wartime neighborhoods earned names like "Little Texas" and "Little Arkansas." Distinct communities developed in the housing projects and at the shipyards, changing the town forever. By the end of the war, the town adapted to new groups of people as thousands of African Americans moved into the community's public housing projects, Italian Prisoners of War settled in at CMTC Camp Hatheway, and guards patrolled at the Interstate Bridge.

¹⁹¹ Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear*, 10.

¹⁹² *Bo's'n's Whistle*, 22 October 22 1942, 3; Van Arsdol, "WWII," 16, 19, 29.

Photographs



Vancouver Barracks, ca. 1937. George C. Marshall front, third from right
Photo reproduced from U.S. Army Ninth Corps CCC Annual



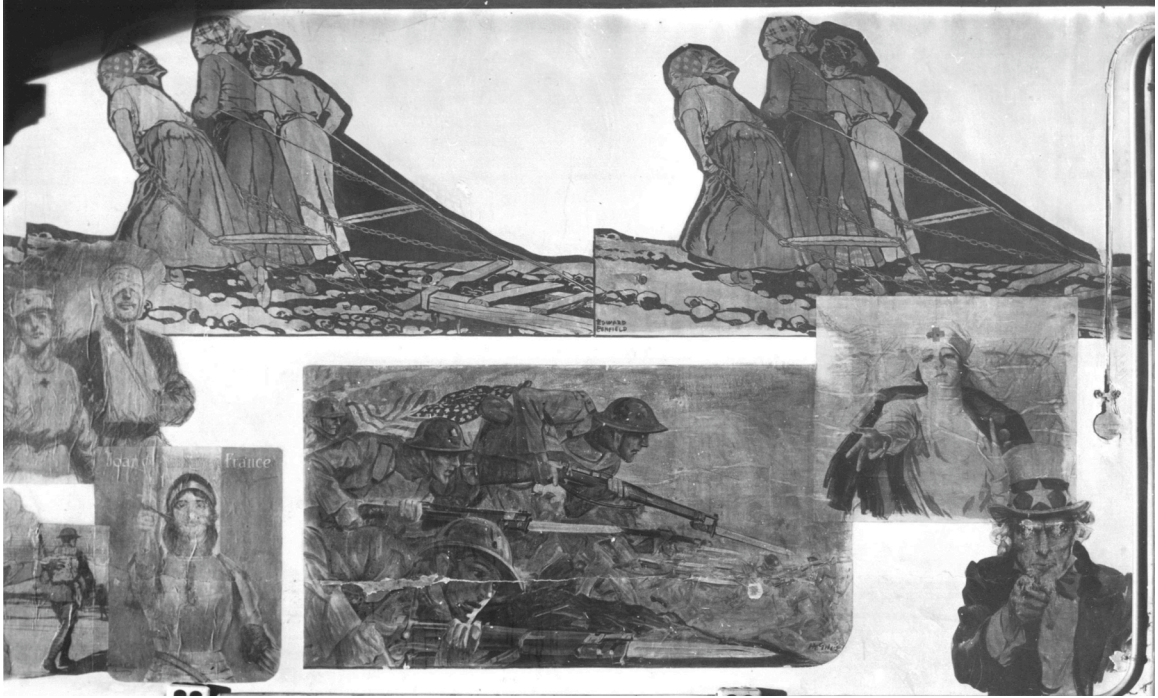
321st Squadron flying over Mt. Hood. *Courtesy Pearson Air Museum*



Flagpole raising at Camp Hemlock, Columbia National Forest
Courtesy Gifford Pinchot National Forest Heritage Program



CCC boys train for fire crew
Courtesy Gifford Pinchot National Forest Heritage Program



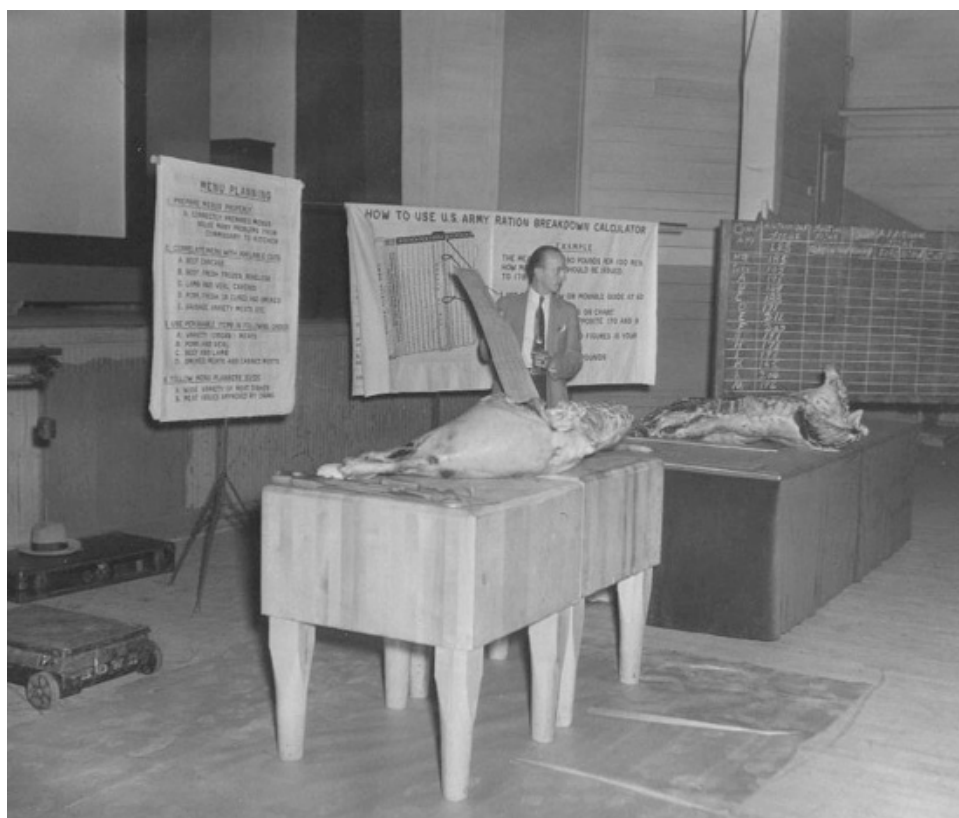
Vancouver Barracks, WWII mural
Courtesy U.S. Army, Vancouver Barracks



Arts and Skills Corps
Courtesy U.S. Army, Vancouver Barracks



Office of War Information – modern technology available in 1942
Courtesy Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division
FSA-OWI Collection [LC-USF34-026046-C; 026047-C]



Lessons in rationing, WWII
Courtesy U.S. Army, Vancouver Barracks

Part II: Appendices

Appendix I: Topics for Future Research, 1920-1942

This section highlights areas for future social history research on the Vancouver National Historic Reserve. Some topics contain specific citations to get the researcher started, with suggestions for additional research. Others require the kind of investigation that involves piecing information together from obscure sources. The Clark County Museum and Historical Society holds early city records, marriage records, and other useful collections such as photographs and letters. The collections of the Oregon Historical Society Research Library hold many useful materials pertaining to Vancouver. General military research would include Annual Reports of the Secretary of War, records of the Adjutant's Office, the *Army Navy Journal*, Infantry and Cavalry journals, Congressional records, military reports, orders, and regulations, and the personal and institutional records of military regiments found at Carlisle Barracks U.S. Army Military History Institute. Online resources for the Military History Institute are available at <http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usamhi/>. See also, U.S. Army Military History Institute, *Army Annual Reports, An Inventory and Research Guide To: Secretary of War Annual Reports, Secretary of the Army Annual Reports, Department of the Army Historical Summaries*. Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania: U.S. Army Military History Institute, 1993.

The Southwest Washington Regional Archives in Olympia contains a wealth of un-mined sources, particularly useful for local business, economic, and social research. The archival holdings of the Regional Archives span from 1850 to the present and include records from the county assessor, auditor, clerk, school districts, port, P.U.D., and treasurer, in addition to more recent governmental agency records. For an overview of

the history of the Reserve, see Lois Mack, *One Place Across Time: Vancouver National Historic Reserve, Vancouver*, Washington, with an introduction by William L. Lang. For general state and regional history, see: Gordon Dodds, *The American Northwest: a history of Oregon and Washington* (Arlington Heights, Ill: Forum Press, 1986); Robert E. Ficken and Charles P. LeWarne, *Washington: A Centennial History* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981); William L. Lang, ed. *A Columbia River Reader* (Vancouver, WA: The Center for Columbia River History, 1992); William Robbins, *Landscapes of Promise: The Oregon Story, 1800-1940* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997); *Landscapes of Conflict: The Oregon Story, 1940-2000* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004); and *The Great Northwest: the search for regional identity* (Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, 2001).

The Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust and the National Park Service hold a Veteran's Retiree Collection that includes military orders, the personal papers of soldiers and officers, unit histories, military rosters, recruiting posters, General Orders and Circulars, military newspapers, newspaper clippings, and photographs.

