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Shenandoah

Historic Furnishings Report

Rapidan Camp: "The Brown House"

Volume 1: Historical Data
Volume 2: Implementation Plan

Shenandoah National Park
Virginia

NORTHEAST MUSEUM SERVICES

National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior

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Cover Illustration: Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover seated at corner of southeast porch, "The Brown House," Rapidan Camp. Photograph, 2 August 1930, *New York Herald Tribune*, Shenandoah National Park Archives.

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6 February 2002

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Memorandum

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From: Laurel Racine, Acting Director, Northeast Museum Services Center

Subject: Rapidan Camp Historic Furnishings Report Distribution

Enclosed please find the report *Historic Furnishings Report, Rapidan Camp: "The Brown House," Shenandoah National Park*. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the distribution or content of this report, please feel free to contact me at (617) 242-5613, ext. 15; fax (617) 242-1833, or laurel_racine@nps.gov.

Laurel Racine

Attachment

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HISTORIC FURNISHINGS REPORT

RAPIDAN CAMP: "THE BROWN HOUSE"
SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

Volume 1: Historical Data
Volume 2: Implementation Plan

by
Laurel A. Racine
Senior Curator

Northeast Museum Services Center
National Park Service
September 2001

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Management Summary

The current report was undertaken in conjunction with the architectural restoration of Rapidan Camp's three remaining cabins. This restoration began in 1997 after it was determined the camp would no longer serve as VIP lodging for Cabinet members and Congressmen. Instead, the restored and refurnished camp will be an interpreted destination for Shenandoah National Park visitors. It is recommended that "The Brown House," often called "The President," be a historic furnished interior. "The Prime Minister" will be a visitor contact station containing exhibits which visitors can experience in a self-guided way. If financially possible, it is recommended that "The Creel" be renovated to house a resident ranger or volunteer in the park. It is also necessary to interpret the camp's landscape and missing buildings. The Park is considering the installation of new wayside exhibits and possibly outlining missing buildings in three dimensions.

It is recommended that Rapidan Camp's "The Brown House" be refurnished to the 1930 to 1932 mature Hoover-era furnishings. This period of restoration is the obvious choice because Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover selected the camp's location, design, activities, and furnishings. This period of Rapidan Camp's history is nationally significant because it was President Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover's weekend retreat for work and recreation from April to October during the beginning of the Great Depression.

There is visual and documentary evidence to strongly support the restoration of "The Brown House" to the Hoover era. A set of period photographs in the collection of the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace is the most important record of the furnishings for this period.[1] This visual information is buttressed by correspondence among the Hoovers, their staff members, architect/friend James Rippin, Major Earl C. Long, and furnishings retailers. Also informative are period receipts and inventories.

"The Brown House" will be refurnished in concert with the current architectural restoration project which also is targeting the 1930 to 1932 Hoover era. Architectural changes that will facilitate the furnishing of the cabin are the restoration of a missing portion of the front porch and the removal of a kitchen addition. These changes allow the accurate display of porch furniture and the furnishing of the sitting room as such instead of as its later incarnation as a dining/conference room. The only additional architectural change recommended is the extension of the stationary lights to two feet below the ceiling rafters to which they are currently attached.

The furnishing of "The Brown House" will be a significant change from its current use as a storage area (albeit one available for tours) and its previous use as lodging. The implications of furnishing the cabin are that several objects must be purchased; some of the objects now stored in the building need to be housed elsewhere in the Park; and a few objects may be considered for deaccessioning. No change to the interior finish is recommended.

Visitors will arrive at the site in one of three ways: by foot, on horseback, or in a twenty-five-passenger (or fewer) minibus or van. Groups of twelve visitors will

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[1] Shenandoah National Park and the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library have copies of these photographs, but their copies are not as clear as those at the Hoover Institution.

experience "The Brown House" on a half-hour guided tour. While waiting, others will explore the grounds and visit "The Prime Minister" on a self-guided basis.

The changes in the cabins' contents and uses will impact the management of the Rapidan Camp site. It is necessary to purchase a van or minibus to transport visitors to the camp. At least one interpreter is required to transport and guide visitors each day the camp is open to the public. Also, one staff member should survey the site weekly to monitor structural changes and clean the cabins according to a housekeeping schedule. If possible, a resident caretaker/interpreter should be employed to increase visitor access to the site and manage facility and collections care.

National Park Service Administrative Background[2]

The United States Congress passed legislation on 25 February 1925 allocating $20,000 for the assessment of potential national parks in the eastern United States, including an area in the northern Blue Ridge Mountains. The proposed Shenandoah National Park was to contain a minimum of 521,000 acres of land. This figure was reduced several times from 521,000 to 400,000 to 327,000 and finally to 160,000 acres. The intent was for the Commonwealth of Virginia to acquire the future parkland and grant it to the United States.

On 22 May 1926, Calvin Coolidge signed the bill stating that if Virginia deeded 327,000 acres of land to the federal government, Shenandoah would become a national park. To acquire the necessary acreage Governor Harold F. Byrd enlisted the help of his former campaign manager, William E. Carson, to head the newly established Virginia Conservation and Development Commission. The Commission's task was to survey, appraise, and purchase the properties within the proposed park boundary. As chairman of this Commission, Carson persuaded President Herbert Hoover to purchase future parkland to be developed as a fishing camp. He hoped this presidential purchase would draw attention to the Shenandoah project and add cost-free acreage to the park.

At Carson's suggestion, Virginia passed a blanket condemnation law for the properties to become part of Shenandoah National Park. The law was challenged by the Commonwealth Supreme Court in October 1929, but the United States Supreme Court refused to hear the case in December 1935. On 26 December 1935 Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes accepted 176,429 acres of land, including the 164-acre Rapidan Camp site and the 1.58-acre Hoover school site, as Shenandoah National Park. Today the park contains 196,400 acres.

The Hoovers donated Rapidan Camp to the Commonwealth of Virginia in December 1932 intending for it to serve as a summer retreat for future United States presidents or to be used by Shenandoah National Park. Due to physical handicaps, personal preferences, and, eventually, the diminished state of the camp buildings, the camp was never regularly used by later presidents. With the exception of a ten-year period between 1948 and 1958 when the camp was occupied by the Boy Scouts of America, Rapidan Camp served as a VIP getaway for Cabinet members and Congressmen. VIP privileges at Rapidan Camp ceased in 1996.

All but three of the camp buildings were demolished in 1959. Since an early 1960s restoration of the remaining cabins, general visitors have been able to visit the grounds of Rapidan Camp. Starting in 1974, visitors could enter the buildings once a year on "Hoover Day." From the early 1990s to 1997 Shenandoah National Park conducted "Hoover Caravan Tours" of the camp for visitors up to seven days per week during the summer months. The same pattern was to pertain in 1998, but the site was closed due to storm damage until August when it opened for Hoover Days. Since 1997, when "The Brown House" is open for public tours it is interpreted as a "restoration in progress." Only the exteriors of "The Prime Minister" and "The Creel" are accessible to

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[2] A majority of the information in this section regarding the development and history of Shenandoah National Park is drawn from Reed Engle, "Shenandoah National Park: A Historical Overview," *Cultural Resource Management Newsletter* 21 (1): 7-10 (1998).

the general public. This report is a step toward refurnishing "The Brown House" to the 1930 to 1932 Hoover period for the education and enjoyment of park visitors.

PRIOR PLANNING DOCUMENTS (in chronological order)

Lambert, Darwin. "Shenandoah National Park Administrative History, 1924-1976," DRAFT, 1979.

Walsh, Tom, William Wagner, and Jim Jacobsen. "National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form – Camp Hoover," 1987.

Robinson & Associates. *Shenandoah National Park: Historic Resource Study*, 1996.

Engle, Reed. "Rapidan Camp: The Beginning," *Shenandoah Resource Management Newsletter*, October 1997.

_____. "The Architecture of Rapidan Camp," *Shenandoah Resource Management Newsletter*, January 1998.

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NATIONAL REGISTER SIGNIFICANCE: "THE BROWN HOUSE"

I. Summary of National Register Statement of Significance

A. Established Areas of Site Significance

"The Brown House" was built in 1929 as part of the Rapidan Camp complex in Madison County, Virginia.[3] The camp became part of Shenandoah National Park when the Park was officially established in 1935. In 1987, Tom Walsh of the Hoover Library Association prepared the National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form with William Wagner and Jim Jacobsen. On 7 June 1988 Secretary of the Interior Donald Hodel designated the core of "Camp Hoover" as a National Historic Landmark under the presidential sites theme.[4] The 1987 National Register Nomination Form recognizes Rapidan Camp as significant in "Political and Military Affairs, The Great Depression and the New Deal (1929-1941)." Using current National Register criteria for evaluation, Rapidan Camp meets Criterion A: Events and Criterion B: Person.

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[3] The cabin was called "The Brown House" because of its brown color and as a play on words with the Hoovers' other residence, "The White House." (Reed Engle, electronic message to author, 14 May 1999.) The name of the cabin on a Hoover-era map drawn by Edward L. Stone is "The Brown House/The President." (Darwin Lambert, *Herbert Hoover's Hideaway* [1971; reprint, Luray, VA: Shenandoah Natural History Association, 1983], p. 144.)

[4] Acting Director, National Park Service to Secretary of the Interior Donald Paul Hodel, 20 May 1988, approved 7 June 1988, National Register of Historic Landmarks, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, Washington, DC.

