

Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)
The Clemson CCC Camp
Company 4486, SCS-17



“Iron Mike” at Oconee State Park, SC. One of 58 statues erected at former CCC Campsites as a tribute to the men that served in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

THE CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS (CCC) at CLEMSON, SC

INTRODUCTION

Most have heard about the CCC. The government work program for young men that began several weeks after President Franklin D. Roosevelt took office in March of 1933. Heard about and admired the State and National Parks and Forests the program helped create. Nearly 70 years have passed since the last CCC Camp closed and only a few of the thousands of enrollees in the program are around today. But the many accomplishments of these young men are still evident, and will stand for generations to come, as monuments to a highly successful government assistance program.

According to the Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni (CCCA) group, there were 98 camps in South Carolina. Most of the enrollees came from SC or adjoining states. However, there is an account of some difficulties experienced with enrollees from New Jersey that were in a camp on the Francis Marion National Forest. They did not adapt well to the climate, had problems communicating with the technical staff and did not feel welcomed when they visited the surrounding towns. Camps were segregated; nine (9) camps in SC had the letter "C" after the camp designation indicating colored. There were six (6) camps with the designation "V" for veterans. Unemployment among veterans of WW I was a special concern of the US Government. There had been a march on Washington in March of 1932 by veterans demanding their bonuses and other promised benefits. The requirements for induction into the CCC program were relaxed to accommodate the veterans and provide them with the opportunity to earn a livelihood.

This is an account of Camp SCS-17 that was located near Clemson, SC. The camp was built in 1939 on a hilltop west of Clemson College across the Seneca River in Oconee County. The site was once the location of the Ravenal Plantation house. The Federal Government had recently acquired the plantation lands as part of Clemson Land Utilization (LU) Project. The Project lands were later deeded to Clemson University. Today the area is referred to by the University as the Ravenal Center.



The contributions of the Clemson Camp are not widely recognized because it was not organized until near the end of the CCC program and most of the Camp work projects were on privately owned lands. It officially began in November 1939 and operated until the termination of the program in June of 1942. Many of the early enrollees transferred from Camp SCS -14 in Liberty, SC that had recently closed. Much of the work credited to the CCC workers on the Clemson LU project was in fact done by local Works Progress Administration (WPA) workers well before the Clemson CCC Camp was established. CCC enrollees did do much of the work on LU Projects throughout the Nation however; this was not the case at Clemson. One of the major justifications for the Clemson LU Project was to provide work for local citizens that were older and had families.

ABOUT THE CCC ENROLLEES

In the South most of the enrollees came from rural communities. They had to be U.S. citizens, unmarried and unemployed males. Originally the age limits were 17-23, in 1937 the age requirements were adjusted to 18 -28. They had to be in good physical condition and enlist for at least six months. Nationally, five percent of the enrollees were illiterate. Only 11 percent were high school graduates. Seventy percent were malnourished and poorly clothed. Most had no work experience other than part time jobs and seasonal farm work. For many the camps provided a wholesome way of living never before experienced.

Camps had up to 200 enrollees in numbered “*company*” units. The Clemson Camp was Company 4486, SCS-17. The four digit number was assigned by the Federal Government. The designation “SCS -17” indicated the Camp was under the technical supervision of the Soil Conservation Service. Nationwide there were 500 camps under the SCS. The primary work of these camps was erosion control. Camps had a dual-authority supervisory staff. For the first 5-years of the program, camps were under the direct control of army officers. General Douglas Mac Arthur was the first commanding general charged with the overall operation of the program. On June 30, 1939 the administration of the CCC program was transferred to the Federal Security Agency and civil service employees replaced army personnel. The War Department retained control of the facilities and equipment and the camp operating procedures established by the U.S. Army were retained. The designations of Camp Commander and assistant, or subaltern, were still used. The camp commander and his staff handled food, clothing, housing, medical care, education, recreation and discipline. Technical service civilians from agencies, primarily the Departments of Interior and Agriculture, were responsible for the work projects. In addition to the technicians from the government agencies, each camp employed several experienced craftsmen. These LEM (locally employed men) guided the work and crafts training of the generally unskilled enrollees.

Enrollees worked a minimum of 40 hours per week and were paid \$30 per month. They were required to send \$25 per month home to help support their families. Food, clothing, shelter, medical care, educational opportunities, recreation and incidental needs were provided. Camp living was “*military style*”. The men lived 50 to a barracks; reveille was at 6 AM, breakfast at 7 AM, work details left for work in the surrounding country side at 8 AM and were back between 4 or 5 PM. Evenings were for doing laundry, writing letters or attending classes at the educational center. Playing baseball and boxing were popular pastimes as were shooting pool, playing ping pong or card games in the recreation room. Enrollees were expected to conform to the standards as set by Camp supervisors. Those that did not conform were discharged and sent home.

CCC WORK PROJECTS

President Roosevelt proposed to Congress on March 21, 1933 the creation of a federal civilian conservation corps patterned after a similar, small-scale project he had authorized while governor of New York State. In his address to Congress, he stated:

“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. I call your attention to the fact that this type of work is of definite, practical value, not only through the prevention of great financial loss, but also as a means of creating future national wealth.”

At the time, 54 percent of the young men in the Nation were unemployed. He promised at least 250,000 of them would be provided meals, housing, uniforms and small wages to work on conservation projects. To appease the Labor Unions he had to assure them that no job training would be involved beyond simple manual labor.

As the Program developed the following ten (10) general project type classifications were adopted:

1. Structural improvements: bridges, fire lookout towers, service buildings
2. Transportation: truck trails, minor roads, foot trails and airport landing fields
3. Erosion control: check dams, terracing and vegetative cover
4. Flood control: irrigation, drainage, dams, ditching, channel work, riprapping
5. Forest culture: planting trees and shrubs, timber stand improvement, seed collection, nursery work
6. Forest protection: fire prevention, fire-presuppression, firefighting, insect and disease control
7. Landscape and recreation: public camp and picnic ground development, lake and pond site clearing and development
8. Range: stock driveways, elimination of predatory animals
9. Wildlife: stream improvement, fish stocking, food and cover planting
10. Miscellaneous: emergency work, surveys mosquito control

According to interviews with two (2) of the Clemson Camp enrollees whose service spanned from August 1940 to June of 1942 most of the work they did was erosion control. They planted trees on old fields, built check dams in gullies and planted kudzu and cleared and drained wetlands. Some of the work was on the Clemson LU Project but most was on surrounding privately owned land. Apparently, local farmers could put in a request for assistance and CCC crews would be dispatched to work on the property.