This appendix refers to topics that have not been addressed in previous documents in this series and addresses the period from 1920 to 1942. Separate appendices follow for the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Russian Aviators, the 7th Infantry, and entry into World War II. The following is an alphabetical list of general research topics:

- **Air Force origins, Army Signal Corps**

The Army Signal Corps preceded the U.S. Air Force, blazing the path in military use of airplanes. The navy, too, used airplanes, and by 1925, controversy raged over use of military aeronautics. Lieutenant Oakley Kelly's promotional use of the aircraft of the 321st Observation Squadron was part of a larger question regarding who should rule the skies, especially in military conflict. By the spring of 1925, Congressman Curry proposed a bill (H.R. 10,149) that would create a Department of Aeronautics to take over the Air Service of both the army and navy. Curry believed that air service differed from

other branches of service in that it was, “indissolubly connected and joined with civil and commercial aviation, while its personnel are airmen instead of landmen or seamen...No great general has ever been a great naval officer, and no great admiral has ever been a great general. Likewise no soldier or sailor is competent to serve in charge of an air force. It takes an airman.”¹⁹³

Army officials disagreed as did Secretary of War John Weeks. He opposed the Curry Bill, pointing out that, “It proposes an Air Service for the Army which is not a permanent and integral part of the Army, this violating the second great principle of military organization, --- that arms which are habitually to function together in battle must form permanent parts of the same organization.”¹⁹⁴ Both army and navy officers also testified against the creation of a separate branch of service; however, they eventually lost. In 1947 President Harry Truman signed the National Security Act and set up the National Military Establishment, named the Department of Defense (DOD) in 1949.¹⁹⁵

The Army Air Service in the early days and its later transformation into the U.S. Air Force, especially the relationship between the Reserve Corps and the Army Signal Corps is a topic deserving further research. For more on the history of the Army Signal Corps and the Air Force, see the Air Force History support office website at: <http://www.airforcehistory.hq.af.mil/> and contact the Center of Military History, United States Army.

• **The U.S. Army and the U.S.D.A. Forest Service**

The U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Army had a long-standing relationship beginning with early plans for the army to guard forest reserves.¹⁹⁶ In 1921 the Forest Service began housing airplanes at the Vancouver Flying Field for aerial fire watch. The aviation relationship lasted at least throughout the 1920s. Once the Army implemented the CCC the relationship strengthened, with the U.S. Army providing the administrative arm for “Roosevelt’s Tree Army.” The ongoing nature of the relationship between the army and the Forest Service, especially as it pertains to the Pacific Northwest is a significant topic for investigation. For a general understanding of the Forest Service and lumber industry in the Pacific Northwest, see Thomas R. Cox, et. al., *This Well-Wooded Land: Americans and Their Forests from Colonial Times to the Present* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985); Robert E. Ficken, *The Forested Land: A History of Lumbering in Western Washington* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1987); Michael Frome, *Whose Woods These Are: The Story of the National Forests*. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1962; William G. Robbins, *American Forestry: A History of National, State, & Private Cooperation*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985; Harold K. Steen, “Forestry in Washington to 1925.” Ph.D. thesis, University of Washington, 1969; *The U.S. Forest Service: a history*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976. For an early history of the Forest Service in the Pacific Northwest, see

¹⁹³ “Congressman Curry” in *the Bulletin of the 96th Division*, 4.

¹⁹⁴ “Secretary of War,” *Bulletin of the 96th*, 5.

¹⁹⁵ “Medal of Honor: History of the United States Air Force.” Medal of Honor website, U.S. Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, available from <http://www.medalofhonor.com/HistoryUSAF.htm> [accessed December 11, 2004].

¹⁹⁶ See Gifford Pinchot’s autobiography, *Breaking New Ground* for his recollections of development of the U.S.D.A. Forest Service.

Lawrence Rakestraw, "A History of Forest Conservation in the Pacific Northwest, 1891-1913." Ph.D. diss. University of Washington, 1955. Useful journals include the *Journal of Forest History* and *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*. Investigation of the relationship between the army and the Forest Service during this period would require researching Army Signal Corps records as well as historical records housed on nearby national forests, such as the Gifford Pinchot and Mt. Hood National Forests.

• Aviation History

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, the use of aircraft for both military and civilian purposes underwent a tremendous surge. From the ability to fly round the world, to providing airmail, to crop dusting, airplanes promised hope for a brighter future. The first airmail flight occurred around 1911, the first round-the-world flight in 1919, and the first orchard dusting with lime took place in Clark County in July 1930.¹⁹⁷ By this time aircraft had been used for a number of years for regional transportation and many civilians had experimented with flying from Vancouver's military and civilian fields. The development of aviation generally and in Clark County, its various uses, and the public reception of airplanes is a prime research topic.

For an overview of aviation in Vancouver and significant aviation events and individuals, see Jon Walker, *A Century Airborne: Air Trails of Pearson Airpark* (Vancouver, Washington: Jon Walker, 1994); and Roy F. Jones, "Clark County Aviation." *Clark County History* 9 (1968): 299-323.

Relationship between the Vancouver Municipal Airfield and Pearson Airfield

The city of Vancouver took over operation of the Chamber of Commerce flying field in 1930, designating it the Vancouver Municipal Airport. There were many pilots who soloed at the Vancouver airport and later flew in World War II, such as Leverett Richards. Scenic tours and ten-minute flights offered in 1930 by the local aviation company, Bell Air Service and the Ford Reliability Tours offered community members a chance to experience flight. The Chamber of Commerce Field was a busy place, but did have some drawbacks. Portland commuters complained about the Interstate-5 Bridge and in 1926 Portland developed an airport at Swan Island with its own airmail route. Charles Lindbergh was among the first to land at Swan Island, disappointing Vancouver's fans, who had hoped he would land in Vancouver.¹⁹⁸

Women in Aviation

In the 1930s, women began to participate widely in aviation. Their organized cross-country contests were called "Powder Puff Derbies."¹⁹⁹ Edith Foltz began flying at Swan Island and at Pearson Air Field in 1929. Foltz was named "Queen of the air show" at the dedication of the Vancouver Municipal Airport in 1930. She later flew unarmed fighters and bombers in World War II, and was one of the first women to sign up for Jacqueline Cochran's Air Transport Auxiliary – women pilots who ferried transports, fighters and bombers from the factories to combat areas during the war. She spent four years ferrying fighters and bombers across the English Channel, earning the King's

¹⁹⁷ VC, "Dust Sprayed on Trees By Plane," 3 July 1930.

¹⁹⁸ Jones, "Grand Opening," 316; "The Municipal Field," 319.

¹⁹⁹ Jones, "Grand Opening," 316.

Medal for heroic service to England. Amelia Earhart was among her flying friends. Foltz died of cancer in 1956 at age fifty-four.²⁰⁰

Other women who flew from the Vancouver Field include the Chinese woman, Leah Hing, who took lessons from Tex Rankin; and Evelyn Waldren, who learned to fly in Nebraska and later flew from Pearson Field in the 1930s. Waldren was among the women barnstormers of the time and during World War II when private flight was banned, Waldren went to San Diego to teach army pilots to fly. Her oral history and a biography are available at the Oregon Historical Society, as are a number of interviews with Leah Hing. For a biography of Tex Rankin, see Walt Bohrer, *Black cats and outside loops: Tex Rankin, pilot and legend*. Oregon City, OR: Plere Publishers, 1989.

• **Camp Hatheway**

In September 1942, the military established Vancouver Barracks' Camp Hatheway as a staging area and processing center for the Portland Port of Embarkation. The camp was located at what is now the site of Clark College on Fort Vancouver Way, where thousands of soldiers were processed and prisoners and supplies were housed. The camp was described by Dick Spiro, one of the arrivals (and later a reporter for the *Longview Daily News*) as "quite a little complex," with facilities that duplicated "those at the lower end – movie, mess hall, fire station, jail, motor pool." The facilities at this site, also the site of CCC Camp Hurlburt and CMTC training, should be further investigated.²⁰¹

• **Citizen's Military Training Camps (CMTC)**

CMTC training was held throughout the nation through the 1920s and 1930s, and in the Pacific Northwest. Young men between the ages of seventeen and thirty participated in CMTC, learning a variety of skills in addition to enhancing the nation's military preparedness. The CMTC had a very clear military focus, teaching young men – citizens – to be soldiers. This training occurred during an era of controversy over whether the United States should take further its isolationist stance, and whether pacifism or militarism would rule. In 1925, Congress allocated enough money to train 35,000 young men in the nation's Citizens' Military Training Camps, 930 to attend the camps in the Pacific Northwest – Fort George Wright, Fort Worden, and Camp Lewis. The following year, from June 18 to July 17, 1926, Vancouver Barracks held its first CMTC training. CMTC took place in Vancouver annually thereafter until WWII.

Very little is known about the CMTC experience in Vancouver; however, its role as a military training program for an all volunteer army is especially noteworthy of investigation. The CMTC remained active until the beginning of WWII and the implementation of the draft. CMTC research would involve a general overview as well as research specific to Vancouver through the Military History Institute. To get started, see especially, Donald Kingston, *Forgotten Summers: the story of the Citizens' Military Training Camps, 1921-1940* (San Francisco, CA: Two Decades Publishing, 1995); *The Vanguard: The official yearbook of the first annual Citizens' Military Training Camp* (Vancouver, WA: Vancouver Barracks, 1926), located at Eastern Washington

²⁰⁰ Walker, *A Century Airborne*, 41.

²⁰¹ Royce E. Pollard, "Presence and Missions," 37; Van Arsdol, "WWII," 14.

University; and *The Columbian, Ninth Corps Area, Camp Lewis, Washington* (Chicago: Military Training Camps Association of the United States, an annual serial publication available at the Washington State Library).