Under Criterion A, Rapidan Camp is nationally significant because it was President Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover's weekend retreat from April to October during Hoover's 1929 to 1933 term in office and the beginning of the Great Depression. The camp served the president in two ways during this trying period of American history. First, he was able to retire from the harsh pressures of office so that he could relax and approach the ailing world economy with fresh eyes on Monday mornings. According to the National Register Nomination Form:

> For both Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover, the Rapidan Camp served as an oasis from the political firestorms that surrounded the Hoover Administration's efforts to deal effectively with a failing world economy. As a presidential retreat, the Hoovers' camp is the forerunner of the modern-day 'summer White House' concept.[5]

"The Brown House" is an important survival from this first complex designed solely as a retreat for the president of the United States. It represents an important point in the political and social historical trend during which the United States presidency evolved into a more-than-full-time job. After World War I when the United States emerged as the leader in the western world, the president found his time filled with important year-round responsibilities in Washington, DC. These commitments precluded long stays in distant alternate homes, so Calvin Coolidge suggested the creation of a "Summer White House" within driving distance of the capital. There the president could escape the pressures of office and the heat of the city. Rapidan Camp was Hoover's "Summer White House" and is the precursor to Shangri-La, later called Camp David, in Maryland.

Second, Rapidan Camp served as a meeting site where Hoover and his colleagues could discuss domestic and international concerns with few interruptions. According to the National Register Nomination Form:

> Throughout the Hoover Administration, Camp Rapidan was the backdrop for policy debates and political strategy sessions. A story in the June 12, 1932 edition of *The New York Times* claims that the specifics of the Republican tariff bill of 1930 were hammered out at Camp Rapidan. During the summer of 1931, as he worked toward a balanced federal budget, Herbert Hoover summoned each of his department heads, one by one, to a series of weekend conferences at the camp. World attention was focused on the camp in October 1929 when British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald and his daughter, Ishbel, spent a week at Camp Rapidan. . . . During their stay, Herbert Hoover and Ramsay MacDonald held a now-legendary discussion of naval disarmament.[6]

"The Brown House," the Hoovers' private cabin at Rapidan Camp, is also nationally significant under Criterion B: Person, in relationship to Herbert Hoover.

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[5] Tom Walsh, William Wagner, and Jim Jacobsen. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form – Camp Hoover. United States Department of the Interior, 6 November 1987, section 8, page 1.

[6] Walsh, section 8, continuation page 2.

Hoover's significant accomplishments include heading the Committee for the Relief of Belgium (CRB) during the first year of World War I and serving as Woodrow Wilson's food administrator during the closing years of the War. He served as Secretary of Commerce in the 1920s during which time he addressed issues regarding safety, affordable housing, standardization of manufactured goods, children's rights, conservation of natural resources, and regulation of radio broadcasts. As president of the United States he increased the budget and area of the National Park System; planned series of dams for the Tennessee Valley and California; and established the Veterans' Administration, Antitrust Division of the Justice Department, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover personally chose the location and design of Rapidan Camp. Walsh states in the National Register Nomination Form,

> The camp's association with the Hoovers is hardly casual. Its location was handpicked by Herbert Hoover in the spring of 1929 while on a horseback survey of the upper Rapidan terrain. Even before the site was selected, Lou Henry Hoover had a clear idea of what was required: "My husband's idea was to have a camp down on one of the tree-covered flats beside a stream or at the junction between two streams." Lou Henry Hoover wrote in the January 27, 1929, letter that predates the site selection expedition, "He likes to be near enough to hear the water murmuring. A spot might be found where part of the camp would be down there and part of it a hundred or so feet higher on one of the broad benches giving a distant view." In his Memoirs, Herbert Hoover credits Lou Henry Hoover with the layout and design of the camp's simple, rustic buildings and grounds.[7]

The current structure of "The Brown House" represents the Hoovers' original design and the alterations they made during their four seasons there.

The exterior integrity of Rapidan Camp is fair. The three remaining buildings retain integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. However, the camp's setting, or physical environment, is all but lost. Many of the large and small original buildings are missing; paths are overgrown; and the vegetation is overgrown, new growth, or missing. The loss of the overall camp's setting detracts from its design and feeling. Therefore, the integrity of the overall camp is fair.

The exterior integrity of "The Brown House" is fair to good. The exterior porches are areas of low integrity. The rear, or west, porch is missing and the current front, or southeast, porch is an inaccurate reconstruction. Shenandoah National Park staff members are in the process of accurately reconstructing these porches. Lou Henry Hoover's bathroom was removed in the early 1960s to allow the installation of a kitchen adjoining the sitting room. Fortunately, there was enough remaining physical evidence that after the kitchen's removal the exterior profile of this bathroom could be confidently reconstructed.

Despite the intervening sixty-five years of VIP lodging, Boy Scout use, and inattention, the interior spaces of "The Brown House" retain a very high degree of integrity. With the exception of the removal of Lou Henry Hoover's bathroom, the arrangement of the interior spaces has not changed. The original unfinished wooden

[7] Walsh, section 8, continuation page 1.

surfaces on the interior of the cabin remain. Disturbances of these surfaces are located on the northwest wall of Lou Henry Hoover's bedroom and the northeast wall of the sitting room where structural changes were made to accommodate the added kitchen. Also, periodic changes of the electrical and alarm systems are apparent on the unfinished walls. Architectural features including large fieldstone fireplaces, windows, screened openings with wooden shutters, and built-in shelves remain in place. Therefore, the integrity of the interior architectural features and finishes is very high.

B. Potential New Areas of Site Significance

No new areas of site significance are proposed.

C. Areas of Site Significance Considered and Rejected

No new areas of site significance were considered.

D. Collections as a Feature of the Site

Established Areas of Site Significance

In 1998, the Northeast Museum Services Center catalogued 111 objects, or sets of objects, related to Rapidan Camp. Fifty-five of the objects were attributed to the Hoover occupancy based on extant photographs, a 1970 furnishings plan keyed to objects' manufacture dates, relative appearance of objects' age, and the knowledge of Cultural Resources Branch Chief Reed Engle. Twenty-four objects were attributed to the early-1960s National Park Service refurnishing of the cabins. These attributions were based on photographs of the refurnished cabins, period correspondence, and the 1970 furnishings plan. Thirty-two objects were attributed to the early-1970s National Park Service refurnishing of the three cabins. These attributions were based on photographs of the newly furnished cabins, the 1970 furnishings plan, and period purchase orders and correspondence. It is important to note that not all of the extant furnishings were located in "The Brown House."

The objects dating to the Hoover period contribute to Rapidan Camp's national significance under both Criterion A: Event and Criterion B: Person. The Hoovers used the furnishings for official and recreational purposes during the early years of the Great Depression. The extant Hoover-era furnishings are contributing features because they were made or purchased expressly for the camp. They reflect the Hoovers' taste and offer a glimpse of how early-twentieth-century camps were furnished. Some of the furnishings are regionally significant because they are fashioned from local chestnut, a tree nearing extinction in the area during the Hoover period.

The extant Hoover-era objects possess a high degree of integrity individually, but a low degree of integrity as an assemblage. Most of the individual objects retain integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. However, many of the objects are lacking cushions and other textiles. As an assemblage, some large and small pieces of Hoover-era furniture survive, but no textiles or small to mid-sized decorative objects survive. In the Implementation Plan, nineteen extant, Hoover-era

objects are recommended for use in "The Brown House." This number represents only about ten percent of the furnishings in the building during the Hoover period.

The objects purchased to furnish the Rapidan Camp cabins in the 1960s and 1970s were intended to evoke the ambience of the Hoover-era furnishings, while serving the needs of VIP lodgers. These furnishings have some cultural value by association to the Hoover originals and the period photographs on which they are based. The majority of these objects have little value as examples of American fine or decorative arts. However, the early-1960s Navajo rugs are good examples of Native American art created on twentieth-century reservations.

II. Additional Areas of Significance for Site Collections

Areas of Site Significance Considered and Rejected

Criterion C: Design/Construction; Area of Significance:
Art -- Arts and Crafts Movement

None of the extant Rapidan Camp objects are significant as examples of fine or decorative arts except in peripheral relationship to the larger Arts and Crafts Movement popular in the United States at the time. They represent the ideals of handcraftsmanship, truth to materials, and use of local materials central to this movement. However, none of the objects are notable enough to require the addition of Criterion C to the site's National Register documentation.

Criterion D: Information Potential

The Shenandoah National Park archives has some pictorial and documentary evidence related to the furnishings of Rapidan Camp. It has copies of all interior photographs of the cabins in the possession of the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace. It also contains purchase orders and correspondence related to the early-1970s refurnishing of the camp. This information is either redundant or related to an insignificant period in the camp's history. Therefore, it is not necessary to add Criterion D to the site's National Register documentation.

Historical Data

A NOTE ON SOURCES

- Letters and Diaries

The Herbert Hoover Presidential Library contains the papers of Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover. Among these papers, particularly those of Mrs. Hoover, are numerous letters and a few diary entries that shed light on the furnishings of and activities at Rapidan Camp.

The correspondence among Lou Henry Hoover, James Y. Rippin, Earl C. Long, William E. Carson, Lawrence Richey, and occasionally Herbert Hoover contains information regarding the early conception and construction of the camp. The correspondence between Lou Henry Hoover's secretaries (mainly Mildred Hall) and retailers indicates the types and quantities of goods the Hoovers bought for the camp. In the early 1960s, the correspondence among Joel T. Boone, Philippi Harding Butler, and Shenandoah National Park staff members illuminates the refurnishing of the cabins. A very few memoranda and reports written by Shenandoah staff members informs the discussion of the early-1970s refurnishing.

Remarkably, there is little correspondence between Lou Henry Hoover and friends during and after the furnishing of the camp. In August 1929, she complained once to Dare Stark McMullin of the difficulties in finding appropriate furnishings. Mrs. Hoover lamented that she needed McMullin's help to complete the job successfully.[8] Following a divorce in 1930, McMullin moved from California to Washington to serve as Mrs. Hoover's social secretary. To furnish the cabins, the women likely worked closely with little written correspondence. Perhaps because the Hoovers were very social and invited vast numbers of people to the camp, Lou Henry Hoover did not need to describe it to others. She simply invited them to experience it for themselves instead.