One of the interviewees gave this account. *“I had completed truck driver’s school so I was paid \$5 more per month. I got my truck out each morning and loaded the men and their tools and carried them to the work site. I remember that one of the projects we worked on was clearing and draining the bottomland along 12 Mile River near Pickens where the flea market is today. After I dropped the men, I headed back to the Camp to get their lunch. They always got a hot meal at lunch unless they were fighting a fire. I had them back in Camp between 4 and 4:30 PM most days. I also drove the men to Seneca on Saturdays afternoons for recreation and went to Anderson to pick-up a truck load of girls when we had a Saturday night dance at the Camp. We serviced, washed and polished our trucks every Friday afternoon. They all ran like new.”*

Another former enrollee reflected. *“We had 10 PM bed check; there were 4 barracks, 1 recreation hall, 1 officers’ quarters and a mess hall. We wore kaki uniforms with neckties tucked into the third button for dress and denim pants and shirts with a floppy hat for work. The winter dress uniform was heavy olive drab (OD) wool similar to that worn by regular U.S. Army personnel. I took night classes in English and geometry. Some of the courses were taught by Clemson graduate students.”*

Both interviewees commented that the Clemson Camp was a good camp. One of them served only six (6) months at Clemson and then transferred to a camp in Nevada that he did not like as well. The other (the truck driver) served 18 months and left in June of 1942 to become a tank driver in the US Army. Interestingly, he cleared up the question as to why the 1944 aerial photography shows only one building on the Camp site. He said “*they began tearing the place down while we were still there.*” They were moving everything to Camp Croft in Spartanburg County, SC. The one building shown on the 1944 aerial photograph still exists on the site. It is located behind the main building of the Ravenal Center and is used by the USDA to store miscellaneous equipment.

ACTIVATION OF THE CLEMSON CAMP

Construction of the Clemson Camp 4486, SCS-17 probably began in late spring or early summer of 1939. Aerial photographs taken in 1938 show the site is vacant except for a few dilapidated outbuildings leftover from the old Ravenal Plantation. The main house of the Plantation had burned in the early 1930’s. The official date the Camp became fully operational is listed as November 2, 1939. A memorandum dated October 6, 1939 to the Director, Civilian Conservation Corps, Washington, D.C. from a Mr. Neill McL. (middle initial as listed on memo.) Coney, Jr., Special Investigator indicates activity on the Clemson site for the previous months of July, August and September. Apparent Mr. Coney was asked to investigate why so much time was being lost from work projects. He reported for the period:

- 1,895 man-days spent on specials details
- 389 man-days of authorized leave (AWL)
- 148 man-days of unauthorized leave (AWOL)
- 287 sick days
- 1,458 man-days on company details – KP, grounds maintenance, etc.

The remainder of the 11,831 total available man-days was spent on official work projects. The report shows a non-effective rate of 35.3 percent. He closes his special report with the comment. “*Special details involving 1,895 man-days were used in camp construction. Use of these details was apparently authorized by higher authority*”.

Mr. Coney’s also did a standard Form 11 – Camp Inspection Report. He rated the Camp in October of 1939 as fair to good overall. His general comments in the inspection report again explained the high non-effective rate. “*This camp is in the process of movement from Camp SCS-14, Liberty, SC to the new camp site at Clemson College. Movement has been delayed because of difficulty of obtaining sufficient water flow from the well at the new camp site. In other respects this camp is a excellent natural site. Building construction is virtually complete.*” He also remarked on the Camp educational program. “*This camp is in the process of moving and the educational program appears to be more or less disrupted. During the months of July and August, the academic program of this company was suspended in accordance with District “B” policy*”.

It has not been verified, but it is possible that some of the buildings on the Clemson site were moved from Liberty. This would partly explain the delays during the summer and fall of 1939.

However, a Camp Inspection Report dated March 28, 1940 showed some of the workers were still engaged in dismantling the Liberty Camp. As shown in the Camp photographic collage, buildings sections were bolted together and of relatively of simple construction. There was no insulation or inside wall covering, electrical wiring and plumbing were exposed and heat was provided by wood-fired space heaters. It is known that the buildings on the Clemson site were quickly dismantled in May and June of 1942 and hauled by truck to Spartanburg County.

CLEMSOM CAMP – GROUP PHOTOGRAPH

The group picture on the next page was taken on September 3, 1940. It reveals much about life in the Camp. As indicated at the bottom of the roster, the photographic collage was prepared by a professional photographer from Orlando, FL. The roster lists the names of 202 individuals. The roster of names has been enlarged and included with the photograph. There are 12 administrative and technical personnel shown on the roster. Most of these same names appear on each of the Camp Inspection reports obtained from the National Archives that span from October 1939 to July 1941 indicating a low turn-over in Camp management. Individuals with varying colors of shirts and trousers and un-tucked neckties are members of the technical staff. The 190 enrollees appear to be a neat, clean and well-groomed group of young men. Also, worthy of notice is the large “*Best Camp*” plaque held by one of the staff.

In the lower right of the collage a photograph of an open-bay type barracks is shown. The steel frame beds are made up open-air style. Each man had a foot locker and a wall locker. Tilt windows provided ventilation and daylight but absent are the rows of light bulbs as shown in the adjoining picture of the mess hall. Apparently barracks were for strictly for sleeping. Two space heaters are visible. For a building with approximately 2,000 square feet of open floor space, no inside wall or ceiling covering and no insulation, indoor temperatures were probably well below freezing on some winter nights. The building in the upper right of the photographs is the only structure with exhaust fans on the roof. There is sign above the door of the building that is partly obscured by the small tree indicating “*Officers*”. The building was probably for officers living quarters and the camp stores. It appears to be the most elaborate building in the Camp.

The bottom center right photograph is the mess (dining) hall. Tables are picnic style and were probably built on site. There are eight place settings per table. Vases of flowers are on every third table. The dining area is well lighted with a row of single exposed light bulbs down each side. These were needed in the winter months because breakfast was served before daylight and it would be dark before the evening meal was completed. The food preparation area is not shown but it was probably in the end of the same building or in an adjoining wing.

The bottom center left photograph shows the interior of the recreation room. There are two pool tables and a small table with a board game on it. In the back is a small canteen. The canteen was open in the evenings and on weekends for the enrollees to purchase small luxury items. Cokes and candy bars were five (5) cents each and cigarettes were ten (10) cents a pack. The room was well lighted and had curtains on the windows.

CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS

COMPANY 4486, Camp SC SCS-17

CLEMSON, SOUTH CAROLINA

**** September 3, 1940 ****

ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL

CHARLES M. TATUM,
Company Commander
James H. Lovelace,
Subaltern
Charles R. Clegg,
Educational Adviser

JOHN D. McKEY,
Camp Superintendent
William G. Yarbrough,
Jr. Soil Conservationist
James F. Gilreath,
Jr. Agronomist
Tommy M. Martin,
Jr. Asst. to Tech.
Almo D. Hopkins,
Sr. Foreman of Laborers
Hovie G. Tooley,
Sr. Foreman of Laborers
John M. Fenton,
Sr. Foreman of Laborers
Moulton A. Phifer,
Sr. Foreman of Laborers

Will, the Well-digger
LEONARD PARKE - PHOTOGRAPHERS

ORLANDO, FLORIDA

LEADERS

Apple, Herman W.
Black, James C.
Clayton, Jolly
Corbin, John L.
Cox, Willis F.
Estes, A.J., Jr.
Parker, William A.
Stancil, James A.
Tripp, John J.
Williams, James T.