Additional resources include: Materials created by the Military Training Camps Association – *Memoirs of the CMTC 1936: citizens' military training camps, 1921-1936* (Chicago: The Association, 1936); *Fifteen Years of the CMTC: brief accounts of the Citizen's [six] Military Training Camps, 1921-1935* (Chicago: The Association, 1935); *The story of the camps. A brief word on the citizens' military training camps* (Chicago: The Association, 1928). See also: P.S. Bond, *The red, white and blue manuals... a text book for the Citizens' Military Training Camp* (Baltimore, M.D.: John Hopkins Press, 1921); John Adams Bechtel, *Handbook for civilian military training camps: a compilation of regulations, forms, orders, instruction, circulars, and other data, ready for reference in connection with the civilian military training camps* (Cambridge, Mass: Caustic-Claflin, 1922); United States Adjutant General's Offices, *Studies in citizenship for citizens military training camps, 1921* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1924); United States, author unknown, *Regulations for citizens' military training camps, 1921* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1921); United States, Congress, House, *Provision for care and treatment of members of National Guard, Organized Reserves, Reserve Officers' Training Corps, and citizens' military training camps who are injured or contract disease while in military training: report to accompany S. 3334* (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1936); United States, Department of the Army, *Youth Corps Training Experiences* (Washington D.C.: Dept. of the Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, 1964); United States War Department publications include: *Citizens' Military Training Camps* (Washington D.C.: War Department, 1923); *Citizens' military training camps: "red, white and blue" courses, an opportunity for young America* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1921).

• Federal Public Works Projects

Throughout the nation during the 1930s, the government invested in revitalizing the economy through numerous federal works public projects. Economic and social stimulus came from undertakings that ranged from local construction to massive dam building on the Columbia River, to the Federal Theater Project. Small and large communities were affected by federal works projects to varying degrees, with some communities, like North Bonneville, Washington, booming into existence.²⁰² Others provided work to the indigent and unemployed. This is an important and most under-documented period in the history of Vancouver. During the 1930s, the local newspaper, the *Vancouver Columbian* reported regularly on public works activities in the community and on the military base. For example, in January 1934 the paper reported that the local Civil Works Administration (CWA) office provided work to between 1,300 and 1,700 people. Work included road projects, Vancouver Airport development, and high school remodeling. Throughout this period there were numerous protests regarding the intermittent funding provided for public works. Each time work halted due to funding

²⁰² For the history of dam building on the Columbia River, see the Center for Columbia River History website at www.ccrh.org. The site has numerous bibliographies as well as histories of river communities that include oral histories, primary documents and photographs. See also, William Dietrich, *Northwest Passage*, Paul Pitzer, *Harnessing a Dream*, Roberta Ulrich, *Empty Nets*, and Richard White, *Organic Machine*.

cuts, projects were indefinitely postponed and people again became unemployed until Congress made further appropriations.²⁰³

Important public works programs in Vancouver include the Civilian Conservation Corps, as noted, the CWA, which became the Washington Emergency Relief Association, the Works Progress Administration (WPA), and even the Federal Theater Project, which in May 1939 brought to town “The Flotilla of Faith,” a dramatic pageant commemorating the arrival of the first Catholic Missionaries at Vancouver. The theater provides one example of the ways in which federal works projects sometimes acted in concert. The WPA sewing rooms provided costumes for the production, which was presented on the Columbia River a short distance east of Main Street.²⁰⁴

The WPA, in particular, made long-term contributions in Vancouver, through project work in the 1930s and developing Vancouver’s infrastructure as WWII began. In January 1942, Vancouver city officials applied under a special WPA defense project for removal of 319.1 tons of streetcar rails underlying city streets. The application stemmed from OPM (Office of Production Management) information that the government was preparing to dig under the asphalt of northwest streets for scrap steel to be used in defense. According to OPM, all of the labor and 75% of the cost of resurfacing would be provided by the WPA, with the city furnishing the remainder. The city hoped to sell enough scrap steel to cover its costs.²⁰⁵

By 1942, it had become clear that the federal government must provide funding for the city’s infrastructure and the city of Vancouver bid for \$635,000 worth of federal aid projects, including eight water system projects and four street improvement projects that would use most of the money. Other WPA projects in Vancouver included construction of a sexton’s residence at Parkhill Cemetery, construction and equipping a swimming and wading pool at Leverich Park, constructing a comfort station and bandstand at Esther Short Park, constructing and equipping a fire station, and extending the water system from Washington Street to the west city limits, and north to Thirty-ninth street, and east to Lincoln Avenue.²⁰⁶

The possibilities for research of the Great Depression and public works programs in Vancouver are innumerable. The best place to begin is with an overview of the depression, a topic with a voluminous literature. To start, see David Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear: The American People in the Great Depression* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004). For a general overview of Pacific Northwest history that includes the Great Depression, see Carlos Schwantes, *Pacific Northwest: An Interpretive History*. Research of federal works projects in Vancouver would require detailed investigation. Many of the topics noted above and in the main body of this work provide a start.

• Labor Issues

As noted in the main body of this document, there were numerous labor conflicts during this period, including but not limited to, the 1921 Standifer Shipyard strike, a 1923 conflict with Portland Longshoremen, the 1934 “milk wars,” the International

²⁰³ VC, “Fund Limitation Halts Work on Major Projects,” 20 January 1934, 1, 4.

²⁰⁴ Van Arsdol, “Live Theater,” 27, 30.

²⁰⁵ VC, 20 January 1942.

²⁰⁶ VC, 20 January 1942, 2.

Longshoreman Association's strike during the same summer and WPA strikes in the 1930s and 1940s. In early 1937 a maritime strike prevented ships from docking at the new Terminal No. 2. By February as the strike ended, river steamers and freighters began to call at the dock. The steamer *The Dalles* was the first official visitor after the end of the strike, taking 55 tons of canned goods to Portland. Next came the freighter *Charles L. Wheeler*, taking 1,000 tons of wheat to California. Labor conflict seemed particularly heightened in relation to the waterfront and shipping. As David Kennedy notes, "Most industrial workers in 1930 put in forty-eight hours a week. The two-day 'weekend' was not yet a fixture of American life, and paid vacations for workers were almost unknown. 'Retirement,' too, was still and elusive fantasy for the average American worker, whose days of toil extended virtually to the end of the life cycle."²⁰⁷ Labor conditions during this period are an important topic for research, one that connects Vancouver to broader social and economic forces.

International Longshoreman's Association (ILA) Strike of 1934

The ILA Strike of 1934 is among the most notable West Coast labor stories. Beginning on May 9, 1934 the International Longshoreman's Union struck along the entire Pacific coast. The strike included longshoremen from Alaska to San Francisco, and halted shipping for nearly two months. Vancouver's and Portland's longshoremen stood squarely behind it – 100 percent – and further investigation of the role of these cities in the strike is warranted. The economic and social impact of the strike in Vancouver is also significant. For example, twenty-three sawmills closed in the county and millworkers were laid off during the summer of 1934.

For a general understanding of the ILWU strike, see Harry Bridges, *Harry Bridges, a centennial retrospective: an oral history of the origins of the ILWU and the 1934 Strike* (San Pedro, CA: Harry Bridges Institute, 2001); Roger Buchanan, *Dock Strike: History of the 1934 waterfront strike in Portland, Oregon* (Everett, WA: Working Press, 1975); Charles P. Larowe, "The Great Maritime Strike of '34" *Labor History* 1970 11 (4): 403-451, 1971 12 (1): 3-37; Bruce Nelson, *Workers on the waterfront: seamen, longshoremen, and unionism in the 1930s* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990); Herman Phleger, *Pacific Coast longshoremen's strike of 1934 arbitration before National longshoremen's board* (1934); Lynd Staughton, *"We are all leaders": the alternative unionism of the early 1930s* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996); *This is our story* (New York: Rank & File Committee, International Longshoremen's Association, 1945). For more specific regional research, consult local newspapers, collections at the Oregon Historical Society, the Washington State Historical Society, and identify materials at regional universities.

• Military Training and Social Activity

The army provided codes of organization, procedure, conduct, and instruction for nearly every aspect of war, daily life, and peacetime comportment, ranging from instructions for dismounting with and without arms to topographic mapping to animal care and principles of personal hygiene. Each area was outlined in training regulations, often in the form of small books and pamphlets. In addition, each arm of the service produced its own journal, including the *Infantry Journal*, *Field Artillery Journal*, *The*

²⁰⁷ Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear*, 23; *VC*, 8 February 1937, 1.

Military Surgeon, and the *Quartermaster Review* (especially pertinent to investigations of daily life). These sources should be explored for a variety of military and social topics, including but not limited to the soldier's experience in preparedness and execution of warfare, and personal and institutional behaviors defined by the army, especially as related to family and personal regulations and conduct, recreation, community interaction, morale, religion, and other aspects of daily life.

- **Prison Labor**

Dorothy Jan Plum describes an incinerator at Clark College, built by prisoners at Vancouver Barracks in 1929. The use of prison labor from Vancouver Barracks for community development is a prime social research topic.²⁰⁸

- **Prohibition in Vancouver**

In 1920, the national policy of Prohibition began when Congress ratified the 18th Amendment to the Constitution – the Volstead Act. The Act prohibited the manufacture, sale or transportation of intoxicating liquors and was ultimately repealed in 1933. Despite the 18th Amendment, speakeasies, frequented by both civilians and soldiers, were common and military officials recognized that illegal drinking continued. The result of prohibition, as noted in the body of this document, was often violence. The stories provided here came mainly from a review of the local newspaper, the *Vancouver Columbian*. This is one topic that could be expanded greatly through in-depth investigation into city, county, and state level court records, police records, the records of the Clark County Historical Museum and Library and the Oregon Historical Society. For more on early anti-saloon efforts in Vancouver, see Donna Sinclair, *Part II, The Waking of a Military Town: Vancouver, Washington and the Vancouver National Historic Reserve, 1898-1920*. For the history of Prohibition in the state of Washington, see Norman Clark, *The Dry Years: Prohibition and Social Change in Washington*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988.