Princeton professor William Starr Myers is the only individual whose diary accounts related to Rapidan Camp have been located. Although not a diary, Joel T. Boone's "Autobiography" reads much like one and may have been based on one. These accounts focus mainly on the activities in which people participated, not their surroundings. By design, the camp buildings and furnishings were unassuming and caused little comment. They likely fit into an accepted type of camp architecture and furnishing scheme with which guests were familiar. Also, activities were focused out-of-doors and in community buildings designed for social interaction. Beyond the occasional meal on the front porch, few people mention being in "The Brown House." Thus, the camp seems to have worked well in offering the Hoovers and their guests a healthy combination of group and solitary activities and spaces.

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[8] Lou Henry Hoover to Dare Stark McMullin, 15 August 1929, "Rapidan Camp, General 1928-1938," Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

- Lists and Receipts

Complete guest lists for the Hoover 1929 to 1932 era at Rapidan Camp are at the Hoover Library. These lists give a full account of the number, type, and frequency of guests at the camp. However, these lists reflect only the people who stayed at the camp, not all who were invited.

Receipts and inventories regarding the purchase, storage, and shipment of objects are tantalizing in that they indicate the types of items that filled the camp. Yet, the descriptions are commonly vague, there is no way of knowing with certainty where some objects were located, and the extant receipts indicate but a fraction of the purchases made to build and furnish the camp. The cooperation in the camp between the Hoovers and the government coupled with the many Hoover employees who handled their affairs further cloud the issues of what was purchased when and for what purpose. In general, purchases related to public areas (e.g. china and serving pieces for the "Mess Hall") are better documented than those for "The Brown House."

Some of the lists compiled by the Marines are helpful in understanding the construction of the camp buildings and the early furnishing of the cabins. A 1929 list entitled "Supplies Chargeable to President's Camp" details the materials used in the camp buildings including lumber, finishes, lamp glass, bathroom fixtures, and electrical appliances. A 14 May 1929 list details the furniture and equipment moved from the decommissioned *USS Mayflower* to Rapidan Camp. Other lists appear in letters and memoranda between Lou Henry Hoover or her secretaries and Earl C. Long. This correspondence indicates the items sent from Washington to the camp.

In early 1933, Philippi Harding Butler, one of Lou Henry Hoover's secretaries, compiled a series of informal written and typed lists in order to coordinate the removal of items from the camp, their storage, disposal, or shipment to California. These lists offer a glimpse of some of the items that the Hoovers purchased for the camp personally.

In both the Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover papers at the Hoover Library are many receipts related to Rapidan Camp. There are several receipts for the year 1929 indicating some of the furnishings and equipment purchased for the camp. Items included in these receipts are table and bed linens, lamps, mirrors, sewing notions, sporting goods, ceramics, rugs, seating furniture, a chest of drawers, fire tools, silverware, tableware, and tables. There is also what appears to be a full range of camp receipts for the year 1930. Earl C. Long, the Marine in charge of the construction and day-to-day running of the camp, saved the receipts for this year in particular to demonstrate that buying items from suppliers patronized by the White House was more expensive than purchasing from the local ones he had the preceding year. The majority of the receipts are for food including fruits, vegetables, dairy items, meats, cakes, candies, and pet food. Non-food items include upholstery, bed linen, lamps, lamp shades, window shades, tableware, bath items, sporting goods, and fire screens. There are far fewer receipts for the years 1931 and 1932. Of interest among the 1932 receipts was the purchase of 300 pounds of grass seed.

Although not receipts, the NPS purchase orders placed for items related to the early 1970s refurnishing indicate the types of furnishings purchased and their suppliers. Included in these purchase orders are beds, bed linens, window shades, furniture, rugs, upholstery, and baskets.

- Legal Documents

At the Madison County Courthouse are the deeds and deed of trust conveying the Rapidan Camp property from the Wayland family to William E. Carson, from Carson to the Hoovers, and from the Hoovers to Carson as a trustee for the Commonwealth of Virginia. In the archives of Shenandoah National Park is a copy of an abstract of title for the camp property tracing its ownership from 1828 to 1929.

- Visual Documentation

In the collections of the Hoover Library and the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace is a series of seemingly "staged" photographs of "The Brown House," "Town Hall," and "Mess Hall" which record the appearance of these cabins at one point in time. These black-and-white photographs are the single most important record of the furnishings in "The Brown House" and appear to illustrate the cabin in its mature furnished state. Missing is a record of its early incarnation when filled with deck furniture from the decommissioned presidential yacht *USS Mayflower*.

There is a series of home movies attributed to Lou Henry Hoover in the collection of the Hoover Library. Probably due to lighting limitations, all of these movies were shot outside the camp buildings. The only information these films offer regarding furnishings is for the front porch.

The 1960s and 1970s refurnishings of "The Brown House" were captured in a few park photographs and in the occasional newspaper article. The 1970 floor plan detailing the age and location of furnishings is an invaluable document offering a way to separate the original objects from two generations of reproductions.

- Oral Histories

In the collection of the Hoover Library are transcribed oral history interviews conducted from the 1960s to the 1980s. Ones containing information pertinent to Rapidan Camp are those of Gertrude L. Bowman, Philippi Harding Butler, Mildred Hall Campbell, Allan and Margaret Hoover, Ruth Fesler Lipman, Sallie Lucille Lewis "Chick" McCracken, and Helen Hartley Greene White. Unfortunately, due to the nature of the interview questions, these oral histories contain little information related to the camp. The most helpful were those of McCracken and White.

- Interviews

The researcher interviewed Darwin Lambert, the author of *Herbert Hoover's Hideaway* by telephone. Mr. Lambert was very knowledgeable about the social history of Rapidan Camp, but admitted that he knew little about its furnishings.

During a visit to E.A. Clore Sons, Inc. the researcher spoke informally with the senior Daniel Clore. During this conversation, Clore looked at Hoover-era photographs. He did not positively identify any of the furnishings as definitely produced by the Clore factory except for an oak-splint screen in Lou Henry Hoover's bedroom.

The researcher also contacted former regional curator, mid-Atlantic region, William Jedlick, hoping he could provide information regarding the early 1970s refurnishing of the camp. Jedlick did not recall being a part of the project and was unable to provide any information.

- Periodicals

Rapidan Camp was featured in many newspaper articles during Hoover's presidential term. Large newspapers such as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Star* had occasional articles on the camp, while the local *Madison County Eagle* focused the most attention on the presidential retreat.

Information provided in the periodicals of the day is sparse. Due to the intentionally private nature of Rapidan Camp, interested members of the press corps were only allowed to visit the camp on very specific occasions. At these times, they were the only guests so their own visit was the only news to be recorded. Hoover had an antagonistic relationship with the press and felt that his personal life at camp was not newsworthy. From remote locations, the newspapermen were forced to elaborate on second- or third-hand information leaked from the camp, speculate on events, or invent them entirely. Therefore, most of their accounts are as uninformative and redundant today as they were when Hoover was president.

ANALYSIS OF CONSTRUCTION, HISTORIC OWNERSHIP, OCCUPANCY, AND USE OF STRUCTURE

The Setting: Madison County, Virginia

Rapidan Camp is located in present-day Madison, County Virginia. This area, which supposedly went unseen by European eyes until 1716, was part of a 1745 land grant from King George II to Thomas, Lord Fairfax, Baron of Cameron. His lands, called the "Northern Neck," consisted of 5,000,000 acres between the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers. It was later part of Orange County and finally Madison County.[9]

In building Rapidan Camp, Hoover and his associates encountered several local organizations. The Virginia Commission on Development and Conservation first introduced Hoover to Madison County. This Commission and the county jointly funded the building of the necessary roads to Rapidan Camp. The building of these roads was overseen by the Virginia Park and Roads Commission and the Madison County Board of Supervisors.[10] In 1929, the Madison County Chamber of Commerce staged "Madison County Day" honoring the Hoovers' building their camp in the county.[11]

Madison County has changed little since the Hoovers built Rapidan Camp. This lack of change may be attributed to the fact that Madison County lacks an entrance to Skyline Drive and Shenandoah National Park. Thus, it is not along the major thoroughfares traveled by park visitors. It is a rural region in the piedmont of the Blue Ridge Mountains serviced by two lane highways and other secondary roads. It features rolling hills and several rivers. The county seat is in Madison. Now, and in Hoover's day, the county is home to about 10,000 people.[12] The newspaper for the area continues to be the daily *Madison County Eagle*. Another survival from Hoover's era is E.A. Clore Sons, Inc., a furniture company which produces much the same furniture today as it did in the early 1930s.

The lack of change in Madison County and the area directly surrounding Rapidan Camp offers both advantage and challenge to the interpretation of the site. The continuity in the landscape, aside from the natural growth of the forest, allows visitors to experience much the same drive, hike, or horseback ride through a relatively undisturbed mountainside as the Hoovers did. The challenge now, as it was then, is transporting visitors to Rapidan Camp.

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[9] Thomas Lomax Hunter, *The President's Camp on the Rapidan* (Richmond, VA: Virginia State Commission on Conservation and Development, 1930), pp. 7-10.

[10] Herbert Hoover to William E. Carson, 2 August 1929, "Rapidan Camp, Deeds, Leases, Correspondence, 1929-1930," Box 189, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. "Hoover Aides Pick Rapidan Headquarters as Fishing Grounds," *Harrisonburg Daily News Record*, 18 March 1929.

[11] W. Storling, operative, to Lawrence Richey, 7 August 1929, "Rapidan Camp, Madison County Meeting, 1929," Box 191, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[12] Linda Leslie and William J. Choyke, "Hoover Days at Shenandoah," *Washington Post*, 19 August 1990.