ASSISTANT LEADERS

Burdette, Asa A.
Burdette, Clarence A.
Carroll, Homer R.
Cox, D.W., Jr.
Daniell, Clifford
Kelly, Ralph
McAdams, James B.
Matthews, Luther S.
Reid, Willie J.
Simpson, Samuel W.
Stancil, Cleo
Talley, Ray D.
Terry, Richard E. Jr.
Wiles, Harold E.
Wilson, Walter L.
Woodson, Albert J.

MEMBERS

Adams, Omer S.
Alexander, Homer A.
Alexander, Lewis C.
Allen, Isom A.
Allen, James C.
Allen, Olin L.
Anderson, Sherman L.
Atkins, James C. Jr.
Baker, Vardmon T.
Baldwin, Johnnie B.
Black, Ralph F.
Black, Walter L.
Blackmon, James W.
Blackwell, James D.
Blair, Eulysses N.
Boroughs, John W.
Bradford, Clifton E.
Bramlett, Carl R.
Bridwell, Clyde F.
Bright, Virgil P.
Brook, Louis S.
Brooks, Therston H.
Brown, Hans W.
Bryant, John W.
Campbell, Howard C.
Campbell, Jack
Campbell, Jessie C.
Campbell, Joe F.
Campbell, Richard B.
Carroll, Ernest
Carter, Claud M.

Cash, Jesse W.
Cater, Henry A.
Chappellear, James H.
Chapman, Lloyd C.
Chatham, Boyd W.
Clem, Horace B.
Clark, Milton L.
Cox, Clyde O.
Crooks, Stiles D.
Curtis, Herman E.
Darby, Gerald L.
Davenport, Everett B.
Davis, Charles L.
Dean, Fredrick E.
Dickerson, Ed L.
Dyar, John H.
Edens, Charles S.
Ellenburg, Pelum E.
Epps, Fred D.
Evatt, Jacob T.
Fant, Samuel F.
Ferguson, Charles M.
Finley, James D.
Forehand, Fred
Frasier, Leroy
Freeman, Gerald T.
Gentry, Johnnie W.
George, Vance D.
Gibson, Henry P.
Gillstrap, James G.
Gossett, Ralph V.
Graham, Edward C.
Gray, William C.
Greer, John A.

Grubbs, James H.
Hall, William O.
Hannon, John T.
Hardy, John F.
Harris, Daymond
Harris, James W.
Harvey, Clarence P.
Harvey, Tom S.
Hawkins, Dewey O.
Heller, Sam B.
Henson, Rudolph E.
Herring, William G.
Hill, George W.
Hollis, Benjamin B.
Holmes, Bennie R.
Hornick, William C.
Hudgins, James W.
Hughes, Dan
Hunnicuttt, George E.
Johnson, Lee R.
Johnston, Thomas H.
Jordan, John O.
Keys, Dorsey E.
Kirby, Alphonse
Littleton, Thurman C.
Loftis, Edward W.
Lollis, Horace W.
Looper, John H.
Lyles, James A.
Mann, James L.
Mann, Johnnie M.
Martin, Elijah G.
Matheson, Grady G.

Mauldin, Birt
McAllister, James L.
McCall, James W.
McCullum, James D.
McCoy, Frank J.
McGuffin, B.P.
McMahan, Alex E.
Metcalf, Barber L.
Miller, Thomas C.
Money, Dalton H.
Moore, Fred M.
Moore, Claudis W.
Moore, Oscar G.
Morgan, William V.
Nalley, Robert L.
Nichols, Vernon
Odell, Jack I.
O'Kelley, Claude C.
O'Kelley, John H.
O'Pry, Henry C. Jr.
Owens, John H.
Parnell, Floyd H.
Parson, Samuel A.
Pinion, Herman D.
Peay, James W.
Petty, James R.
Pointer, Joseph L.
Powell, Dennis
Powell, Johnnie Q.
Price, Curtis R.
Rice, John T.
Roach, Harley D.

Roach, Lawrence E.
Rogers, Columbus J.
Rogers, James
Roper, William S.
Sanders, Grady L.
Satterfield, Harlie B.
Segars, Franklin R.
Sentell, James W.
Sheriff, Marvin B.
Skipper, Gray H.
Sims, Fred E.
Smith, Claude L.
Smith, Cullen J.
Smith, Earnest W.
Smith, Mack D.
Smith, Wade C.
Snelgrove, James M.
Suttles, Henry L.
Stancil, Clyde J.
Sutton, Warren L.
Taylor, Harold L.
Timbell, Lee Jr.
Tinsley, James L.
Toney, James H.
Turner, David L.
Walters, Stewart
Warren, Jean C.
Whitaker, Ray T.
Wilson, Clifton E.
Williams, William T.
Wright, Johnnie S.

Bottom left is a photograph of the library and educational room. Special Investigator Coney reported in his October 6, 1939 inspection that the library had 650 volumes and that 39 books had been checked out in August of 1939. He indicated that there were current magazines and daily newspapers available. However, the last inspection report received from the National Archives dated July 14, 1941 showed there were only 450 volumes with a circulation of 50 to 75 per month. The 1941 Camp Educational Report also stated, "*All illiterates are enrolled in courses*" and that "*one enrollee received his degree from Clemson College during the month of June*". A Camp Inspection Report dated July 3, 1940 cited that 21 of the young men were classified as illiterate out of total company strength of 151 or 14 percent. This is nearly three times the number quoted as the national average for enrollees and reflects the dismal state of the economy in the rural south in the early years of the 20th century. The report further states: "*Seventy-five men have completed courses in national defense training, carpentry, electricity, auto mechanics, blacksmithing, welding, drafting and truck driving and maintenance.*"

The top of the photo collage shows the arrangement of the buildings on the Camp site. The open space in the mid- area is probably the muster ground where the entire company would form up for various occasions. Note the flagpole at the corner of the field. One of the interviewees remarked about raising the flag each day for reveille and lowering it in the evening for retreat. The Camp Headquarters building was located under the trees to the left of the flag pole. There is a water tanker parked on the left side of the water tower.