²⁰⁸ Dorothy Jan Plum, "Vancouver, A Vignette: The Incinerator" *Clark County History* 31 (1990), 43.

Appendix II: Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942

In March 1933, newly elected president Franklin Delano Roosevelt called a special session of Congress that created a program dear to his heart. The president successfully planned to put 500,000 unemployed youth to work within the following two months in a program intended to address national conservation issues while responding to families in need. The Emergency Conservation Work program (ECW), or Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) as it was later called, employed young men in the nation's forests, parks, and rangelands. The Departments of Agriculture and Interior provided work projects and personnel to manage the workers. The Department of Labor coordinated enrollees, and the only agency with the mobilizing power to organize such a large number of youth, the U.S. Army, ran the camps.

Vancouver Barracks again became one of the significant posts in the West due to its regional administration of the Civilian Conservation Corps. As one of the two area induction centers, in 1938 the paymaster's office at Vancouver Barracks disbursed nearly \$9 million.²⁰⁹ Costs included \$1,709,288.00 for salaries and supplies at the regular army post and approximately \$7 million at the CCC camps, nearly 60% of it spent in the Portland/Vancouver area. Not only did a fairly large contingent of military personnel remain active for CCC administration, but as the headquarters and disbursing agency for twenty-seven CCC camps in 1939, the barracks commanded about 6,000 CCC enrollees.²¹⁰

From the organization's inception in 1933 and its end in 1942, between twenty-five to fifty-five camps were administered from Vancouver at any given time, each

²⁰⁹ The second regional induction center was located at Fort Lewis.

²¹⁰ Sharon, *Vancouver and Clark County*, 43.

associated with a particular national forest, soil conservation district, or state park. Although Caucasian men aged eighteen to twenty-five were the majority of CCC enrollees, some women, minorities, and WWI veterans participated in the program. At least 450 African American CCC enrollees came to the Pacific Northwest in 1933 from Chicago, some serving in camps in the Columbia National Forest (now the Gifford Pinchot National Forest).²¹¹ In later years, the CCC created segregated camps in the southern United States. There were also CCC camps on many of the regional American Indian reservations that were administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. As the experiences of minorities, women, veterans, and American Indians in the CCC have not been well documented, these are topics for further investigation.

The CCC at Vancouver Barracks and at camps connected to the post provide important research topics. Although some oral history projects have been conducted on various national forests, little academic research exists regarding CCC operations. Nor has the focus been specifically on the Vancouver Barracks regional administration area that included southwest Washington and the state of Oregon.²¹² Researching the social history of the CCC at Vancouver Barracks would include understanding the induction process and daily life in the CCC, both at the barracks and in the woods or on the range. Social activities and relationships with the community are important aspects of the CCC impact, as are activities on the military base. Two regional works may be helpful in this study. The first, *In the Shadow of the Mountain: The Spirit of the CCC*, was written by Edwin Hill, a former CCC member from Chicago. Hill provides a good overview of

²¹¹ Sinclair and McClure, *No Goldbricking Here*, 2.

²¹² The Vancouver Barracks and Fort Lewis were part of the Ninth Corps, which included Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Utah, Nevada, California, and Yellowstone Park with headquarters in San Francisco, California.

daily life in the CCC, and of its legacy in the Northwest, but he focuses mainly on the Fort Lewis District. The second, *“No Goldbricking Here”*: *Oral Histories of the CCC in the Columbia National Forest, 1933-1942* by Donna Sinclair and Richard McClure is a collection of eighteen interviews with former CCC enrollees on what is now the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. The interviews focus on work and daily life, and the collection provides a sense of community relations, and connections to the regional administrative centers and the U.S.D.A. Forest Service.

- CCC research topics include the following:

African Americans in the CCC

During the first years of the agency’s operations, CCC camps were integrated. African Americans were among the first groups of enrollees to arrive in Vancouver from Fort Sheridan, Illinois. However, CCC administration soon created “Negro” camps in the south. The African American experience in the Pacific Northwest is an important topic for further research. For a general study of African Americans in the CCC, see Olen Cole, *The African American Experience in the Civilian Conservation Corps*.

Agency relations

In addition to paying for CCC activities, the army’s finance department disbursed funds to the U.S. Forest Service, National Parks, State Parks, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Soil Conservation Service, and the Bureau of Biological Survey. In 1938, about twenty-five WPA teachers joined the camps. Cooperative relations between agencies should be explored further, especially those with the regional Soil Conservation Service.²¹³

CCC departments and operations

Initially, the army operated the CCC “in addition to other duties.” It quickly became evident that an integrated approach was not possible since CCC administration was not only massive, but different in many respects from regular army administration. The CCC Quartermaster department separated from the regular Quartermaster’s department and sub-divided into five groups – sales division, administration, procurement, transportation, property and motor transportation, each with well-defined activities. CCC operations are a topic for further investigation along with initial camp construction and organization, expansion of the program in 1935, and issues such as morale, welfare and education.²¹⁴

²¹³ *CCC Annual*, 43, 45.

²¹⁴ *CCC Annual*, 33.

Community relations

Within the first few years of the CCC, as separate departments formed, each steadily hired more civilian employees. Subsistence and its relation to the local economy would be an important topic for research. The army provided contracts for meat and milk to approved local dairies and meat suppliers. Approval required plant inspection for construction, ventilation, equipment condition, utensils, cleanliness, and sanitary preparation methods. Recreation and community impact is another important topic for investigation. Young men often came to Vancouver on weekends for dances or to attend the theater in Vancouver or Portland. The social impact of the Corps during this period, both in communities near camps and in Vancouver, is a significant topic for research.²¹⁵

Long-term impact of the CCC

Many young men came from around the country to participate in the Civilian Conservation Corps in the Pacific Northwest. Many also remained in the area, having met a spouse or becoming engaged in work on the region's numerous public works projects. As the National CCC Alumni Association points out: "Few records were kept of the sociological impact of the 1930s on the nation's young men. Many had never been beyond the borders of their state, and others had not even left home. Yet, many would never return. They would choose to remain in towns and villages near their camps. They married, raised families and put down their roots, much as had other young men in the migratory movements of past years. Those who did return, many with brides, came back as successful products of an experiment in living..." Oral histories and memoirs of CCC experiences are one way to better understand the long-term social impacts of the organization.²¹⁶

Medical and dental care

The army initiated prophylactic care for CCC enrollees, reducing the number of pneumonia cases in 1938 from eighty-five the previous year, to six. They also used "serum treatment for lobar pneumonia," an advance that gave the post hospital "an enviable reputation." Under General Marshall's tenure, the army conducted a dental study. The District Surgeon, through the Sick and Wounded Office, also reported all injuries and illnesses to the U.S. Employee's Compensation Commission. The social need for medical and dental care, as well as its implementation, are significant areas of investigation.²¹⁷

Modernization and the CCC

During the CCC era, Vancouver Barracks received new "modern" equipment, ranging from trucks to office machinery. An additional twenty-three telephone lines were added at the post by 1937 as well, and CCC camps received radio receivers. What additional modernization role did the CCC play? What was the infrastructural impact of the CCC in the national parks and national forests? Some obvious results included trails,

²¹⁵ *CCC Annual*, 42.

²¹⁶ National Association of Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni, "Roosevelt's Tree Army, A Brief History of the Civilian Conservation Corps," available at <http://www.cccalumni.org/history1.html> [accessed December 2004].

²¹⁷ *CCC Annual*, 42.

buildings, roads, and dams. The question of the CCC contribution to modernizing the Pacific Northwest is an important topic in terms of its long term social and economic consequences.

Opposition to the CCC

Most accounts of the CCC are positive, with former participants recalling it as a formative period in their lives and as a way to help their families. However, opposition to the CCC did exist. Some viewed it as a Socialist program. Organized labor provided the strongest opposition because its leaders feared losing jobs that could be filled by union members. They also feared a regimentation of labor associated with the army. Thus, Roosevelt made a very deliberate choice to employ A.F. of L. union leader Robert Fechner to direct the CCC. Even Fechner noted the potential for militarization in the CCC, once saying that “after the regular six-month CCC enrollment a graduate was ‘85% prepared for military life.’” As *Time Magazine* noted in 1939, other military potentials of the CCC included maintenance of a continuously up-to-date list of CCC names kept by the Army as well as a reservoir of air corps mechanics. CCC supporters pointed out that conservation, not defense, was organization’s main goal.²¹⁸

Veteran’s Camps

A list of projects for the state of Washington on the National CCC Alumni website includes nine veteran’s camps, with four in the state of Oregon. This is an important and neglected research topic. Veteran’s camps were created due to the appearance of a second Bonus Army in Washington D.C. in May 1933. In response, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 6129, dated May 11, 1933. The order authorized the immediate enrollment of about 25,000 veterans of the Spanish American War and WWI, with no age or marital restrictions.²¹⁹

The *CCC Annual* notes Veteran’s Company 1922 at Vancouver Barracks,²²⁰ and Camp Killpack, named for Captain Harry Killpack who was killed while on CCC camp inspection in 1935. Camp Killpack, however, is not noted on the CCC Alumni site, nor is at least one other veteran’s camp located in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. Camp Killpack, A-6, Company 2946 originally housed Company 1645, but in August 1935, became the Veteran’s camp for Company 2946. Over 120 veterans worked in the camp. The company’s work included improving a part of the Camp Bonneville firing range. They cleared brush, fenced the reservation with eleven-and-a-half miles of barbed wire, and constructed a dam and bridge, which created a swimming area. Road construction, logging, and water source development accompanied the work. The company also participated in fire fighting.