Early Land Grants (1796, 1812)

The earliest ownership of the 164-acre tract on which Rapidan Camp was built is clouded by early land granting practices in the area. Over a year after the Hoovers vacated Rapidan Camp, it came to light that the tract was included in two early, overlapping land grants. The dates (but not the grantees' names) for these early land grants appear in a period newspaper article. The earlier, and senior, land grant including a portion of the Rapidan Camp tract was recorded by the Commonwealth of Virginia on 1 September 1796. The chain of title through which the Hoovers received the land dated to a land grant recorded in the "old Northern Neck grant book a" on 13 October 1812. This discrepancy came to light during the condemnation proceedings for Shenandoah National Park (see "William E. Carson Trust [1932-1934]"). The final outcome of the condemnation proceedings indicated that through their chain of title the Hoovers owned the vast majority of the property and only a small portion was affected by the older land grant.[13]

Wayland Family Ownership (1828-1929)

According to an abstract of title prepared by Attorney N.G. Payne in 1929, Adam Wayland purchased the Rapidan Camp tract from Aaron and Rosannah Clore on 24 January 1828. Through the provisions of his 1839 will, Wayland's sons Edwin and Albert inherited the land. The tract then was sold within the immediate family in 1859, 1869, 1872, and 1902. In 1929, when William E. Carson purchased the property prior to conveying it to the Hoovers, three family members; Adam Wayland's daughter Caroline M. Wayland, her son Robert E. Wayland, and his wife Mamie Wayland; owned it.[14] There is no indication that the Waylands constructed any permanent structures or ever lived on the Rapidan Camp tract.

Newspaper accounts dating to the time of Hoover's 1929 purchase describe two early uses for the tract. The Waylands used the land for grazing animals.[15] While the Waylands owned the property, Edwin F. Hill claimed that his ancestors were among the first to camp on it:

> Camping in this section from the best information obtainable was originated by Edwin F. Hill who lived at Indian Trace near Locust Dale. In 1846 he and his bride spent their honeymoon in a camp on the mountains between the Rapidan and Robinson rivers. They were the grandparents of the writer. . . . As long as my grandparents lived, they and their family and relatives camped in this section every summer. After their deaths, the other members of the family kept up the practice and enjoyed themselves thoroughly by spending from 10 days to a month in camps in this section, from which they hunted and fished.

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[13] "Hoover Camp Title is Finally Settled." Newspaper article, Unknown newspaper, 21 December 1934[?], Folder 15, Catalogue # 13004, Resource Management Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[14] N.G. Payne, "An Abstract of the Title of a Tract of One Hundred and Sixty-four Acres of Land in Madison County on the Headwaters of the Rapidan River," in Herbert Hoover, Records for Tract #180, 1929-1958, Folder 30, Box 27, Madison County Land Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[15] "President Hoover Becomes Madison County Land Owner," *Madison County Eagle*, 9 August 1929.

> These camping parties lived well – on Virginia-cured hickory-smoked hams and bacon, supplemented by chickens, eggs, butter and milk secured from the farms in that section, not to mention the fish and game, satisfied the inner man. Those who didn't care to fish or hunt went for hikes across the mountains to various places of interest.[16]

The Hills may have been seasonal fishermen, but in 1929, the fishing rights at the headwaters of the Rapidan were owned by twenty-one private citizens who were not fishermen themselves. Twelve to fifteen members of the Orange Fishing Club used the fishing rights.[17]

William E. Carson Ownership (1929)

Late in his second presidential term, Calvin Coolidge suggested that there be a "Country White House" where the president could enjoy a change of scenery and respite from the heat of Washington, DC. His views on this subject were included in period newspapers:

> There is, one thing which the Government could do, which, I think, would be of great physical assistance to the President. Washington is practically at sea level. Its climate is exceedingly good all the year round climate, but the humidity is high and unrelieved; it becomes monotonous.
>
> The only avenue of escape for the President is the naval boat Mayflower. This is a regular naval craft used for the training of seamen, like any other craft, but it is kept stationed in the navy yard in Washington and is fitted up for the use of the President whenever he may wish to leave Washington and is fitted up to go abroad if wanted for that purpose.
>
> The handicap about the Mayflower is that it must necessarily go down the Potomac, which is a change in view and of considerable relief, but no change in altitude and very little in climactic conditions.
>
> The movements of the President are a very ponderous operation. Other officers of the government can travel with a considerable degree of freedom. If they wish to spend a week-end at a hotel or a club, they can do so without difficulty. They also have greater liberty in accepting private hospitality. When the President moves it is an event. A large retinue follows and extensive preparations have to be made in advance for his reception and care. The only place he can enter without considerable preliminary disturbance is the White House.
>
> For these reasons it seems to me that some place should be provided in the hills within easy striking distance of Washington where the President might go for two or three days at a time when he was so disposed with conveniences for entertaining members of the Government and other guests, where he could have

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[16] "Mr. Edwin Hill's Forebears Camped on the Upper Rapidan," *Madison County Eagle*, 7 June 1929.

[17] William E. Carson to Lawrence Richey, 2 April 1929, "Fish for Rapidan River, 1929-1932," Box 190, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

> that freedom of action which he has only at the White House and where he could get a complete change of atmosphere.[18]

Coolidge brought his plan to fruition by choosing Mount Weather as the new "Country White House." Mount Weather was a government-owned National Weather Bureau property about sixty miles over state highways from Washington, DC.[19]

When Hoover came into office, it became known that, although he favored the idea of a presidential getaway, he did not like the style or location of Mount Weather. Hoover's rejection of Mount Weather caused a flurry of self-promotion in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.[20] In Maryland, "A committee of Maryland realtors [was] appointed by the Real Estate Board of Baltimore to see that Congress hears of the advantages of Maryland as a seat for a summer White House."[21] In West Virginia, broadsides informing citizens of town meetings were circulated commanding, "Every Body Come. Here is a big chance to serve this community."[22] Unfortunately, West Virginia followed the wrong scent by advocating locations with "historic associations" such as two colonial estates owned by George Washington's brothers rather than ones with appeal to the outdoorsman.[23]

Despite these efforts, it was the work of William E. Carson, chairman of the Virginia State Conservation and Development Commission, that lured the Hoovers to the headwaters of the Rapidan River in Madison County, Virginia. Rather than guessing what Hoover wanted, Carson went to Washington to ask his secretary, Lawrence Richey, what Hoover's "weakness" was. Richey responded that Hoover was an "enthusiastic fisherman" who favored spotted mountain trout.[24] Armed with this information, Carson sought a suitable mountain stream along which to build a fishing camp. In mid-January the Hoovers explored possible sites in Virginia.[25]

According to Carson, Tom Early, a local fisherman in the employ of the Virginia State Conservation and Development Commission and later the National Park Service, first suggested the Rapidan River as a possible location.[26] It is likely Early that Lou Henry Hoover describes to architect/friend James Y. Rippin:

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[18] "Shenandoah Park Proposed Site for Summer White House," *Page News & Courier*, ca. 30 June 1928.

[19] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 7.

[20] "President Proffers Gift." Newspaper article, Unknown newspaper, ca. 1929, Folder 1 "Zerkel Clippings," Box 12, Series II, L. Ferdinand Zerkel Papers, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[21] "Realtors Urge Summer White House in State," *Baltimore Evening Sun*, 28 December 1928.

[22] "A Public Meeting of the People of Harpers Ferry and Bolivar." Newspaper article, Unknown newspaper, 14 January 1929, Catalogue # 167397, Henry Temple McDonald Papers, Sub-series C, Harpers Ferry, WV, Series I, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, WV.

[23] "West Virginia Wants Summer White House." Newspaper article, Unknown newspaper, n.d., Folder 8 "Clippings #2," Box 11, Series II, L. Ferdinand Zerkel Papers, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[24] Carter Wormeley, "Hoover on the Rapidan," in *Conserving and Developing Virginia*, ed. W.E. Carson (Richmond, VA: State Commission on Conservation and Development, 1934), p. 80.

[25] Lou Henry Hoover to Jane and James Y. Rippin, 27 January 1929, "Correspondence James Y. Rippin," Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[26] "Madison County's Glorious Day," *Madison County Eagle*, 23 August 1929. Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 14.

We were met by a Shenandoah Park official who knows the entire neighborhood for a hundred miles around. He told us that a dozen miles further South, but on another road and an equal driving distance from Washington, was a stream [Rapidan River] infinitely better for fishing and infinitely more picturesque than the one we saw [Hughes River], with 18 miles of uninhabited length to choose a site from. It was too late for us to go the round-about road to get from where we were to this other stream. . . . But it was decided then that some spot on this other stream would be selected for a comparatively temporary camp for this Summer, and that during the early stages of its occupation, everyone would probably be exploring around until someone hit upon the ideal place for a more or less permanent camp.[27]

Under this plan, Carson acquired the fishing rights for the headwaters of the Rapidan by the end of February. On 1 March, Carson met with Madison county officials to discuss the funding of the necessary road to the camp site. At that time, Madison County agreed to pay for half the cost and Carson pledged to raise the remaining funds. In mid-March, Secretary Lawrence Richey, US Commissioner of Fisheries Henry O'Malley, and National Park Service Director Horace Albright surveyed and accepted the Rapidan River as the site for the Hoovers' fishing camp.[28] On 6 April, a party including Herbert Hoover, Lou Henry Hoover, Secretary of the Interior Ray Lyman Wilbur, Captain Brown, Lawrence Richey, Major Earl C. Long, James Rippin, and Admiral Joel T. Boone went to investigate the site.[29] According to Boone, Hoover chose the location for the camp between the Mill and Laurel Prongs himself proclaiming:

> This is where I am going to build a cabin. This is just what I want. Here is peace and quietude. I know its going to be infinitely cooler here than in Washington, living under the trees to the rustling water, where I can indulge myself happily in trout fishing. Here I will establish my camp of retreat, far removed from the city environment, confines of the White House.[30]

About two weeks later on 26 April, the *Madison County Eagle* reported the arrival of Marines on the site to set up the presidential camp.[31]

Carson purchased in his own name 274 acres of land, 164 acres of which would become the Rapidan Camp site, from the Waylands on 20 July 1929. Carson's role in successfully luring the Hoovers to Virginia were lauded by his contemporaries. One account describes fellow Virginian and assistant editor of *National Geographic*, Dr. William Showalter, as giving

> great praise to William E. Carson for his active interest in bringing President Hoover to Virginia. . . . Mr. Carson conducted Mr. and Mrs. Hoover, and

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[27] Lou Henry Hoover to Jane and James Y. Rippin, 27 January 1929. "Upper Rapidan Officially Accepted as Fishing Lodge for President Hoover," *Madison County Eagle*, 22 March 1929.