Numerous references are made in the inspection reports about the water supply. The October 6, 1939 report states "*some difficulty is being encountered in securing a sufficient flow and additional drilling is being made*". Two months later, in the December 1939 inspection report, the water supply is rated "*Unsatisfactory*" – "*Well inadequate and water being hauled from Clemson College to supplement supply. Attempts now being made to secure water from additional wells.*" The next available report is dated March 28, 1940. It states, water is still be hauled from Clemson but "*another well is in the process of being constructed.*" The inspector uses the term digging rather than drilling. Shallow hand-dug wells usually 30 to 60 feet deep were the most common means used during the period to obtain a water supply in rural areas. Worth noting is the inclusion of "*Will, the welldigger*" in the group photo. The presence of the water tanker parked next to the water tower would indicate there were still water supply problems when the group photograph was taken in September 1940. The June 1940 report rate the "*wells*" as barely satisfactory. The report, dated December 16, 1940 (4 months after the date of the photo. collage) rates the water system as "*satisfactory*" and the overall rating of the Camp "*excellent*". In the June 1940 report the camp is rated as "*very satisfactory or excellent.*"

CAMP INSPECTION REPORTS

The Clemson CCC Camp was in operation for 32 to 35 months, depending on whether the couple of months transition time from Liberty to Clemson is counted. Throughout the Nation, most camps operated for 6 or 7 years. This relatively short existence and the fact that it was organized just a few years before the CCC program was terminated is no doubt the reason very

little had been recorded about the Camp. Seven camp inspection reports were obtained from the National Archives. They span the period from October, 1939 which was a month before the Camp became an official CCC facility to July 14, 1941 which is approximately one-year before official closing of all camps. Neil McL. Coney, Jr., Special Investigator was listed as the inspector on all seven of the reports.

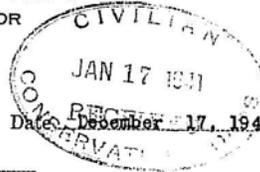
The CCC Form 11, Camp Inspection Reports have been referred to previously in relation to other subjects. The reports provide an in-depth view of life in the Clemson CCC Camp and warrant further discussion. The report form was divided into the following sections with a brief statement describing the type of data recorded in each.

- 1) **General Information** – date, names of key personnel, company strength, number of men fit for duty and number sick and absent without leave (AWOL).
- 2) **Work Project** – basically described type of work and the number of man-days expended. A roster of technical service personnel with their title and annual salary was attached to the report.
- 3) **Camp Sanitation** – brief evaluation of water supply, latrines, garbage removal and mention of disease outbreaks.
- 4) **Medical Service** – the information in this section shows that a medical doctor was contracted to serve each Camp. The doctor for the Clemson Camp was E.J. Bryson. The report indicates he also provided services to one other camp (probably one of the other camps in Oconee County). It also indicates he visited the Camp daily and that he examined food handlers for venereal disease weekly. It also required the inspector to certify that the enrollees were examined for venereal disease on a monthly basis and that prophylactic kits were available. There are comments regarding food procurement and storage. If the importance given to venereal diseases seems a bit over-emphasized, it should be pointed out that syphilis was incurable and much more prevalent before antibiotic medications were discovered.
- 5) **Recreational and Athletic Activities** – the types of activities are listed and the question is asked about trucks being available to haul the enrollees to nearby locations for recreation. The Town of Seneca was the usual destination. At the Clemson Camp, baseball, tennis, boxing, horseshoes, basketball and softball are listed as the athletic activities. According to one of the interviewees, boxing and baseball were the most popular. He remarked, “*the Clemson Camp had a good baseball team and even played some of the teams in the “textile league”*”. Ping-pong, pool, weekly movies, board games and listening to the radio are listed as indoor recreation activities available.
- 6) **Religious Services** – in this section the inspector was tasked to inquire into the availability of opportunities for the enrollees to attend church. How often the CCC Chaplain visited and did local clergy hold services at the Camp.
- 7) **Rating of Personnel and Facilities** – everything from the condition of the men’s shoes to cleanliness of the latrines was given a rating of superior, excellent, good, fair or poor.
- 8) **Safety** – in this section questions about compliance with CCC safety regulations and the condition of the motor vehicles and heavy equipment. There was also a supplemental Safety Questionnaire, Form 11-a, that had to be completed and submitted with the report. Form 11-a

requested information about the Camp safety program are fire drills conducted, how many?, how many accidents?, are explosives properly handled? etc.

- 9) **Camp Educational Report** - this report was made on CCC Form INV-606 and attached to the main report. It required evaluation of the total program and demonstrates the emphasis placed on enrollee education. Of special interest, one of the report states, "***All illiterates have been taught to read and write and are still pursuing their elementary studies.***" The report form required a listing or answers to questions regarding:
 - a) Subjects taught- level of instruction, included basis subjects and vocational skills
 - b) Related educational work - first aid, music lessons, and educational movies.
 - c) facilities - library, number of volumes, circulation, other woodworking shop, etc.
 - d) scope of instruction - grade of course work and how conducted
 - e) results - how many illiterates and what is their progress, how many enrollees are ready for college and how many discharged to take secure jobs.
- 10) **Technical Services** - the reports contained a listing by job title and salary of the personnel that administered and supervised the work projects. In December of 1940, salaries at the Clemson Camp ranged from \$2,700 to \$1,680 per year (\$225 to \$140 per month).
- 11) **Food (CCC Form 10)** - great emphasis was placed on the cost, procurement, storage and preparation of food. The information recorded on the Food Inspection Report (Form 10) had to be certified by the Company Commander. Menus for the week prior to the inspection had to be attached the main report. Each meal consisted of 7 to 10 different items, cooked from basic ingredients and served hot. As evidenced by the following 7-day menu for 2 - 9 December 1940 the enrollees did indeed eat very well. All for the average cost of \$.43 per enrollee per day. Their diet, in terms of quality, quantity and nutrition, far exceeded that of the general population. It is interesting to note that for the evening meal on Thursday the 4th of December the main course was roast beef with gravy and five (5) side dishes with hot rolls and coffee. The company strength as indicated on Form 10 was 184 men plus, the staff and some of the technical personnel for a total of approximately 200. This meal was provided for the grand cost of \$31.78 or about \$.16 per man.

CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
WASHINGTON, D. C.



Date: December 17, 1940

For the week beginning Monday, 12-2-40

Camp No. SC 3CS-17 Company No. 4486 Company strength at beginning of week 184

State South Carolina P. O. address Clemson

Ration allowance per enrollee per day..... \$ 4290

Ration fund value end of last month 11-30-40 468.49

Amount of fund impounded..... 177.82

Amount saved in ration fund last month (or lost) saved 72.61 = Stock + cash

(No deduction should be made for purchase of kitchen equipment).

Value of subsistence stock end of last month..... 623.31

Value of subsistence stock end of preceding month 10-31-40 573.56

Are cooks experience^d and properly trained? Yes
(Yes) (No)

Are meals properly prepared? Yes
(Yes) (No)

Are substitute meals changed on menu? Yes
(Yes) (No)

Is menu posted, approved, and signed by C. O.? Yes
(Yes) (No)

How has mess rated during last 3 months? Excellent

Tableware used? Yes Sterilized? Yes
(Yes) (No) (Yes) (No)

Mess kits used in camp or in field? field

Are mess kits sterilized? Yes
(Yes) (No)

Are all articles of food properly inspected for quality, weight, and specification? Yes
(Yes) (No)

Is sanitary condition of kitchen and mess hall satisfactory? Yes
(Yes) (No)

Certified to be a true copy.

Approved by C. M. Tatum
C. M. TATUM, Company Commander.