• People Associated with the Civilian Conservation Corps at Vancouver

²¹⁸ CCC Alumni website; “National Affairs: Conservation,” *Time: The Weekly Magazine* 33, 6 (February 6, 1939), 12.

²¹⁹ CCC Alumni website.

²²⁰ Interestingly, the Vancouver Barracks camp is listed for the state of Oregon rather than Washington. This is likely because not only was the Forest Service office located in Portland, but also most camps associated with Vancouver were in the state of Oregon with the exception of those in Southwest Washington on the Columbia National Forest, or along the Columbia River, such as Cathlamet.

**District Commander, Staff, and Companies, CCC, Vancouver Barracks,
Washington, Brigadier General George C. Marshall, 1937**

Captain Lester H. Hall, Inf-Res., *District Adjutant, District Public Relations Officer*;
Lieutenant Colonel James A. Marmon, FD-USA; *Finance Officer January 1, 1936 to
January 1, 1938*; Major Royal G. Jenks, FD-USA, *Finance Officer January 1, 1938*;
Captain Joel Pomerene, D.O.L., *District Executive Officer*; Lieutenant Colonel H.R.
MacKellar, MC-USA, *District Surgeon*; Captain Wilbur E. Read, Inf-Res., *Personnel
Adjutant, District Welfare Officer*

Captain Bernhard A. Johnson, Inf-Res., Astoria Sub-District Commander

Company 491, Camp Warrenton SCS-7
Company 258, Camp Saddle Mt. SP-11
Company 1456, Camp Cathlamet P-213
Company 2908, Camp Nehalem P-221
Company 3225, Camp Canby A-5
Company 5461, Camp Reehers P-227
Company 5447, Camp Trask P-217
Company 5481, Camp Sunset F-39

Captain James M. Carr, Inf-Res., Hood River Sub-District Commander

Company 263, Camp Mill Creek F-112
Company 928, Camp Zig Zag F-11
Company 944, Camp Hemlock F-40
Company 945, Camp Goldendale SCS-8
Company 1542, Camp Cascade Locks F7
Company 1294, Camp Frederick Butte DG-68
Company 1454, Camp Sisters F-110
Company 1469, Camp Simnasho SSC-5
Company 5428, Camp Moro SCS-4
Company 5480, Camp Beacon Rock SP-13

Captain C.A. Herbert, Inf-Res., Eugene Sub-District Commander

Company 927, Camp Belknap F-23
Company 981, Camp Reedsport S-228
Company 1213, Camp Woahink Lake SP-10
Company 1443, Camp Mill City P-214
Company 3503, Camp Arboretum S-222
Company 2907, Camp Cascadia F-109
Company 3402, Camp Triangle Lake P-219
Company 5426, Camp Silver Creek Falls SP-9

Captain Jack W. Kittrell, Inf-Res., *Assistant District Inspector*; Captain M.R. Simmonds,
QM-Res., *Assistant District Quartermaster*; Captain Alfred H. Hopkins, Inf-Res., *District*

Exchange Officer; Captain John E. Foley, Ch-Res., *District Chaplain*; Captain V.J. Gregory, FA-Res., *Assistant District Inspector and Signal Officer*; Lieutenant Kenneth Horne, QM-Res., *Assistant District Quartermaster*; Captain F.F. Wolfer, QM-Res., *District Motor Transport Officer*; Captain Seth M. Kerron, Med-Res., *Assistant District Surgeon*; Lieutenant Marvin E. Gilmore, Inf-Res., *District Sales Officer*; Lieutenant W.F. Coughlin, Med-Res., *Assistant District Surgeon*; Captain D.D. Todorovic, Med-Res., *Assistant District Surgeon*; Captain B.O. Garrett, Ord-Res., *District Quartermaster*; Mr. Joseph B. Kennedy, WO-USCG, *Assistant Finance Officer*; First Lieutenant Galin E. Jordan, CH-Res., *Chaplain*; First Lieutenant Willis Bergen, CH-Res., *Assistant District Chaplain*; Lieutenant Colonel Harry J. Juzek, VC-USA, *District Veterinarian*; First Lieutenant K.H. Williams, *Assistant District Veterinarian*; First Lieutenant Edwin E. Swanson, Dent.-Res., *District Dental Officer*; First Lieutenant E.A. Waterman, Dent.-Res., *District Dental Officer*; D.E. Wiedman, *Civilian Educational Advisor, Ninth Army Corps*; Donald Mace, *District Educational Advisor*²²¹

• **Ninth District Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, and State Forest Administrators, 1937**

F.A. Silcox, *Chief Forester, U.S. Forest Service, Washington D.C.*
C.J. Buck, *Regional Forester, North Pacific Region, Portland, Oregon*
A.W. Middleton, *Regional Administrator CCC Soil Conservation Service*
W.A. Rockie, *Regional Conservator, Soil Conservation Service*
J.W. Ferguson, *State Forester, Oregon*
J.C. Morgan, *Assistant State Forester*

Robert Fechner

Director of the Civilian Conservation Corps, April 5, 1933 – 1939. Robert Fechner was born on March 22, 1876 in Tennessee and raised in Georgia. He quit school at age sixteen, worked in a railroad machine shop, then wandered Latin America working as an itinerant machinist. Fechner fought for the 9-hour day in 1901 and in 1913 was elected to the general executive board of the A.F. of L. machinist's union. He worked as a union organizer for most of his life, and had represented the machinist's union in negotiations with Secretary of the Navy Roosevelt during WWI. Fechner was appointed by Roosevelt because, claimed *Time Magazine* in 1939, "Franklin Roosevelt implicitly trusted him." In February 1939 when he appeared on the front cover of *Time*, the magazine declared: "Robert Fechner ran and still runs the show," a job he held until his death on December 31, 1939 from a massive heart attack. Fechner's assistant from the Corps' beginning, John McEntee, then took over. Fechner controlled operation of the CCC without challenge to his authority from the time of his appointment until just before his death. In early 1939 the CCC was brought into the Federal Security Agency, a restructuring opposed by Fechner. For more about Fechner and the CCC, see Robert Fechner, *Training and Educational Work of the CCC*. Washington, 1933; John Saalberg, "Roosevelt, Fechner and the CCC: a study in Executive Leadership." ph.d. dissertation, Cornell University, 1962.

Captain Harry W. Killpack

²²¹ *CCC Annual*, 9-17.

Harry W. Killpack was born in California on April 8, 1897. He first entered the army on 3 November 1916, serving as private, corporal, and sergeant in the 15th Infantry and the 31st Infantry. He was appointed a 2nd lieutenant of infantry on September 3, 1918 and was promoted to 1st lieutenant on July 1, 1920. Immediately following WWI he served with the 27th Infantry in the American Expeditionary Forces in Siberia and later in Hawaii with the same regiment.

Captain Killpack was transferred to the 7th Infantry at Vancouver Barracks from the 29th Infantry at Fort Benning, Georgia. He arrived in Vancouver on September 28, 1931. During his services with the 7th he commanded Company B, then Company D, and later was a member of the regimental staff, until his detail with the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1933. Harry Killpack received his commission as a captain on October 1, 1934. He assisted in the organization of the Eugene CCC District and was its adjutant until his return to Vancouver a year later. Up to the time of his death he served as assistant post executive officer and supply officer of the Vancouver Barracks CCC District. Harry Killpack died in an airplane crash in Prineville, Oregon on August 29, 1935. In September, CCC Camp Bonneville was renamed. It became CCC Camp Killpack, A-6, a veteran's camp.

Brigadier General George C. Marshall

District Commander of the Civilian Conservation Corps, Commanding Officer, 5th Brigade, Vancouver Barracks, August 1936 – July 1938. George Catlett Marshall was born in Uniontown, Pennsylvania on December 31, 1880. He graduated from the Virginia Military Institute in 1901 and was commissioned a second lieutenant of infantry, serving for two years in the Philippines, and then at Fort Reno, Oklahoma for four years. In 1907, Marshall graduated with honors from the Army Infantry-Cavalry School, and from the Fort Leavenworth Army Staff College in 1908. He then served as instructor at the staff college for the next two years. In 1911 he was assistant to the chief signal officer of the Maneuver Division at San Antonio, Texas. Between 1911 and 1913 he served as National Guard instructor in Massachusetts, with the 4th Infantry in Arkansas, at Fort Snelling, Minnesota, and with the Second Division at Galveston, Texas.

Marshall, then a colonel, next served as aide de camp for General Hunter Liggett in the Philippines (Later commander of the First Army in France during WWI), then for General J. Franklin Bell, Western Department Commander at San Francisco. In June 1917, Marshall was promoted to captain and detailed on the general staff. As Assistant Chief of Staff, he sailed for France with the First Division. During the next year he participated in the operations of the First Division, AEF, France, and in 1918 was assigned to General Headquarters at Chaumont. He received high praise for his draft of plans for the St. Mihiel offensive. When the battle got underway, Marshall was given the task of transferring some 500,000 troops and 2,700 guns to the Argonne front. In October 1918, he was appointed Chief of Operations of the First Army. On November 3, he was made Chief of Staff of the 8th Army Corps, remaining until recalled to the General Headquarters in the spring of 1919. In May 1919, he became aide de camp to General Pershing and remained in that position until 1924 when he went to China for three years with the 15th Infantry.