[28] "Hoover Aides Pick," 18 March 1929.

[29] Joel T. Boone, "Autobiography." Unpublished manuscript, ca. 1965, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA, pp. xxii-64 to xxii-66.

[30] Boone, "Autobiography," p. xxii-67.

[31] "Marines are Arriving at Hoover Lodge," *Madison County Eagle*, 26 April 1929.

members of the cabinet, over points in Virginia a number of times, in the interest of having the President establish a vacation camp in the State, and it was due in large measure to Mr. Carson's efforts that a suitable location was found and adopted.[32]

Showalter also expressed his enthusiasm in monetary terms: "'It is my sincere belief that, measured over the term of years that probably lie ahead for Mr. Hoover in the White House, the worth of this identification with Virginia may be appraised conservatively at $25,000,000.'"[33]

President Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover Ownership (1929-1932)

Eleven days after the recording of Carson's deed, William and Agnes Carson sold 164 acres of land at the headwaters of the Rapidan River to the Hoovers for use as their summer camp.[34] By that time construction was already well underway.

Site

Rapidan Camp was built on the eastern slope of Chapmans Mountain in the Blue Ridge Mountains.[35] The buildings of the president's camp (as opposed to the Marine and Cabinet camps) were constructed between the Mill and Laurel Prongs, the tributaries that converge to form the Rapidan River at the southeast corner of the camp.

Rapidan Camp is about eighty miles over land from Washington, but by road it is about 100 miles.[36] The closest village to the camp is Criglersville which is about eight miles away. Madison is the closest town. It is about ten miles to the southeast over land, but much farther by road.[37] Today Rapidan Camp is generally accessed from Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park. By car, the camp is about six miles from Skyline Drive down the winding dirt Rapidan Fire Road. By foot or horse, the camp is about three miles from Skyline Drive. Just off Skyline Drive near the entrance to the fire road is Byrd Visitor Center and Big Meadows Wayside, Lodge, and Campground.[38]

In the Hoovers' day, within walking distance of the president's camp were the Marine camp, built in 1929, and the Cabinet camp, built in 1930. These camps were located southeast of the president's on the road to Criglersville. Today, the site of the former Marine camp is located within Shenandoah National Park, but the buildings have

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[32] "Valuable Public Service." Newspaper article, Unknown newspaper, ca. June 1929, Folder 1 "Zerkel Clippings," Box 10, Series II, L. Ferdinand Zerkel Papers, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[33] "Hoover's Va. Camp $25,000,000 Ad." Newspaper article, Unknown newspaper, 19 June 1929, Folder 2 "Zerkel Clippings," Box 12, Series II, L. Ferdinand Zerkel Papers, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[34] William E. and Agnes H. Carson, Deed to Herbert Hoover, 31 July 1929, Madison County Deeds, Book 49, pp. 292-293, Madison County Courthouse, Madison, VA.

[35] "Madison County May Get the Summer White House," *Madison County Eagle*, 1 March 1929.

[36] Hunter, p. 5.

[37] "White House is Best News Source for Rapidan Camp 100 Miles Away," *The Fourth Estate*, 13 July 1929.

[38] Charles Anibal, "Shenandoah National Park is the Result of Interaction with the Mountains," *Madison Eagle Bicentennial Edition*, 16 April 1992.

been raised. The site of the former Cabinet camp is located outside the Park and falls outside the scope of this study.

To make the Rapidan Camp site useable as a presidential retreat, Carson coordinated many improvements. Because well-maintained roads ended at Criglersville, the Virginia Development and Conservation Commission and Madison County constructed upgraded dirt roads. In early June of 1929, the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company of Virginia completed the installation of telephone service at the camp. According to the *New York Times*, "It was necessary to construct about fifteen miles of pole line from Madison to the camp site and to string copper circuits from Orange, Va. From Orange to Washington circuits were made available on an existing line of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company."[39] The *New York Times* described the camp's power supply in September of the same year: "Electric light comes into the camp on the wires of the Madison Power Company, which ran a special high-tension wire carrying 6,600 volts for twelve miles over the mountains."[40] The overall improvement of the camp site was made difficult by the complicated terrain, rocky soil, and slow roads.[41]

The landscape of the camp also needed to be improved for use as a retreat. According to Lambert, the camp site–presented a menacing appearance prior to its taming:

> The forest had more than eighty different species of trees, at least that many more shrubs and vines, and hundreds of species of smaller plants. . . . few spots were free of flora . . . Penetration was more difficult in 1929 than it had been in 1700, for cutting of the larger trees had opened the way for denser growth, thorny berry canes, the natural barbwire of smilax, small trees so close-ranked as to constitute a barricade.[42]

Lou Henry Hoover was the mastermind behind the landscaping of the camp. Her intent was to retain the natural look of the camp while "improving" it in ways she found necessary. Her avid interest in this project is evident in a set of typewritten instructions and lists, "Flowers and Shrubs for the President's Camp – Directions," detailing her landscaping philosophy and suggestions for plantings. She desired that the plant varieties selected for the site fall into one of three categories: they were to be the same as those within a twenty- to twenty-five-mile radius, they were to be hardier varieties of the plants in the area, or they were to appear so like the native varieties "that they will not seem out of place among that woodsy setting." When planting flowers and shrubs, she asked that the Marines create "mass effects of color" because the "President is very fond of color in gardens." This was not to be accomplished by placing plants in formal beds, but the plantings were to have "a certain compactness so as to give masses of color, [and] should

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[39] "Phone Line Strung to Hoover's Camp," *New York Times*, 2 June 1929.
[40] "Here the President Finds Calm," *New York Times Magazine*, 8 September 1929.
[41] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 21.
[42] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 21.

ramble off into the surroundings." Appended to her "Directions" were at least seven lists of suggested plantings.[43]

Lou Henry Hoover's landscaping plans extended beyond the immediate camp site. She did not want the plants in her camp to come from areas surrounding the camp that she may see while riding or hiking. She also asked that the visual aspect of the road to Rapidan Camp be improved. Where clearing had taken place along the road, she wanted flower seeds planted to "diversify" the ferns that would naturally grow there. Additionally, to supply her many indoor vases and pots without removing the camp greenery, Lou Henry Hoover wanted flowers planted at a distance for cutting.[44]

The president's cabin was built right at the junction of the Mill and Laurel Prongs. Other camp buildings radiated out to the west of "The Brown House" along the trails and waterways. The buildings of Rapidan Camp were linked together by a network of dirt paths and stone or wooden bridges. These buildings and walkways were intended to blend with the "natural" landscape (see ill. 1). Therefore, trees were left in place whenever possible or desirable. They protruded through the porches of the cabins and stood between the buildings for shade. Lou Henry Hoover objected to the Marine method of marking paths because it was not in keeping with the intended natural look. According to Dare Stark McMullin, "she *did* balk at having all the paths lined with large whitewashed rocks (a guide for visiting strangers, set up by the military). 'No whitewashed rocks in our camp,' said Mrs. Hoover. So there weren't any."[45] "Street lights" along the paths were placed high in the trees so that they would not intrude on the landscape.[46] To "improve" the areas between the trees and paths, grass (clover and blue grass) was planted.[47] Other improvements included a manmade trout pool; an outdoor fieldstone fireplace; and a fieldstone fountain. Marine Paul C. Abernathy described the fountain to Lambert years later:

> It was round with steps rising toward a narrow apex where the water would gush out, each step a circular fish bowl. Waterproof concrete was used as mortar, but the natural-stone appearance had to dominate. Water had to be piped from an open stream, and Mrs. Hoover insisted on the very minimum of disturbance of natural stream structure and on careful placement of both vegetation and rocks over the pipeline.[48]

Perhaps the greatest piece of "naturalistic" artifice was the manmade Hemlock Run, a stream over a half-mile in length (complete with waterfall) fed by Laurel Prong.[49] This

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[43] Lou Henry Hoover, "Flowers & Shrubs for the President's Camp – Directions," "Rapidan Camp, Plans for Camp," Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[44] Lou Henry Hoover, "Flowers & Shrubs for the President's Camp – Directions."

[45] Dare Stark McMullin, "Lou Henry Hoover and the Girl Scouts," n.p., n.d. (Available at Herbert Hoover Presidential Library Bookstore), p. [3].

[46] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 32.

[47] P. Mann & Co., Receipt, 3 February 1932, "Rapidan Camp Receipts," Box 193, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[48] Lambert, *Hideaway*, pp. 31-32.

[49] Reed Engle, "The Landscape of Rapidan Camp," *Cultural Resource Management Newsletter* (August 1998): 3. Downloaded from internet.

constructed stream brought water through the camp necessitating bridges to reach "The Prime Minister," "Ishbel," and "The Slums."

Travel to Camp

The presidential party generally took one or the other of two routes from Washington to Rapidan Camp. If they drove through Warrenton and on through Sperryville, the trip was just over 100 miles. A shorter route took the party through Warrenton and Remington, a trip of just over ninety-six miles.[50] According to the reports of guests who rode to the camp, depending on the road conditions and weather, the trip took about three to three-and-a-half hours.[51] The Hoovers and their guests were usually chauffeured to the camp, but Lou Henry Hoover occasionally drove a small car herself.[52]

Travel to the camp prior to August 1929 was certainly longer and less comfortable than those three-hour jaunts. When the Hoovers first went to see the site they motored from the White House to Criglersville in large cars. At Criglersville they transferred to model "A" Fords for a portion of the mountain road. They rode the last stretch to the Rapidan River on horseback.[53] In July of 1929 travel to the camp was still a dicey affair requiring phone calls to and from Major Long regarding weather and road conditions. In mid-July the Hoovers' plans to visit the camp were spoiled because "they received a telephone from Major Long an hour before saying that it was just impossible to get anything except a mule driven vehicle over the road that day, because rains of the last two days had been so bad."[54] At another time they made it to the camp with Long's assistance: "But although the road was really in a very bad condition, Major Long knew all the chuckholes personally, and being such an excellent driver, he got Mr. and Mrs. Hoover through without a stop."[55] Lou Henry Hoover described the location and travel to the camp as "at the end of nowhere, with a road that in wet weather lets you sink to your hubs in slushy mush and while there bump over the most amazing bo[u]lders that you cannot see at all on the top."[56] In fact, the last portion of the drive from Criglersville to the camp alone could take an hour and a half.[57] It was not until mid-August that the large White House cars could travel all the way to the camp on suitable roads.[58]

Because the car ride to the camp was lengthy, Hoover took care to select his riding companions. Some guests rode with Hoover so that they could discuss

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[50] Hunter, p. 5.