To be taken from Monthly O. M. Mess Account:	
Total number of rations allowed last month <u>4933</u>	Total Value \$ <u>2071.49</u>
Actual Cost of Meals last month	\$ <u>2064.85</u>
Income from Boarders last month	\$ <u>60.97</u>

*includes \$34.65 excess Turkey Ration

BREAKFAST	Quantity Used	Unit Cost	DINNER	Quantity Used	Unit Cost	SUPPER	Quantity Used	Unit Cost
MONDAY:								
Tangerines	1 Crt.	1.50	Camp Meal:		\$	Fried Corn Beef	4 Can	\$5.60
Cereal	200	3.65	Spaghetti & Beef	47 #	7.18	Mashed Potatoes	100 #	2.40
Milk	200 1/2 Pt.	6.00	Blackeyed Beans	15 #	.60	Green Lima Beans	6 Can	2.16
Bacon & Eggs	10 # 2 doz	9.54	Creamed Potatoes	100 #	2.34	Fried Cabbage	100 #	1.82
Grits	8 #	.16	Sliced Onions	21 #	.42	Lettuce & Tomatoes	1 Crt.	2.75
Gravy & Honey	15 #	1.50	Blackberry Cobbler	3 Cans	1.84	Cocconut Pies	15 #	1.86
Butter	6 #	2.04	Corn Bread	45 #	1.38	Hot Rolls	55 #	2.15
Coffee	8 #	.64	Coffee	8 #	2.24	Butter Milk	25 gal.	5.00
Hot Biscuits	50 #	1.89	Number served 34.....					
			Field Meal:					
			Same As Above					
			Number served 123					
TOTAL COST		\$ 26.92	TOTAL COST		\$ 16.00	TOTAL COST		\$23.74
TUESDAY:								
Oranges	1 Crt.	2.00	Camp Meal:		\$	Pork Chops & Gravy	60 #	\$9.68
Cereal	200	3.65	Country Style Steak	80 #	15.20	Fresh String Beans	2 Bu.	3.74
Milk	200 1/2 Pt.	6.00	Lima Beans	20 #	1.04	Steamed Rice	13 #	.39
Pork Sausage	50 #	7.50	Boiled Collards	1 1/2 doz.	1.59	Baked Sweet Potatoes	3 Bu.	3.75
Butter	7 #	2.38	Combination Salad		.75	Banana Pudding	37 #	5.74
Grits	8 #	.16	Apricot Cobbler	3 Cans	1.70	Lettuce & Tomatoes	1 Crt.	2.75
Gravy			Corn Bread	40 #	2.60	Hot Rolls	55 #	2.52
Syrup	1 Gal.	.36	Coffee & Cream	8 #	1.09	Hot Cocoa	24 Cans	2.16
Coffee	8 #	.64	Number served 32.....					
Hot Biscuits	50 #	2.09	Field Meal:					
			Same As Above					
			Number served 124					
TOTAL COST		\$ 24.78	TOTAL COST		\$ 23.97	TOTAL COST		\$30.73
WEDNESDAY:								
Fresh Apples	2 Bu.	2.50	Camp Meal:		\$	Cheese & Macorina Pie	20 #	\$5.91
Oatmeal & Raisins	4 Bo 3 #	.48	Spanish Beef	58 #	12.35	Green Lima Beans	6 Can	2.52
Milk	200 1/2 Pt.	6.00	Pinto Beans	20 #	1.04	Boiled Turnip Greens	2 Bu.	1.12
Soft Boiled Eggs	28 Doz.	7.84	Rutabaga Turnips	50 #	1.49	Sage Dressing		.90
Butter	7 #	2.38	Cabbage & Onion Sal	25 #	.50	Sweet Mixed Pickles	2 Can	1.26
Grits	8 #	.16	Choc. Pudding W/C. Nut	5 #	1.39	Apple Pies	7 Can	3.22
Gravy			Corn Bread	40 #	1.88	Hot Rolls	50 #	1.71
Syrup			Coffee	8 #	1.00	Coffee & Cream	8 #	2.36
Coffee	8 #	.64	Number served 34.....					
Hot Biscuits	40 #	1.81	Field Meal:					
			Same As Above					
			Number served 125					
TOTAL COST		\$ 21.81	TOTAL COST		\$ 19.65	TOTAL COST		\$19.00
THURSDAY:								
Fresh Apples	2 Bu.	2.50	Camp Meal:		\$	Roast Beef	87 #	\$16.53
Cereal	200	3.65	Meat Loaf & Gravy	80 #	15.36	Brown Gravy		
Milk	200 1/2 Pt.	6.00	Blackeyed beans	20 #	1.04	Turnips & Greens	1 1/2 Bu.	1.62
Pork Sausage	50 #	7.50	Corn & Tomato Jumbo	13 Can	1.38	Fried Sugar Corn	24 Can	1.44
Grits	8 #	.16	Vegetable Slaw		.75	Candied Yams W/M	1 Buldo	3.19
Butter	7 #	2.38	Blackberry Cobbler	3 Can	2.10	Fruit Salad	6 Can	3.65
Honey	15 #	1.6	Corn Bread	35 #	2.54	Sliced Tomatoes	1 Crt.	2.00
Gravy	2 #	.14	Coffee & Cream	8 #	1.88	Hot Rolls	50 #	1.71
Coffee	8 25 Sugar	.64	Number served 35.....			Coffee & Cream	8 #	1.64
			Field Meal:					
			Same As Above					