When Marshall returned to the United States in June 1927, he was appointed as instructor at the Army War College. His wife, Elizabeth Coles Marshall, died that

September. Two months later he became Assistant Commandant of the Infantry School, Fort Benning, Georgia where he remained until 1932 when he assumed command of Fort Screvens, Georgia. His next command was near Charleston, South Carolina where he was Commanding Officer of Fort Moultrie and District 1, Civilian Conservation Corps. He was then promoted to Colonel and became senior instructor, Illinois National Guard, 33rd Division, in Chicago, Illinois. On October 1, 1936, Marshall came to Vancouver Barracks as Brigadier General assigned to command the 5th Brigade and Vancouver Barracks and the CCC in the Vancouver Barracks District.²²²

In July 1938, General Marshall became Assistant Chief of Staff (head of the War Plan Division) and in October he was assigned as Deputy Chief of Staff. By August 1939, one year after leaving Vancouver, Marshall had become Chief of Staff and in September he became Major General. As Chief of Staff, Marshall attended the most significant discussions of WWII, including: the Atlantic Charter Conference (August 1941); ARCADIA Conference (Dec. 1941-Jan. 1942); discussions in Britain with President Roosevelt and Winston Churchill (April & July 1942); Casablanca Conference (Jan. 1943); Tehran Conference (Nov. & Dec. 1943); Yalta Conference (February 1945); Potsdam Conference (July 1945).

When Marshall retired as Chief of Staff in November 1945, he had been promoted to General of the Army. In November, he became Ambassador and Truman's Special Representative, appointed head of the U.S. Mission to China. From December 1945 to December 1946 Marshall met in China with Nationalist and Communist Chinese officials to mediate the Chinese Civil War. He also became Secretary of State. In February 1947, Marshall retired from the Army and in June he gave the "Marshall Plan" speech at the Harvard University commencement. In January 1949, Marshall retired as Secretary of State. His final assignments between January 1949 and his death included acting as Chairman of the American Battle Monuments Commission and reappointment to the Army. From September 1949 to September 1950 he served as head of the American National Red Cross and Secretary of Defense. In December 1953, General Marshall received the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway. He died October 16, 1959.²²³

• Resources Associated with General Marshall

According to the Marshall Foundation, the general and statesman tried to prevent people writing about him while he was in public office: "After World War II he refused to write a memoir, despite being offered sums reported to run as high as one million dollars. Only in 1955, four years after his final retirement and after the Marshall Foundation hired the respected military historian Forrest C. Pogue—author of *The Supreme Command* [in Europe] (Washington: GPO, 1954), a volume in the official series United States Army in World War II—did General Marshall acquiesce to being first interviewed by Dr. Pogue and later to Pogue's working on an authorized biography."²²⁴

²²² CCC Annual, 8-9; "George Catlett Marshall Chronology," Marshall Foundation Website, http://www.marshallfoundation.org/marshall_foundation.html [accessed December 2004].

²²³ Marshall Chronology, Marshall Foundation Website.

²²⁴ Marshall Bibliography, Marshall Foundation Website.

The following bibliography is adapted from the Marshall Foundation Website, found online at: http://www.marshallfoundation.org/marshall_foundation.html. The site also includes a link to its library and archives.

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Library of Congress American Memory Website. Available at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/>

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Appendix III: Russian Aviators in Vancouver

Three Russian pilots made aviation history in Vancouver, Washington on June 20, 1937 when they unexpectedly set down at Pearson Field and completed the world's first nonstop transpolar flight. The men, Valeri Chkalov, Georgii Filippovich Baidukov, and Alexander Belyakov flew more than 5,000 miles from Russia to Vancouver in their single engine Soviet Aircraft ANT-25. The ANT-25 was named for one of the U.S.S.R's most famous aeronautical designers, Andre Nikolaevich Tupolev. In 1931, Tupolev had been given approval to design a long-range plane. While Westerners tried for distance records in modified existing aircraft, Soviet innovation created the ANT-25. Paul C. Spitzer describes the plane:

Aerodynamics decided the configuration of the wings. Like those of soaring birds, its wings would be very long and narrow. The wings' original covering was corrugated duralumin, while inside the wings, extremely long fuel tanks spread out the weight of what would be a very heavy load. Air chambers also nested inside in case of a downing at sea. The fuselage, at 44 feet, was short in comparison with the 111-foot wings. The propeller selection absorbed a great deal of thought and required many test flights because of the varied conditions the plane would encounter. Remarkably, only a single engine, an 874-horsepower M-34, was used. This engine, whose reliability was critical, promised trouble-free service for 100 to 120 hours, much longer than the airplane would need to stay aloft."²²⁵

The Soviet aviators expected to end their long distance flight in Oakland, California, but when they ran short of fuel they landed in Vancouver where they were met by George C. Marshall, commander of the 5th Brigade. Both Marshall and the Soviet aviators found themselves involved in an international situation with broad implications. More than one Soviet transpolar flight took place that summer, and both were connected to U.S./Soviet relations. When Mikhail Gromov flew from Russia to San Jacinto the

²²⁵ Spitzer, "When the Russians Landed," 9.

following month, he broke Chkalov's record. He and his crew also toured the major U.S. cities and were met by friendly crowds, despite suspicion between Russia and the United States. Ironically, the "goodwill" missions created little change in American attitudes, nor did they foster friendships.²²⁶

The transpolar flights of the summer of 1937 are significant topics for research regarding relations between the United States and Soviet Union. University of Washington professor Edward M. Bennett, an expert on U.S./Soviet relations, claims the aviators were briefed by Stalin of the importance that they establish a "first" in Soviet aviation. At the same time, they were unaware of the importance of their diplomatic mission. U.S./Soviet relations had been tense since the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The transpolar flight, deemed the "Handshake Across America," was the culmination of a series of events that began when President Roosevelt decided to reexamine the question of diplomatic relations in 1932. According to Bennett, Roosevelt's decision regarding the Russians stemmed from a tense situation in the Far East, from Russian efforts to gain American support in a Russo-Japanese war, and because of the menace of Hitler in Europe.

Through the world record flights and the corresponding U.S. welcome, the Soviets and Americans tried to deliver a "double" message, demonstrating both Soviet military potential and American friendliness. "The means of doing this could be by proving the long-range capacity of Soviet military aircraft, the willingness of the Americans to greet Soviet military fliers and take them to military installations in the United States and to emphasize the event by a reception of these fliers wherever they went at American military bases across America and by a formal and friendly reception

²²⁶ Spitzer, "When the Russians Landed," 12.

by President Roosevelt himself at the White House.” This was the larger background and significance of the Soviet Trans-Polar flight of June, 1937. It was intended as what we would today call a “media-event.”

The accidental landing in Vancouver added to the impression of military importance of the flight. The *New York Times* and several other major American newspapers reported on the flight, indicating its importance. According to Bennett, this was a time when:

...mutual interests coincided and both Americans and the Russians expected some positive results from their coordinated effort at drawing closer together. The Trans-Polar flight was a step in a diplomatic process which had broader ramifications to it than any of the participants in the flight or any of the group of Vancouver citizens who gathered to meet that Soviet military plane breaking through the clouds on that June day in 1937 ever imagined.²²⁷

In Vancouver, annual celebrations of the flight’s anniversary have taken place since the landing, commemorating the achievement of the Soviet aviators and “reinforcing the bonds of friendship and goodwill.” This event has helped to shape Vancouver’s character by facilitating an ongoing relationship with the Soviet Union. A Transpolar Flight Monument was established near Pearson Airpark in 1974, the only tribute to Soviet heroes in the United States. In 1987, one of the original aviators, Georgii Baidukov, participated in the fifty year commemoration by greeting a U.S. delegation to Moscow.²²⁸ The transpolar flight of the summer of 1937, and its predecessor in 1929, are significant topics for research regarding relations between the United States, the city of Vancouver, and the Soviet Union. In addition, today Russians comprise the largest immigrant population in Vancouver, making the city’s longstanding relationship with the Soviet Union a significant topic for investigation.

²²⁷ Bennett, “Diplomatic Significance,” 1, 4, 7, 8, 13.

The following provides biographical information regarding the pilots of the ANT-25, *Itinerary of Stalin*, men who were deemed “Heroes of the Soviet Union.”