[51] W.P. McCracken Jr. to W.P. McCracken Sr., 29 August 1929, "Rapidan Camp, Misc., 1929," Box 193, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. William Starr Myers, Diary, 29 August 1930, "Madison-Hoover Project," Darwin Lambert Papers, Shenandoah National Park, VA, p. 679. Mildred Campbell, Unpublished memoirs filed as oral history interview, 1971, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA, p. 8.

[52] Campbell, p. 4.

[53] "President Hoover Inspects and Accepts Rapidan Fishing Preserve," *Madison County Eagle*, 12 April 1929.

[54] Mildred Hall[?] to James Y. Rippin, 17 July 1929, "Rapidan Camp, Furniture and Equipment, 1929-1931," Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[55] Mildred Hall[?] to James Y. Rippin, 17 July 1929.

[56] Lou Henry Hoover to Dare Stark McMullin, 15 August 1929.

[57] "Rain and Mud Encountered by Hoover Party at Camp," *Washington Post*, 10 June 1929

[58] "Hoover Takes Lindberghs to Rapidan Camp," *Washington Herald*, 10 August 1929.

government matters. British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald rode to camp alone with Hoover so the men could talk privately.[59] Others enjoyed informal discussions during the car ride. Professor William Starr Myers wrote in his diary of an interesting conversation during one such trip:

> The four of us [Myers, Hoover, columnist Mark Sullivan, and another] got into the auto. . . . The chauffeur, an elderly, seasoned man was *most* cautious, but a superb driver. Went rather slowly until we reached open country, then kept the speedometer at exactly '41' for mile after mile. . . The Pres. is quiet, reticent, shy, but very pleasant man, with a sense of humor, and is a 'good fellow.' He likes to hear other people talk, but joins in the conversation, speaking low, but rapidly & with energy, asking questions, or sometimes talking readily for several minutes. The conversation touched on protection of wild game (especially ducks), prohibition, where the Pres. gave a remarkable summary of the past history of the liquor problem (which, he thinks, mainly began with the Protestant Reformation), & spoke of the numerous plans of all kinds continually being suggested to him by person & by letter. But said it is better to have bootleggers profit from the *bottom* of society than at the top, as formerly. Did not express his own plan -- I suggested that the machine age would ultimately require prohibition, that liquor was doomed, and that the problem is to find some policy or plan to bridge over the time until that arrives, & he agreed with me. . . . He told of the little girl & boy from Texas who recently had come to the White House, the little girl herself writing him a letter asking to see him. The secretaries had made this possible & he discused *dogs* with them. The reporters got hold of the children & wrote it up in the paper. Pres. said – 'By actual count there was about 5 times as much editorial space given to this incident as to the London Naval Conference!' Sullivan spoke of Rascob & Michelson & the subsidized propaganda attacks on the administration, quoting article by Frank R. Kent in Sept. ('30) 'Scribner's Magazine.' The Pres. spoke rather resentfully of the attacks and added 'They even charged me with having corrupt relations with the sugar interests last winter! There never has been a corrupt President! Even a corrupt man could not be corrupt when he became Pres. The pitiless publicity would make it impossible.'[60]

The Hoovers' guests' travel to the camp was also carefully orchestrated. In his diary Myers described his 1931 visit to Rapidan Camp: "White House car called for us at 8.15 (standard from now on). Took us to White House, where we left our bags to be sent to the camp. Then to Union Sta., where Mr. & Mrs. Edsel Ford arrived & we drove together to the Rapidan Camp arriving soon after noon."[61]

As the Secret Service and Marines were in constant contact with the White House, they knew when to expect the president and his guests. When Hoover rode into the camp at night, the Marines lit the last stretch of road with flares and torches.[62] A remark Christine Vest Witcofski made years later indicates that all guests arriving at the camp

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[59] Boone, "Autobiography," p. xxii-230.
[60] Myers, Diary, 29 August 1930, pp. 679-680.
[61] Myers, Diary, 23 May 1931, p. 698.
[62] "British Chief and President Seek Solitude of Mountains, "*Washington Herald*, 6 October 1929.

were met by the Marines: "After making the hairpin turn, we were going down grade. . . . In no time, we were at Camp, at the Circle. It looked so familiar but no Marine Major to greet us!"[63]

Communication

Rapidan Camp was connected to the outside world by three means of communication. There were telephones in the "Duty Office" and at least one telephone in "The Brown House." There may also have been one or more telephones in "Town Hall." An airplane coordinated by the Marines dropped mail at the Marine camp. This same plane dropped the morning newspapers and could receive ground signals to pick up outgoing mail at Syria, Virginia.[64] The Marines brought mail to and from the president's camp. They likewise distributed the daily newspapers ensuring that Herbert Hoover got his while still in bed.[65]

Buildings

- James Yardley Rippin

The Hoovers selected architect and friend James Yardley Rippin to design the Rapidan Camp buildings. They likely met Rippin through his wife Jane Deeter Rippin, the then national director of Girl Scouts of America. Lou Henry Hoover served as president of that organization from 1922 to 1925, overlapping Rippin's directorship by several years.[66]

James Rippin met Jane Deeter in 1911 when he became one of the first male members in a cooperative boarding house Deeter started in Philadelphia the same year. They married on 13 October 1913. Rippin

> was an architect, woodworker, and contractor, who always encouraged his wife in her career. The couple fashioned an egalitarian and mutually supportive marriage which survived various fluctuations in their fortunes. Most often her salary was their main source of income.[67]

Jane Deeter had begun a career in social work in 1908. In 1914, she received a master's degree from Irving College and became the chief probation officer in Philadelphia.[68] The Rippins likely first moved to New York City around 1919 when Jane became the national

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[63] Christine Vest Witcofski to friend, ca. 1965, "Camp Rapidan Restoration, 1962-1963," Box 77, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[64] Earl C. Long, *Detachment Regulations and Orders for the Guard, Marine Detachment, Camp Rapidan* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1932), pp. 69-70.

[65] Darwin Lambert to Chuck Anibal, 26 August 1988, "Hoover," Darwin Lambert Papers, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[66] Girl Scouts of USA, *Highlights in Girl Scouting, 1912-1996* (New York: Girl Scouts of USA, 1997), pp. 8-9.

[67] Personalities: Rippin, J.D. – Magazine/Newspaper Articles, Girl Scouts of the USA, New York, New York, p. 2.

[68] Personalities, p. 2.

director of the Girl Scouts, a position she occupied until late 1930.[69] In 1927, the Rippins lived at 330 East 35th Street in New York City.[70] By August 1930 they were living in Ossining, New York.[71]

James Rippin's career is elusive; he seems to have left little mark on architectural history. It is unclear whether this is due to his designing few known buildings or because as Gilborn states, "camp architecture never achieved real visibility and respectability in the profession."[72] While the author was only able to locate two examples besides Rapidan Camp, Rippin may have designed many buildings for friends or camps which are not well-known because of the building type's low esteem in the architectural record.

In 1925-1926, Rippin designed the Great Hall at the Girl Scouts' newly acquired Camp Edith Macy. When the camp opened in 1926, Great Hall was the only large (albeit unheated) building and served as a dining room.[73] It was the focal point of a May 1926 International Conference attended by founder Juliet Gordon Low, Lou Henry Hoover, and representatives from twenty-nine countries.[74] Rippin designed Great Hall to resemble a Connecticut barn, one of Edith Macy's favorite architectural styles.[75]

The building is a tripartite structure with the main dining room in the center, the original kitchen to the right, and the original library to the left. With the exception of a lower level beneath the kitchen, the building is a single story with a low slate roof, a horizontal band of tall windows, and a stone base. At the center of the front and rear facades are double wooden doors. The main structure is punctuated by stone supports at the ends and flanking the doors. Stone chimneys rise from either end of the main structure. Inside, the end walls of the main room are completely constructed of stone and contain fireplaces. The exposed-beam ceiling is open to the roof and supported by rough-hewn timbers. The building's stone came from stone walls on the camp's property. The timbers came from the property's stands of yellow pine, white pine, and Douglas fir. Rippin also designed and made many of the building's furnishings including tables, seating furniture, wrought-iron electric light fixtures, candelabra, and fire screens.[76] Today Great Hall is used for "Pinning Ceremonies," tours, Girl Scout special events, and the display of historic memorabilia.[77] The original kitchen is the memorial "Hoover Room" dedicated to Lou Henry Hoover and the original library is now the Edith W. Conant Lounge.

Another Rippin-designed building is the gate lodge of the N.F. Brady estate in Roslyn, Long Island, which appeared in the Architectural League of New York's Forty-

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[69] Girl Scouts of USA, *Highlights*, pp. 7, 11.

[70] Architectural League of New York, *Index of Exhibits, Forty-second Annual Exhibition* (New York: Architectural League of New York, 1927), p. 25.

[71] Myers, Diary, 30 August 1930, p. 680.

[72] Craig Gilborn, *Adirondack Furniture and the Rustic Tradition* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1987), p. 59.

[73] National Historic Preservation Center, "The Macy Story" (Girl Scouts of the USA, New York, New York, 1999), photocopy, p. 15.

[74] Girl Scouts of USA, *Highlights*, p. 9.

[75] National Historic Preservation Center, "Macy Story," p. 15.