Hot Biscuits	45 #	2.11	Same As Above					
			Number served 129					
TOTAL COST.....		\$ 27.96	TOTAL COST.....		\$ 25.01	TOTAL COST.....		\$31.78
FRIDAY:								
Oranges	1 Crt.	1.75	Camp Meal:			Oyster Stew	50 can	17.92
Cereal			Ham & Egg Pie	49 #	11.06	Oyster Crakers	22 #	2.64
Milk	200 1/2 Pt.	6.00	Mashed Potatoes	100 #	3.09	Oven Fried Potatoes	100 #	2.00
Bacon & Eggs	10 #	10.66	Fresh String Beans	2 Bu	3.54	Chili Sauce	20 Bot	2.00
Butter	5 #	1.70	Combination Salad		.75	Buttered Beets	2 Can	.90
Grits	8 #	.16	Rice Pudding	10 #	1.98	Cocconut Pies	20 #	4.30
Gravy			Corn Bread	35 #	2.03	Corn Meal Muffins	25 #	1.69
Syrup	1 Gal	.36	Coffee	8 #	1.14	Coffee & Cream	8 #	2.04
Coffee	8 #	.64	Number served 34					
Hot Biscuits	45 #	1.79	Field Meal:					
			Same As Above					
			Number served 128					
TOTAL COST.....		\$ 23.06	TOTAL COST.....		\$ 23.59	TOTAL COST.....		\$33.49
SATURDAY:								
Fresh Apples	2 Bu.	2.50	Camp Meal:			Fried Hamburgers	51 #	10.37
Cereal	100	1.82	Fried Steak	69 #	13.11	Tomato Gravy	1 Can	.28
Milk	200 1/2 Pt.	6.00	Gravy			Baked Hominy	12 Can	.72
Pork Sausage	50 #	7.50	Lima Beans w/Catsup	18 #	1.11	Creamed Carréts	1/2 Bu.	1.10
Butter	6 #	2.04	Buttered June Peas	2 Can	.78	Sliced Cucumber Pickles	1 Can	.42
Honey	15 #	1.88	Fried Cabbage	50 #	.99	Pineapple Pies	3 Can	2.77
Grits	8 #	.16	Banana Pudding	42 #	4.31	Hot Biscuits	30 #	1.44
Coffee	8 #	.64	Hot Biscuits	30 #	1.55	Coffee & Cream	4 #	.72
Hot Biscuits	40 #	1.80	Number served 178					
			Field Meal:					
			Coffee & Cream	8 #	2.67			
			Number served					
TOTAL COST.....		\$ 24.26	TOTAL COST.....		\$ 24.52	TOTAL COST.....		\$ 7.82
SUNDAY:								
Oranges	1 Crt	1.75	Camp Meal:			Cream Of Tomato Soup	3 Can	.72
Cereal	150	2.73	Baked Cured Ham	63 #	11.34	Crakers	4 #	.40
Milk	150	4.50	Fresh String Beans	1 Bu.	1.75	Baked Beans	12 Cans	.84
Fried Bacon	30 #	5.10	French Fried Potatoes	50	1.32	Sliced Cheese	12 1/4 #	2.57
Butter	2 #	.84	Baked Sugar Corn	18 Cans	1.68	Raisin & Cabbage Slaw	15 #	.75
Honey	10 #	1.25	Lettuce & Tomatoes	1 Crt.	2.80	Oatmeal Cookies	3 Boxes	1.41
Coffee	4 #	.32	Lemon Cake	16 #	1.88	Hot Biscuits	32 #	1.11
Hot Cakes	15 #	2.67	Sliced Peaches	3 Can	1.26	Hot Cocoa	2 1/2 #	1.05
			Number served 178					
			Field Meal:					
			Hot Rolls	30 #	1.26			
			Coffee & Cream	4 #	1.80			
			Number served					
TOTAL COST.....		\$ 19.16	TOTAL COST.....		\$ 24.49	TOTAL COST.....		\$ 8.85
TOTAL WEEK COST.....		\$ 167.95	TOTAL WEEK COST.....		\$ 157.23	TOTAL WEEK COST.....		\$ 165.41
GRAND TOTAL COST.....		\$ 490.59						

Number of boarders in camp ... 14

From the above description it is evident that persons conducting the camp inspections delved intensely into all aspects of Camp operations. The inspections were patterned after the operation of the Inspection General Office of the US Military where everything from the cleanness of commode seats to the number of typo's in the unit's records were a matter of interest and affected the rating of the organization. The last report received from the National Archives is dated July 14, 1941. In this report, the overall rating of the Camp is "*excellent.*"

WORK PROJECTS

The natural resource conservation activities of the Clemson Camp merits more in-depth discussion. In the 1930's, the Clemson area that included lower Pickens, Oconee and upper Anderson County contained some of the most eroded farm land in the region. Dr. George H. Aull, a Clemson faculty member, was able to convince the Federal Government to establish a special Land Utilization Project for the area. By 1939, 29,669 acres of sub-marginal farmland had been purchased in the tri-county area around Clemson. Work on the Clemson Land Use Project began in 1935 and peaked in the 1937-38 when approximately 1,500 local WPA workers were employed. Obviously, most of the work on the Clemson was completed before the Clemson CCC Camp was organized in November of 1939.



Erosion on land near Clemson
c. 1935

The Clemson Land Use Project was a beginning in the effort to reclaim the South Carolina upper piedmont lands. However, many thousands of privately owned acres needed conservation work. Most of the work by the enrollees of the Clemson CCC Camp was done on surrounding privately owned farmland. In the last available Camp Inspection Report dated July 14, 1941, the work is described as "*Fences; Gully treatment; Terrace outletting; Field planting (trees); Soil preparation, seeding and sodding; surveys; etc.*" The report also states that 59,858 acres were under SCS agreement of which 10,935 had been completed. The work area is described as lying in the Upper Savannah Soil Conservation District. This leaves little doubt that the Clemson CCC

Camp enrollees did not do much work on the Clemson LU Project. Forestry records show that nearly all the pine trees planted on the Clemson Project were planted in 1937 – 1939.

Form 11, the camp inspection report of the Civilian Conservation Corps contained a supplement describing the “*Work Project*”. It briefly outlined the work being done and inquired if the work plan was being followed. Overall, the inspection report seemed less concerned with the fieldwork accomplished by the enrollees and technical personnel and concentrated more on how much and where the enrollees worked. For example, the March 1940 report shows a “*non-effective*” rate of 48 percent. Nearly half of the available man-days were spent on non-work project duties. Dismantling the remaining buildings at Liberty Camp site occupied much of the enrollee’s time during this period. Apparently, there was some severe weather in March of 1940 because the report also states that about 20 percent of the available man-days were lost because of “*bad-weather*”.

The enrollee’s field work was organized and supervised by a technical staff. The first Camp Inspection Report dated October 6, 1939 lists eleven (11) technical personnel by job title and annual salary. The project superintendent, Mr. J.D. McKey served in the position for the entire time the camp was in operation. His salary is listed as \$2,600 per year (\$217 per month). Agricultural Engineers were paid \$2,000 per year (\$167 per month), senior foreman \$1,740 per year (\$145 per month) and the blacksmith \$1,320 per year (\$110 per month). These were considered very good jobs and local politicians strived to have a camp located in their district.

DISSENT AT THE CLEMSON CAMP

The story about the Clemson CCC Camp would not be complete without mention of an event that began to unfold just a few weeks after the Camp was officially established. The period from the summer of 1939 to mid-winter of 1940 was somewhat chaotic because of the transfer from Liberty to Clemson. Some of the buildings, all the furnishing, tools and equipment had to be removed from the Liberty site and transported to Clemson. The roads, walkways and landscaping were not in place or were very rudimentary at Clemson. The water supply was inadequate consequently; water for showers, washing clothes and cleaning of buildings and vehicles was rationed. In addition, many of the enrollees had just joined the program and had not yet become accustomed to the regimented life style. While working at their regular duties from 8 AM to 4 PM enrollees were required to cope with the situation by working after duty hours at the camp and sacrificing some of their personal comforts and freedom. The combination of these factors led to a minor rebellion.

The nature and the extent of the enrollee’s dissent was expressed in a letter addressed to:

“Mr. Robert Fletcher
Director CCC
Washington D.C.”