Georgii Filipovich Baidukov

Born 1907. Baidukov was copilot on the three-man crew that landed in Vancouver in June 1937. He is identified as pilot, colonel-general, and hero of the Soviet Union. Baidukov graduated from the 1st Moscow school of military pilots (1928) and Higher Genshtab Academy (1951). He flew with Belaykov and Chkalov in record flights: Moscow-Udd (1936) and Moscow-North Pole-Vancouver (1937). He participated in the “Winter War” (the Finnish-Soviet War of 1939-1940) as commander of a fighter regiment. He also participated in the “Great Patriotic War” (WWII) as commander of a fighter division. From 1947-49 he acted as head of the GVF (Civil Air Fleet) in Russia. Baidukov died at age 88, the last of the three pilots to pass away. He is credited with suggesting that the landing take place in Vancouver rather than at Swan Island.²²⁹

Alexander Vasilievich Belyakov

(1897-1982). Belyakov was aviator of the plane *Itinerary of Stalin*. He was a navigator, doctor of geographical sciences, general lieutenant, and hero of the Soviet Union. Belyakov graduated from military school in 1917 and went into the Red Army in 1919. In 1935, he became professor, then dean of Zhukovskii Military Academy RSKA. He flew with Baidukov and Chkalov - record flights on roads, Moscow-Udd (1936) and Moscow-North Pole-Vancouver (1937). In 1936-39, he was the chief navigator of DA and VVS (Russian Air Force). In 1940 he became chief deputy of the military academy of VVS. From 1945-60, Belyakov was dean of Gagarin Academy, and from 1960 on, he was professor of the Moscow Physical Technical Institute.²³⁰

Valerii Pavlovich Chkalov

Chkalov was born January 20, 1904 in the village of Vasilevo. Chkalov volunteered for the Red Army in 1919 and worked as an airplane assembler, later becoming a skillful pilot. In 1936, he made an endurance flight of 5,821 miles across northern Asia with Belyakov and Baidukov. He also made advances in aerobatics and military tactics, although his specialty was testing airplanes. According to Keith Peterson, “Chkalov was, in a country that gave considerable influence to pilots, near the top. He became a Party member not long before route approval was finally gained. But in 1938, just 18 months after the Vancouver flight, Chkalov ‘Hero of the Soviet Union,’ was killed while testing a high-speed fighter. He was buried inside Red Square at the Kremlin wall. Russia renamed his native village, an island and the town of Orenburg after him (later renamed Orenberg after Stalin’s death).”²³¹

²²⁸ VC, 29 December 1994; *Oregonian*, 29 December 1994.

²²⁹ “Russian Aviation Heritage: Who is Who?” at: <http://aeroweb.lucia.it/~agretch/RAFAQ/WhoIsWho.html> [accessed December 2004].

²³⁰ “Russian Aviation Heritage: Who is Who?”

²³¹ Spitzer, “When the Russians Landed,” 7, 8.

The following is a list of sources for research on this topic. The archives of the Clark County Historical Museum and Library hold files associated with the Russian landing, including commemorative memorabilia, newspaper articles and images. Pearson Air Museum also has a library, and many materials are available at the Fort Vancouver Regional Library.

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Appendix IV: World War II begins – 1942

The United States officially declared war against Japan on December 8, 1941, the day after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. The war lasted until September 2, 1945, and for those located in Vancouver it was a time of massive and irreversible change. At one time during World War II the city's population reached 95,000; thus, wartime on the homefront is a tale unto itself. Only those issues associated with the initial entry into World War II are addressed in this study. This section highlights the social change that occurred as the U.S. and Vancouver entered the war as full-fledged members of a contested international arena. While the soldiers of the 7th Infantry headed overseas and the military reconstituted its structure, homefront events centered around wartime production. Among the key wartime players were the Aluminum Company of America and the Kaiser Company. ALCOA's aluminum production began in Vancouver in 1939. The Kaiser Company signed a contract with the U.S. Maritime Commission to manage the Vancouver Shipyards on January 9, 1942, only a month after the war began.

Some of the waterfront property leased by Kaiser along the Columbia River near Vancouver Barracks is now part of the Historic Reserve.²³² The organizational feat of constructing a shipyard that went “full blast” by March 1942 is a topic worthy of serious investigation. Sources of information for research during this period include, but are not limited to records and newspapers at the Oregon Historical Society, Henry Kaiser's papers at the Bancroft Library in Berkeley, California, materials at regional archives and university libraries, and at the ports of Vancouver and Portland. The Portland City Archives holds Portland Housing Authority materials and Kaiser materials that may also

²³² Today one can see evidence of the Kaiser Shipyard in the concrete pilings that remain on the riverfront and in the street names of the industrial sections of the waterfront, areas not officially part of the Reserve.

include information regarding Vancouver. For a general history of this period in the West see, Gerald Nash, *The American West Transformed: the impact of the Second World War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985). There are also numerous online sources for understanding the social context of the period.

The following is a list of topics and information that just scrapes the surface of historical change in Vancouver as the community entered World War II.

- **ALCOA, Aluminum Company of America, 1939-1987**

As the possibility of war heightened during this era, it became clear that the Pacific Northwest with its increased electricity production capacity, due to Bonneville Dam, would serve aluminum production well. In 1939, the Aluminum Company of America built a huge reduction plant in Vancouver. With Vancouver's J.D. Ross Substation distributing power through the Bonneville Power Administration, the city proved an ideal location. ALCOA became an important part of the community, economically and socially, providing jobs and student scholarships, and supporting arts in the community. The company's history is an important topic for research. It is connected to international events, the worldwide production of aluminum, and the building of public works dams on the Columbia. In addition, ALCOA's social history of labor-union relations, its World War II and aviation connections, and the high numbers of people employed in the community (1,500 in 1954) make this company an important aspect of Vancouver's history.²³³

- **Barnes Hospital**

By April 1941, Barnes General Hospital, part of a major U.S. defense program, was nearly completed. The hospital numbered 63 buildings placed under the jurisdiction of the medical corps. The "modern military medical center" viewed as a city within itself and separate from Vancouver Barracks, was commanded by Colonel Sidney L. Chappell. The thirty-one member medical corps at the barracks moved to the hospital facilities on April 1 and were joined two days later by a fifty man cadre of medical corps enlisted men. Total recruits and draftees slated for hospital duty were 350, with quarters built for ninety-two nurses of the Nurse's Corps, fifty-three officers, and approximately 400 enlisted men. The hospital was equipped with a Post Exchange, infirmary, morgue, cold storage plant, fire station, motor repair shop, and entertainment halls.²³⁴

During wartime, hospital beds numbered about 1,500 and provided care for ill and wounded soldiers. Members of the Women's Army Corps and several hundred civilian employees worked there. In the post-war period, the hospital came under charge of the Veteran's Administration and has had an often contested history. The Veteran's Hospital

²³³ Chipman, "ALCOA," 70-72.

²³⁴ VC, 2 April 1941.

continues to stand at the northwest corner of the former military reservation, and although it is not sited on the Reserve, its history is directly connected to Vancouver's role as a military base.²³⁵

- ***Bo's'n's Whistle***

The *Bo's'n's Whistle* was launched in July 1941 and was printed bi-weekly for employees of the Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation of Portland and Kaiser Co., Inc. Vancouver and Swan Island. The paper's stated objectives were: "to help employees build more ships faster, to help promote safety and enthusiasm for this big job, and to give shipbuilders straight information about their work." The *Whistle* included an ideas section, with suggestion boxes located in each of the shipyards. The company's goal was to allow shipyard workers a voice in operations and to draw from their experiences to initiate new innovations in shipbuilding, ideas for labor saving machinery, and waste prevention, etc.²³⁶ The *Whistle* is an invaluable source for understanding the social history of the period, as it provides not only operational guidelines in the shipyards, but reports on housing, medical care, education, childcare, and many other topics related to daily life.

- **Housing Construction for War Workers**

At the same time the Kaiser Company built the Vancouver Shipyard, the city planned to construct housing for 45,000 to 50,000 war workers. Throughout the West, the WWII population influx and housing crunch completely re-shaped society. Vancouver officials rapidly determined that application for federal housing aid would be needed as they anticipated the storming of the city by shipyard workers. On February 9, 1942 the Vancouver Housing Authority became the designated agent of the Federal Public Housing Authority (Resolution No. 67), responsible for developing accommodations for people engaged in national defense. The city of Vancouver authorized a \$4,000 loan for its initial operating funds. Vancouver's public housing projects were built by and were the property of the Federal Public Housing Authority and were operated by the local Housing Authority under a lease agreement. The Housing Authority served as the government's agent to collect rents, maintain the properties and provide other necessary services. As noted in the body of this work, a multitude of problems associated with the housing shortage faced the city. The first year of the war was particularly difficult. Workers were urged to leave their families at home temporarily when coming to the shipyards and when they arrived a housing service assisted them in locating a place to live. Development of the housing authority, planning decisions, and the social milieu during this period of disruption are important topics of historical investigation.²³⁷

²³⁵ Ted Van Arsdol, "Serving those who served," *Vancouver Columbian* 28 February 1999, available at: <http://www.columbian.com/special/vancouverbarracks/serving.html>.

²³⁶ *The Bo's'n's Whistle*, 27 September 1942, 31.

²³⁷ Van Arsdol, "WWII," 9; "50 Years of Progress," 3; *VC*, 20 January 1942, 2; "A Tale of 6 Cities," 2; *Bo's'n's Whistle*, 27 September 1942, 20.