[76] National Historic Preservation Center, "Macy Story," pp. 15-16. Gordon Grey, conversation with author, 12 July 1999, Edith Macy Conference Center, Briarcliff Manor, NY.

[77] National Historic Preservation Center, "Macy Story," p. 18.

second Annual Exhibition in 1927.[78] Interestingly, while other architects were listed as such, Rippin's title was "designer." He may have chosen this title, but it appears he was the architect because the photographs listed in the exhibition's index are of the rear elevation and interior stairs of the lodge.[79] This structure is fanciful and eclectic with a low, steep-pitched roof with spring eaves, possibly of Dutch influence. Atop the roof are three wide, round chimneys. On the second (apparently main) floor, a peaked dormer contains a round-headed window and a peaked entry contains a Gothic pointed door. An oriel window projects from the first floor. Using Rippin's other two known commissions as a basis, it is likely that this design was inspired by the Bradys or the style of the estate's main house.

While Rippin was a capable architect and furniture designer, it seems that he did not have a distinct style of his own and was willing to design a variety of structures and objects within his clients' dictates. Rapidan Camp bears no resemblance to the Brady Gate Lodge. It does share some common characteristics with Great Hall, however. At first glance the buildings are not strikingly alike, but are both made of materials native to their areas and have low profiles. Also they both have large fieldstone fireplaces, long horizontal ranges of windows, and sets of double doors.

The Great Hall furnishings indicate that Rippin may have had a hand in designing some of Rapidan Camp's chairs, tables, and settles (see ill. 2). Lou Henry Hoover describes most of the furniture as "to my own designing."[80] Perhaps she conceived the general look of the forms and left the construction specifications to Rippin. Although they are supported by four distinct legs, the Great Hall wooden chairs have backs constructed much like the slant-back chairs on the Hoovers' porch. The large dining tables have trestle bases. However, the legs, trestles, and tenons are all based on rectangles unlike the more diagonal elements of the Rapidan Camp tables. A long-time Camp Edith Macy (now Edith Macy Conference Center) employee described two now-missing high-backed settles with curved profiles which once flanked one of the Great Hall's fireplaces.[81] These settles were likely similar to the large and small settles in "The Brown House."

- Buildings

Rippin's original designs for Rapidan Camp followed Lou Henry Hoover's request:

> It seems to me that good board flooring and a roof, with a boarded strip extending up perhaps three feet from the floor and with or without a similar strip below the

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[78] "Gate Lodge on Estate of N.F. Brady, Roslyn, L.I., N.Y," *The American Architect* 131: 301 (5 March 1927). Architectural League of New York, *Index of Exhibits*, p. 25.

[79] Materials available at Columbia University regarding the Architectural League of New York's Forty-second Exhibition are limited. The index for the exhibition is available, but not the accompanying illustrations.

[80] Lou Henry Hoover to Gertrude Bowman, 20 April 1937, Gertrude Bowman Papers, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[81] Grey, conversation with author.

> eaves, with the sides composed of canvas curtains that let up and down as weather dictates, might answer this year's needs.[82]

However, in response to guest complaints about the earliest 1929 structures, the plans were significantly altered in the same year. Lou Henry Hoover lamented these changes in a letter to Dare Stark McMullin:

> But alas, they decided that if the weather turned dry, which it threatened never to do, that the sparks from the fireplace might set the roof afire, so it was covered with asbestos coated shingles. Then they felt that in blowy rainy weather it was too dark so they put in windows. Then they decided in cold nights, which are always, there is too much draft around the canvass, so they put in windowpanes so it is now a timber shack.[83]

By July or August of 1929 this design was the model for future camp buildings.

Marines under the direction of Major Earl C. Long constructed the camp buildings. Long said of building the camp:

> With one exception this was the most difficult task in my career as an engineer, covering about 25 years. . . . It would have been easier to have moved an army of 10,000 men across the Blue Ridge than to have built this camp. I have been amazed to find so wild an area existing here so close to the eastern cities.[84]

At its largest, the camp contained thirteen buildings containing public spaces, work spaces, and sleeping quarters. In addition, there were smaller storage structures and a six-by-ten-foot dog kennel.

- Rapidan Camp and the Great Camps of the Adirondacks

Rapidan Camp is not unique in its conception or its development. It likely finds its roots in late-nineteenth-century hunting and fishing camps such as the Great Camps of the Adirondacks, the wooded mountains of northern New York State, and other resort communities in the Midwest and West.

In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries wealthy industrialists, financiers, and builders of the Eastern establishment left the cities to "rough it" near the lakes and in the mountains of the Adirondack region.[85] These camps started as temporary, seasonal sites for multiple tents in the 1880s. As families returned to the same sites year after year, the former tent sites became permanent wooden structures. By the first decade of the twentieth century, Great Camps had evolved into complexes of fewer, larger lodge buildings.[86] In keeping with the Arts and Crafts Movement, the Great Camp buildings were constructed of native materials (particularly stone fireplaces and

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[82] Lou Henry Hoover to Jane and James Y. Rippin, 27 January 1929.
[83] Lou Henry Hoover to Dare Stark McMullin, 15 August 1929.
[84] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 20.
[85] Harvey H. Kaiser, *Great Camps of the Adirondacks* (Boston: David R. Codine, 1982), p. xii.
[86] Kaiser, p. 68.

exposed wooden beams), designed to fit into the landscape, and had many porches to link the buildings with their natural surroundings. Their exterior and interior materials and finishes were to espouse the "inherent qualities of the forest." Plaster, wallpaper, and paint were given up in favor of the natural color, figure, and grain of wood.[87]

The early Great Camps were composed of a variety of small tents and/or buildings housing sleeping quarters, dining rooms, living rooms, recreation rooms, and service areas. In fact, the Stokes family's Upper St. Regis Lake camp and its evolution closely parallels Rapidan Camp. Mildred Phelps Stokes Hooker described the family's camp in a later recollection. In 1883, when the camp was first set up, "By night they had six tents ready besides the cook house and dining tent. Five beds in the 'parlor' (a fourteen by fourteen tent) accommodated the overflow." Later there were fifteen tents in addition to the cabins and the original dining tent.[88] Over an unspecified, extended period of time, the series of tents evolved into a series of buildings. Hooker describes the transition:

> this is perhaps as good a place as any to explain how our camps took on their unusual form and grew up into little villages instead of developing into houses. At first we all lived in tents, as you know, so they were naturally separate. Tents couldn't be left up over the winter, and Mother found it very inconvenient to move all the furniture into the cabin and back and hit upon the scheme of building little wooden storerooms behind the tents into which the furniture could be moved. When the tents wore out it was a natural transition to add to these storerooms by putting cabins instead of tents in front. Often the old tent floors were used. . . . Guide houses, carpenter shops, and ice houses all fitted well into this unit system, and pretty soon it became the accepted way to build, even if you had never had any tents.[89]

The Stokeses were not alone in their multi-building complex. Kaiser describes the configuration of the typical multi-building camp:

> Guests were generally lodged in cabins . . . separate from the camp owner's living unit. The dining room was often housed in an individual building, while the social gathering place, variously called 'the casino,' the game room, or the trophy lodge, was also a separate unit. . . .
>
> Separate buildings were particularly well-suited to expansions that continued through successive summers, the camp extending its size with each successive season. As camps grew, they took on the appearance of small settlements. The staff quarters - kitchens, icehouses, barns, workshops, carriage houses, and storerooms - became the service complex, a self-sufficient community in some cases several miles from the main camp.[90]

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[87] Kaiser, p. 66.

[88] Mildred Phelps Stokes Hooker, *Camp Chronicles* (Blue Mountain Lake, NY: Adirondack Museum, 1964), pp. 9, 30.

[89] Hooker, p. 36.

[90] Kaiser, p. 65.

The Hoovers' Marine camp closely resembled the Great Camp service complexes. Some Great Camps also incorporated the luxuries the Hoovers enjoyed at Rapidan Camp including electricity, underground water and waste collection, and a large staff of servants.[91]

- Public Spaces

Rapidan camp's interior public spaces included the "Mess Hall" and "Town Hall." "Town Hall" was the most versatile building. Signs in guest cabins stated, "The Town Hall in the center of the camp is the place of general meeting for anything from Executive Committee Meeting to ping pong and knitting."[92] The large L-shaped building boasted two fireplaces before which two groups of people could conduct different activities (see ills. 4-5). Hoover made official use of "Town Hall" on many occasions including when British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald visited the camp in October 1929 and during a radio broadcast for the dedication of the war memorial at Ithaca University.[93] Informal uses of "Town Hall" included group discussions, piecing puzzles, playing Ping-Pong, knitting, and reading. "Town Hall" was, in part, a place to retire after dinner in the "Mess Hall." There cigarettes, cigars, and candies were set out for guests to enjoy.[94] The large porch off "Town Hall" was the setting for open air discussions and activities (see ill. 3).[95] The grassy bank in front of "Town Hall" overlooking Hemlock Run was a popular location for outdoor meals.[96]

The furnishings of "Town Hall," intended to facilitate a variety of indoor activities, included chairs, benches, couches, gliders, rockers, bookcases, tables, desks, and a Ping-Pong table (see ill. 6). Lou Henry Hoover placed in "Town Hall" some of the Navajo rugs she received as a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Rhoades.[97] She wrote acknowledging the gift, "Two of those lovely white and black and saffron (?) [in text] ones are too irresistible over a pair of couches in our 'Town Hall,' - where the marvelous little saddle blanket was made for over the fireplace" (see ill. 5).[98] A lamp with a parchment map lampshade adorned with Colonel Charles Lindbergh's Atlantic flights and his signature also decorated "Town Hall."[99]

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[91] Kaiser, p. 2.

[92] Untitled camp information posted in guest cabins, 1929-1932, "Camp Rapidan Restoration, 1962-1963," Box 77, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[93] Boone, "Autobiography, p. xxii-232. Myers, Diary, 23 May 1931, p. 698.