A copy of the handwritten letter was obtained from the National Archives. It is shown here in typewritten form, marked “*COPY*”. It was probably typed at the CCC Director’s office soon after

receipt, to be more easily read by CCC administrators. The underlining is original by one of the recipients. The envelope in which the letter was mailed was also preserved in the National Archives. It was postmarked Nov 18, 11-AM, 1939, Clemson, SC. The 3-cent postage stamp pictured President, Theodore Roosevelt on the left side, a ship passing through the Panama Canal in the middle and General George Goethals, Chief Engineer of the canal project on the right. The inscription on the bottom of the stamp read: "*25th Anniversary Panama Canal*". In the return address block was the handwritten notation:

"return in 6 days to
company 4486
Clemson S.C.,
S.C.S 17,"

Before getting into the official reactions to this letter, it is revealing to examine the significance of the dates. The letter was written on Friday, November 17, 1939 and mailed on Saturday November 18th. On both Saturday and Sunday of that weekend, the Camp Commander restricted the enrollees to the Company area (obviously at least one slipped off to mail a letter). No doubt, the announcement that all weekend passes were canceled was not well received by the enrollees who already felt overworked and under fed. The restriction was probably announced near the end of the duty day on Friday and the letter written that evening.

COPY

Mr. Techner

Clemson, South Carolina
November 17, 1939

Dear Sir:

When we signed up for the Civilian Conservation Corps we didn't have the least idea that we would have to work day and night too, for it is just about that way around here, for we have to work on the crew and when we get in we have to work in the camp. So we thought we would write and see if you could do anything about it for we are working Saturday and Sunday too.

Besides this camp has been put up a good while and we aren't getting half enough to eat for the mess steward put a little over a hundred dollars in the company funds last month. We thought we would get three meals a day when we got in here. The Commanding Officer gives us twelve to fifteen hours a week for even saying anything about the eats around here, so if you can't do anything about it, we are all going on a strike, for we are getting tired of working all the time and can't get to go home on the weekend, for we feel like we are to get off on the weekends anyhow and get something to eat besides.

So if you can do anything about it we wish that you would, so we will close hoping to get results.

CCC, Company 4486
SCS-17
Clemson, S. C.,

We would sign all of our names but they are liable to discharge us, so we are signing the company's number.

REVIEWED BY	<i>K</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FILE		<input type="checkbox"/>
FOLLOW-UP REPORT		<input type="checkbox"/>
REFERRED TO <i>Investigator</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>

THE WHOLE COMPANY

Facts later revealed the restriction was probably justified. The Camp Commander, C. M. Tatum in his written response dated December 12, 1939 explains: "*No week-end passes except emergency were given on those dates (18,19 Nov.) due to the fact the weather was cold and wet, and there were some 44 men in quarters with mild influenza*". The Camp strength in November of 1939 was 187 enrollees. So nearly one-quarter of them were sick that weekend. It is possible but not verifiable in the records that the Commander was acting based on the advice of the Camp Doctor. Influenza was much more feared then than now. The enrollees would have been too young to remember the 1918-19 flu epidemic, but had probably heard many somber stories about it from their parents and grandparents. Camp supervisors would have well remembered the epidemic and been extremely cautious about an outbreak of the flu occurring in the Camp.

Mr. Charles H. Kenlan, Assistant to the Director, Robert Fletcher, officially responded to the letter on December 4, 1939. He instructed Mr. Neill McL. Coney, Jr. Special Investigator, CCC, to: "*Kindly proceed with investigation at the above-named Camp as soon as may be convenient. Also submit regular camp inspection report.*" It is an interesting sidebar to note the letter was addressed to Mr. Coney at the "*Virginia Dare Hotel, Elizabeth City, North Carolina*". Mr. Coney completed his investigation and inspection and forwarded his findings to Mr. Kenlan on December 12, 1939.

Mr. Coney interviewed the Camp Commander and his staff, members of the technical staff and the enrollees. The report is three (3) typewritten pages in length. Attached to the report were statements from the Commander, C. M. Tatum whose title is indicated as: "*Subaltern, Actg. Co. Comdr.*" and Mr. Charles R. Clegg, Camp Educational Advisor. It should be noted that Commander Tatum's title indicates he was a low ranking civil service employee serving as "*acting company commander*". This would indicate he was a relatively new and inexperienced company commander. It would be reasonable to assume he was under considerable pressure to get the new camp shaped-up and gain favor with his superiors. This required extra effort from the enrollees who obviously did not share in these ambitions.

The letters of Commander Tatum and Mr. Charles R. Clegg, Camp Educational Advisor responding to the complaints in the enrollee's letter are shown in original form.

CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS
COMPANY NO. 4486. CAMP SC. SCS-17
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING OFFICER
CLEMSON, SOUTH CAROLINA

CMT/wfc

December 12, 1939

This company moved from SC SCS-14, Liberty, S. C. to SC SCS-17, Clemson, S. C., on November 1st, 1939. SCS-17 was a new camp, having just been built.

As is invariably the case in all new camps, there was considerable work to be done on the camp area. This work included general policing of the grounds and area, laying out of walks, preparing the grounds for grass planting, etc. Under existing regulations, this work can be done only during hours when the men are not on the work project, which means in the afternoons and Saturdays.

Since the movement of the company on November 1st, 1939, there has been no unreasonable amount of work required from the company tho naturally the entire company has had more work to do in camp than would be the case in any old established camp. The camp work has been divided up equitably, and the practice has been to work at least two (2) work crews at the time in the afternoons. This could not be for a period of more than 1-1/2 hours per day, since no work was ever required after 5:30 P.M., and the crews invariably return from the work project at 4:00 P.M. or later.

Work in camp has been required on Saturdays usually from 8:00 A. M. to 11:30 A.M. Week-end passes have been granted every week-end since November 1st, 1939, with the exception of the week-end of November 18th-19th. No week-end passes except emergency were given on those dates due to the fact that the weather was cold and wet, and there were some forty-four men in quarters with mild influenza. It is not the policy at this station to require any work whatever in camp on Sundays, altho on November 5th, the company worked on the camp area approximately 2-1/2 hours. This work consisted mostly of general policing around barracks, mess hall, and other parts of the camp area, and hauling trash away from camp. No work of any nature, except necessary fatigue, was done in camp on the week-end of November 11th-12th.

There has been no complaint made to me, the Junior Officer, the Camp Educational Adviser, any of the Using Service Personnel, or any of the camp overhead concerning the mess, either as to quality or quantity of the food. It is the opinion of the undersigned, which opinion is borne out by official inspection reports, that the mess at this station is well above the average.

There has been no evidence of any hint of any strike or anything of a similar nature during the entire time I have been assigned to this organization.


C. M. TATUM,
Subaltern, Actg. Co. Comdr.

CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS
COMPANY NO. 4486, CAMP SC. SCS-17
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING OFFICER
CLEMSON, SOUTH CAROLINA

November 12, 1939.

Since this company moved to the present site, on November 1, 1939., I have heard no complaints from any of the boys concerning the mess, either as to the quality or quantity of food served. My personal observation has been that the mess is no better than, but equally as good as it was prior to November 1st. I believe that the mess is above the average of those I have been in a position to observe.

I have heard a few casual complaints among a few of the men concerning the extra amount of work necessary in getting the new camp in proper shape.

Occasionally an enrollee has been heard to complain about not being turned loose for week end pass on Saturday morning.