Vancouver's Eight War Housing Communities

	No. of Units	Population
McLoughlin Heights	6,086	25,000
Bagley Downs	2,100	6,800
Burton Homes	1,500	6,000
Ogden Meadows	2,000	5,000
Fruit Valley Homes	500	2,000
Fourth Plain Village	200	800
Hudson House Dormitories	5,018	5,018
Kaiser Barracks	7,000	7,000
Total		57,618²³⁸

Hudson House

The Hudson House provided rooms for single men engaged in war work. The dormitory, located about ¼ mile east of the shipyard, opened four of ten units in September 1942, each with 400 rooms. By the beginning of 1943, Hudson House had a population of 3,364. When completed, the Hudson House was slated to occupy a 45-acre tract, landscaped with roads and parking facilities. Outdoor recreation facilities included softball diamonds, horseshoe courts, swimming and boating accommodations. The housing authority planned for a new administrative and commissary building with a post office, fountain bar, store, library and other service facilities. The Hudson House had a weekly publication, *The Hudson News*, and provided a lively social environment which should be researched further.²³⁹

McLoughlin Heights

The first housing development in Vancouver was McLoughlin Heights, located to the east and slated to be larger than the city of Vancouver. By October 1942, 4,000 temporary homes were completed in McLoughlin Heights and permanent homes were under construction. Such rapid construction posed many problems, including materials shortages and delivery problems; however, work proceeded rapidly. It soon became clear that 6,000 planned homes would not be enough to meet the city's housing needs and the housing authority decided to build more units at Fruit Valley and at Ogden Meadows. Although McLoughlin Heights was the first planned community, the first war-related occupancy took place at Ogden Meadows, built on a field off of Fourth Plain Road.²⁴⁰

In 1942 McLoughlin Heights was the second largest war housing development of individual units ever built in the United States. The two other largest western housing projects were Vanport City, located across the Columbia on the outskirts of Portland with 9,942 units, and University Homes with 2005 units (also in Portland). McLoughlin

²³⁸ "Miracle City," 1.

²³⁹ Van Arsdol, "WWII," 18, 10; "50 Years of Progress," 4; *Bo's'n's Whistle*, 19 September, 1942, 6.

²⁴⁰ "50 Years of Progress," 3- 4."

Heights had 4,000 prefabricated homes, 1,586 units of row housing, and 500 units of permanent housing. Vancouver's Bagley Downs also began in 1942, and with 2,100 units was among the ten largest housing projects in the country.²⁴¹

Construction was the main focus throughout 1942 – building for the future. The first “demountable” temporary houses at McLoughlin Heights were occupied in September 1942. Permanent housing remained unoccupied until April 8, 1943. Construction included shopping centers, a community center, administration offices, a medical center and community facilities, including three schools that opened in 1943. McLoughlin Heights covered 1,098 acres, contained 60 miles of streets, and had a capacity of 25,000 persons.²⁴²

McLoughlin Heights was constructed by Haddock Construction Co., and the Vancouver Contractors.²⁴³ The construction and planning phase for McLoughlin Heights is an important research topic. Although the site is not physically within the Reserve, this period played a significant role in the development of the community and especially in the city's infrastructure. Throughout the West, cities arose through wartime construction. In addition to having hosted the nation's second largest housing project, Vancouver's current shape is directly connected to this time period and its history should be understood and documented.

Ogden Meadows

When Ogden Meadows opened to the first fifty families in August 1942, no ceremonies took place. However, the occasion was deemed an important milestone since Ogden Meadows made the first emergency wartime housing units available. The 1,992-unit war apartment project, built by the Kaiser Company for the Federal Public Housing Authority, occupied 159 acres and housed approximately 5,500 men and women. By the beginning of 1943, Ogden Meadows was almost filled. A commercial center opened on March 1, 1943 and also contained a cafeteria and medical center.²⁴⁴

• Shipyard Construction and Landscape change

Construction of the Kaiser Vancouver Shipyard, land use, and landscape change are important topics for further research. In January 1942, the site of the shipyard was part of a dairy farm and pasture land. Over 3.25 million cubic yards of sand were dredged from the Columbia River to form the fill along the Columbia's shoreline, a 157-acre tract that would become the site of the Vancouver Shipyard. Constructing the shipyard at this site resulted in massive landscape change. For example, the shipyard required a 3,500 car parking lot. The entire waterfront has since been reshaped, and this significant period should be better documented.²⁴⁵

²⁴¹ “50 Years of Progress,” 7-8.”

²⁴² “A Tale of 6 Cities,” 2.

²⁴³ *VC*, 29 September 1942.

²⁴⁴ *VC*, 24 August 1942, 1; Van Arsdol, “WWII,” 18; “A Tale of 6 Cities,” 2-3.

²⁴⁵ *Bo's'n's Whistle*, 27 September 1942, 11; *VC*, 14 January 1942, 1; Van Arsdol, “WWII,” 9.

Timeline for the Vancouver Shipyard – January/February 1942

- Jan. 9 – Contract signed between the Kaiser Company Incorporated, and the U.S. Maritime Commission
- Jan. 12 – Lease of property near Vancouver Barracks signed
- Jan. 13 – Property survey commenced
- Jan. 15 – Sub-contractors on the job clearing site
- Jan. 18 – Dredge *Kentucky* began pumping sand fill in the Way and Assembly Shop Area. Approach roads to the job site started
- Jan. 20 – Foundations poured for the Administration Building, and power lines commenced
- Jan. 23 – First piling driven on Way No. 1.
- Jan. 27 – Additional dredging began pumping in the General Stores and Pipe Shop Area
- Feb. 2 – Filling and grading of Main Parking Area under way. Administration Building framed and roofed
- Feb. 6 – Plate racks under construction. S.P.&S. spur into yards almost completed
- Feb. 13 – Pile driving for Outfitting Dock well under way
- Feb. 18 – Administration Building 75% completed
- Feb. 20 – Four additional ways - \$5,000,000 additional contract announced²⁴⁶

• Social Conditions and the Vancouver Shipyard

Social conditions associated with the Vancouver Shipyard are important topics for further investigation. The following sets the initial tone of the war, demonstrating its impact to local residents and migrants alike.

Gasoline rationing

National gasoline rationing was part of wartime culture and began almost immediately. Under the gas rationing plan, each passenger car except commercial vehicles received a basic “A” gas ration book permitting a maximum mileage of twenty-four per month or 2,880 miles per year. Application forms for ration books were available in the Kaiser shipyards. Everyone was expected to turn all tires in excess of five in to government agencies.²⁴⁷

The following are the principal points in the government’s program for keeping America’s passenger cars rolling with a minimum use of rubber:

- 1) Rationing used tires and recaps, and new tires in stock to provide as far as possible minimum essential mileage to the nation’s passenger cars
- 2) Control of each car’s mileage through gasoline rationing to prevent unnecessary driving
- 3) Compulsory periodic inspection of all tires to guard against abuse and to prevent wear beyond the point where they can be recapped
- 4) Denial of gasoline and tire replacement to cars whose drivers violate the national 35-mile-an-hour speed limit for rubber conservation
- 5) Capacity use, through car sharing, of every car on every trip

²⁴⁶ *Bo’s’n’s Whistle*, 26 February 26, 1942, 10.

²⁴⁷ *Bo’s’n’s Whistle*, 5 November 1942, 6, 7.

Layman's Lament, a poem in the Whistle

I'm the answer to a merchant's prayer.
I buy everything – everywhere.
I buy Defense Bonds with my pay,
And the latest gadgets when I may.
I smoke Luckies, I drink Hires;
But where, or where, can I buy some
tires!²⁴⁸

Medical care for Shipyard workers

Through a charitable organization founded by Henry J. Kaiser, Edgar F. Kaiser, and associates, the Kaiser Company built the Northern Permanente Foundation Hospital on a hill above the shipyard area. The hospital offered medical care to employees and their families on a prepaid plan basis. By September 27, 1942, the “ultra-modern structure” of Northern Permanente stood high on a bluff above the Columbia, slated to open within a few days. All equipment had been installed, and two new ambulances – making a total of four – were on the job, half at the shipyard, half at the hospital. A modern innovation, speaker systems in the two-bed wards, connected patients to the nurse's desk. This period set the stage for Kaiser Permanente's huge health management organization (HMO), a tremendously significant social history topic that should be included in Reserve history.²⁴⁹

Shipyard Slang

The shipyards created a culture unto themselves, one that should be researched. For example, the following is a selection of shipyard slang noted by the *Bo's'n's Whistle* in 1942:

Rod Burner – welder; *Sugar* – Union melt welding flux; *Spider* – high climbing painter; *Aristocrats of the Bristle* – cabin painters; *Headache* – warning to look up; *Baloney* – electric cable for traveling crane; *Nifties* – Girls who replaced the men in warehouses in 1942; *Hook Baiter* – hook tender; *Smoke Eaters* – welders and burners; *Welderettes* – women welders; *Smokey Joe* – plastic armor machine; *Hay* – timbers of other materials under anything heavy, such as steel plates that are laying around the yard.²⁵⁰

• Vancouver USO

The Vancouver USO opened its doors on October 22, 1941. The *Vancouver Chronicle* reported that the: “First boys to play ping pong and to enjoy coffee and doughnuts in the game room were members of the Eighteenth Engineers band and color guard who were given special leave from rifle practice at Camp Bonneville to provide music for the [opening] ceremonies and to hoist the flag over the center.” The USO, explained the paper, was a gathering place for soldiers, where they could meet their girlfriends and drink coffee, eat donuts, sing songs, and entertain themselves. Colonel

²⁴⁸ *Bo's'n's Whistle*, 19 September 1942, 9.

²⁴⁹ *Bo's'n's Whistle*, 27 September 1942, 26.

²⁵⁰ *Bo's'n's Whistle*, 19 September 1942, 10.

E.H. Bertram, commander of Vancouver Barracks expressed pleasure at the center's opening, saying it filled a "great need" from a moral standpoint. The other US service organizations present at opening ceremonies included the YWCA, the YMCA, and Catholic groups.²⁵¹ The USO served an increasingly important role during wartime, and should be investigated further. Recent general literature on the USO includes Frank Coffey, *50 Years of the USO: the official photographic history* (Oxford: Brassey's, 1991); Faircount LLC, *Delivering America: USO* (Tampa, FL: Faircount, 2002).

²⁵¹ *VC*, 23 October 1941, 1, 2.

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