Considering the fact that the camp is new, and has been laboring under some adverse conditions, it is my opinion that the morale of the men in general is excellent.


Charles R. Clegg
Camp Educational Adviser.

Mr. Coney rendered the following conclusions and recommendations in section 5 of his report.

Conclusions:

“a. It is to be concluded that enrollees of this camp have been required to work in the afternoons, on Saturday mornings until noon, and on one occasion upon Sunday, in the camp on the camp area. The requiring of work of enrollees in camp after completion of the normal work in the field is not an unusual practice, although it is more common in recently established camps than in camps, which have been in existence for some length of time. In almost all camps, enrollees are required to work on Saturday mornings until noon. Enrollees are not normally required to work on Sundays.

b. The granting of week-end passes is a privilege, and under existing regulations, the company commander apparently has the authority to permit such passes only after noon on Saturdays. In some camps week-end passes are granted to all who desire them, except overhead and necessary details, on Friday afternoons.

c. There appears to be no foundation to the charges made concerning the operation of the mess, which appears to be satisfactory.”

Recommendations:

“a. It is recommended that enrollees shall not be required to perform any work on Sundays, except that of emergency nature, other than the normal work required of the camp overhead.

b. It is recommended that some consideration be given to the possibility of placing limitations on the amount of work which company commanders may require of enrollees in camp after the performance of their work in the field. Excessive employment of enrolled personnel on camp work, after that personnel has performed a day’s work in the field, is productive of discontent, low moral, and dissatisfaction. It may also be injurious to the educational program, since with no rest intervals between work in the field and in the camp and the educational activities of the camp, it may reasonably be presumed that the educational program will be the sufferer, for enrollees will be too tired to participate in the program.”

Since the War Department was still in the chain of command on January 6, 1940, Mr. Kenlan informed the Adjutant General of the War Department there had been an anonymous complaint about excessive work, poor food and limited weekend passes at Camp SCS-17, Clemson, South Carolina. He enclosed Mr. Coney’s report and the statements from the Camp Commander and Educational Advisor. In the closing paragraph of his letter, he stated, “*the morale of the company is evidently impaired in which case the discretionary judgment of authority may have been carried to the extreme*”. He further suggested the recommendations of Investigator Coney be considered. Over the next few months letters traveled up and down the War Department and U.S. Army chain of command with endorsements agreeing with Inspector Coney’s recommendations.

Apparently, during the early winter and spring of 1940, corrections were made and the enrollee’s attitudes improved. In fact, in the June 1940 inspection report Mr. Coney states, “*The general condition of this camp may be described as very satisfactory or excellent*”. Great strides must have been made because in March of 1940, Acting Commander Tatum became the actual

commander and the company received the “*Best Camp*” award displayed in the group photograph taken in September of 1940.

LOOKING BACK

The Civilian Conservation Corps was one of the most highly acclaimed government programs ever created. At the peak of the program in 1935 there were 500,000 men enrolled in 2,600 camps. From 1933 to June of 1942, 3,000,000 men had served. Many politicians believed the CCC program was largely responsible for a 55 percent reduction in crimes committed by young men of that day. As the economy improved businessmen indicated a preference for hiring men who had been in the CCC. The reason was simple; they knew what a day’s work was and they knew how to follow orders. General Mark Clark in an address at Citadel in October of 1980 remarked:

“In my way of thinking, the CCC was a monumental success in saving the youth of the 1930’s, being the salvation of many families in desperate need, in contributing in endless ways to our national advancement in conservation of forests, lands and waters, and while doing so endowing the individual CCC enrollee with a feeling of dignity, for he was giving his Country an honorable and worthwhile return for what it was doing for him and his family economically – such stark contrast to the shameful, character-robbing Welfare Programs of today”.

General Clark goes on to express appreciation for the contributions made by former CCC enrollees in WW II. He stated, “*The CCC enrollees were part of the linchpin of our frenzied mobilization and without them the United States would have been unable to bridge the time gap that existed.*”

The number of enrollees in the CCC program began to decline in 1940 when conscription for the military began. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, obviously, the young men of the Nation were needed elsewhere. The period from December 1941 to June of 1942 was mostly used for closing out the camps and work projects. Most of the buildings and equipment were assimilated in the war effort. A few on the west coast were used to house Japanese-American detainees. Later in the war some were used to house German and Italian prisoners of war.

It is fairly certain that most who read this report will question why the CCC model was not been employed in the severe economic recession of first decade of 21st century. Inner-city unemployment and crime involving young men is as prevalent, or more so, than it was in the 1930’s. One must look to the leadership of the Country to find that answer. Many individuals that we now refer to as “*the greatest generation*” served in the Corps. Here are just a few:

Hyman G Rickover, 4-star Admiral
Raymond Burr, famous actor
Archie Moore, light heavyweight World boxing champion
Robert Mitchum, Hollywood star
Chuck Yeager, test pilot, first to break sound barrier
Walter Matthau, actor

Aldo Leopold, ecologist, environmentalist (forester on technical staff)

In the multitude of reports, one point that seems to surface about the CCC program is - "*it was a great character builder.*"

Closing Comment

The writer of this report was able to describe from personal experience some of aspects of camp life, the facilities and arrangement of the camp ground. As mentioned the buildings were used during WWII. They were still in use in the 1950's and 60's and some probably still exist around the back fringes of various army posts. I know they were in use during the Korean War because I lived in some very similar structures. Albeit, with some improvements. Most had better lighting, exhaust fans to move the stifling hot air and in some cases central heat from a coal fired furnace located in a lean-to attached to the building.

The facts presented herein are based on information obtained from the following sources:

CCC Alumni organization

The National Archives

The Smithsonian Institute

The George H. Aull collection at the Strom Thurmond Institute at Clemson University

Personal interviews with two (2) former enrollees

Numerous downloads from on-line sources

Special thanks are due to Mrs. Joyce Hartsell for sharing the group photograph. The same photograph was located a few weeks before in a storage room of un-cataloged collections at the Smithsonian. While in the process of attempting to convince the archivist to provide me with a good quality scan, Mrs. Hartsell came forward with an original. And for that we are grateful.

I have interpreted the data gathered from the above sources based on my experiences and opinions. There is no doubt that, somewhere, there exists information about the Clemson CCC Camp that I have not uncovered that will broaden the knowledge about the camp. Some of it will perhaps reverse some of the inferences I have made. I became interested in digging up information about the Clemson CCC Camp because, even though I had worked with many people whom were practicing natural resource professionals during the period when the CCC program was operating they knew very little about the Clemson Camp. The late start and WW II had apparently obliterated much of its history. I knew the Camp existed because it is on the list compiled by the CCC Alumni group. I had been told that the CCC workers built Lake Issaqueena and the recreation facilities that are now part of the Clemson Experimental Forest but also had, years ago, met many who worked on those projects as WPA employees. I began question exactly who did what. When I found that the Clemson CCC Camp was not authorized until November of 1939, I became even more curious and decided to investigate.

Larry D. Reamer, Sr.
March 31, 2012