[94] Earl C. Long to Lawrence Richey, 20 October 1930, "Rapidan Camp Guest Lists, 1930," Box 190, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[95] Untitled draft didactic labels for Rapidan Camp, ca. 1960, Folder 6, Catalogue # 13004, Resource Management Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[96] "Autumn Gives Golden Setting for Hoover Camp on Rapidan," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 23 October 1931.

[97] Thomas Rhoades was the Commissioner of Indian Affairs during Hoover's term. Philippi Butler to Joel T. Boone, 7 December 1962, "Rapidan Camp, Restoration,1962-1963," Box 77, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[98] Lou Henry Hoover to Mrs. Rhoades, 27 April 1930, "Rapidan Camp General, 1928-1938," Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[99] Lou Henry Hoover to Gertrude Bowman, 20 April 1937.

Like "Town Hall," the "Mess Hall" was a large public space, but its only recorded use is as a dining hall. The Hoovers and their guests ate their morning and evening meals in the "Mess Hall." On pleasant afternoons, luncheons were apt to take place outside the camp on a hike or horseback ride. Even when guests were in camp, an open-air meal served before the "Town Hall" might remove them from inside the "Mess Hall."

Meals in the "Mess Hall" were informal affairs with the Hoovers, guests, and staff members together around one or two long tables (see ill. 7 and "Camp Activities: Meals"). If a small party was expected for dinner, a sliding wooden partition could be closed to make the dining room more intimate.[100] According to one visiting writer:

> The table decorations at the Rapidan are a far cry from the massive silver service used for state functions at the White House. There are gay colored dishes. Spritely fall asters or some other flower from the surrounding woods are used for decorations with harmonizing candles.
>
> The napkins are sometimes of checked gingham. A dozen or so white-coated Filipino servants flit hither and thither.[101]

Myers described his impressions of the "Mess Hall":

> We all started for the dining shack, the President going first, each time taking a different lady or ladies. He sits at the upper end, left-hand corner. (Mrs. Hoover at the other end for lunch and dinner.) The table is long, about six feet broad, made of plain pine board. The center covered with small hemlock branches, two glass aquariums with Japanese fantail gold fish, & flowers. 'Runners' (gray) go around the length of the table. The china is white and gold, and bear the presidential crest.[102]

These descriptions provide evidence that there were different linens and at least two sets of tableware. While these items were informal, they were also coordinated and stylish. The only rules at Rapidan Camp dinners were those to enforce their informality: no man was allowed to take his own wife to dinner and there was to be no "shop talk" at the table.[103]

- Work Spaces

While "Town Hall" functioned as a combination work and recreational space, two areas in the camp functioned almost exclusively as work spaces: the "Duty Office" occupied by the Secret Service and the office at "The Slums" occupied by Lou Henry Hoover's secretaries.

From the beginning, Lou Henry Hoover and architect James Rippin considered the accommodation of the Secret Service in their plans for the camp. Hoover wrote to

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[100] "Hoover, MacDonald in Camp," *New York World*, 6 October 1929.

[101] "Autumn Gives Golden Setting," 23 October 1931.

[102] Myers, Diary, 29 August 1930, p. 680.

[103] Mary Hornaday, "Where the President Puts Care Aside," *New York Times Magazine*, 12 June 1932. Boone, "Autobiography," p. xxii-232.

Rippin that there should be shelter for at least six Secret Service men.[104] The "Duty Office" was built as a twelve-by-twelve foot cabin with a lavatory. Here Secret Service men and Marines could maintain communication with the White House and coordinate their security efforts.[105]

Lou Henry Hoover also gave consideration to office space when first conceiving the camp. She wrote to Rippin:

> In another building must be some offices where the men may work and two or three secretaries have their separate diggings, with a biggish room for as many stenographers and typewriters. Incidentally, provision would have to be made for eight or ten of these people to eat and sleep comfortably and picturesquely.[106]

The "Duty Office" and "Town Hall" may have derived from this initial thought, but "The Slums" was built more closely following Lou Henry Hoover's vision for a combined work and lodging space for her secretaries. Helen Hartley Greene White later described "The Slums":

> The jokingly called Slums [underlined in original] consisted of a long building, facing the mountain side, with an unprotected porch its full length. Opening from the deck was a living room, used as the secretaries office, and down the hall were two bedrooms with a bath between at each end of the building, or four bedrooms in all.[107]

"The Slums" contained two single rooms and two double rooms, so could accommodate up to six people. These rooms were most commonly occupied by the secretaries, but on weekends when many guests were due, "The Slums" served as guest lodging. Perhaps the most important guest at "The Slums" was Vice President Charles Curtis who stayed there in July of 1931.[108]

A glimpse of a few objects specific to "The Slums" is offered in a 1930 memorandum to Long regarding the distribution of new camp furnishings. Two standing wrought iron lamps, one with a rose border shade and the other with a "brown all-over scrolly shade," were to be placed in the single rooms. Green comforters were to be put on the beds in the double rooms.[109]

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[104] Lou Henry Hoover to Jane and James Y. Rippin, 27 January 1929.

[105] Inventory of Tract #180, ca. 1933, in Herbert Hoover, Records for Tract #180.

[106] Lou Henry Hoover to Jane and James Y. Rippin, 27 January 1929.

[107] Helen Hartley Greene, "Who? Me? A White House Secretary!" Unpublished memoir, 1980, Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, Stanford, CA, p. 31.

[108] Guest Lists April – October 1931, "Rapidan Camp Guest Lists, 1931," Box 190, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[109] Memorandum on behalf of Lou Henry Hoover to Earl C. Long, 17 April 1930, "Rapidan Camp General, 1928-1938," Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

- Private Quarters

The remainder of the cabins at Rapidan Camp were guest and servant quarters. The quarters of the mess servants and the chief commissary officer were at a distance from the other cabins on the opposite side of the camp's main access road. It appears that the mess servants lodged dormitory style in a cabin with one large room (seventeen-by-sixty feet), a bathroom, and a porch. The chief commissary officer occupied a cabin with a bedroom, bathroom, and porch.

The guest cabins provided room for approximately twenty-five guests. These cabins were of two types. The small cabins including "The Creel," "Ishbel," "The Owl," "The Prime Minister," and "Trail's End" generally had a bedroom, living room, bathroom, and porch. The larger cabins including "The Slums" and "Five Tents" each had four bedrooms, a living room, two bathrooms, and a long porch. Helen Hartley Greene White later described the bedrooms of the guest cabins:

> The rustic cabins were simply furnished. In each room were two single cots, two dressers, and a couple of chairs. Indian scatter rugs were on the floor. By each bed was a small table on which were kept current books and papers.[110]

There is little extant information concerning the furnishings in the living rooms and bathrooms of the guest cabins. In a memorandum to Long, the placement of oval rag rugs in the bathrooms and clothing hooks in bedrooms, bathrooms, and closets is discussed.[111] The *New York Times* also offers a window into the décor of the guest cabins:

> Porches have been made gay with boxes of geraniums and other hardy flowers. There are grass rugs on all floors, print counterpanes on beds and furniture is rustic. Guests are pleasantly surprised to find springs under the mattresses on the rough bedsteads and that the water from the modern plumbing has come through an electric heater.[112]

The Hoovers' cabin, "The Brown House," was the most elaborate of the private quarters boasting a living room, a sitting room, two bedrooms, two bathrooms, several exterior porches, and a screened porch. The living room, sitting room, and front porch functioned, at times, as semi-public spaces when the Hoovers invited small groups of guests for a meal or for tea.

Herbert C. Hoover

Herbert Clark Hoover was born on 10 August 1874 to Jesse and Huldah Hoover in West Branch, Iowa.[113] He was the second of three children. He had an older brother

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[110] Greene, "Who? Me?," p. 31.
[111] Memorandum on behalf of Lou Henry Hoover to Earl C. Long, 17 April 1930.
[112] Hornaday, 12 June 1932.
[113] Richard Norton Smith, *An Uncommon Man: The Triumph of Herbert Hoover* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), p. 15.

named Theodore and a younger sister named Mary.[114] His father, a successful blacksmith, died of heart failure at the age of thirty-four in 1880. His mother was a recorded Quaker minister and often traveled to meetings leaving her children with other Friends. As the result of one such trip, Huldah Hoover died of pneumonia and typhoid fever in 1884. At that time the orphaned Hoover children were separated to live with family members. Herbert remained in West Branch living on the farm of his Uncle Allan Hoover.[115]

The following year, Hoover's maternal uncle John Minthorn lost his son and requested that Hoover be sent to Newberg, Oregon, to live with him. Minthorn owned half a million acres in Oregon including pear orchards and stands of pine trees. He was a mirthless businessman, educator, physician, and moralist with an equally dour circle of friends. Hoover attended Newberg Academy, a Quaker school which his uncle superintended, and worked in his uncle's business office. In this atmosphere Hoover honed his natural work ethic, but missed acquiring the social graces that would have benefited a youth "already inclined toward moody silences and a short fuse." By 1888, Hoover's siblings joined the Minthorn family in Oregon.[116]

A Quaker mathematics instructor recruited Hoover to enter the engineering program at the newly founded Stanford University. At seventeen years old, Hoover was the youngest member of the school's first class entering in 1891.[117] Hoover's first geological job was as a laborer working summers in the Sierra and Ozark Mountains. He received his degree from Stanford in 1895.[118] After graduation, Hoover worked for a California- and New Mexico-based mining firm whose owner recommended him to the British firm Bewick-Moreing and Company.[119]

In the employ of Bewick-Moreing, Hoover went to Coolgardie, Australia, in 1897 and successfully served as the chief engineer for eight gold mines there.[120] This success led him to a more profitable management position in China. This promotion more than doubled Hoover's salary and allowed him to marry Lou Henry, a younger geology student he had met at Stanford University. They married in a civil ceremony at the Henrys' California home on 10 February 1899 and the journey to China served as their honeymoon. In China the Hoovers lived in various locations including Tientsen where they were caught in the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. They left and then returned to Peking in 1901. Hoover decided to leave China permanently the same year.

After he left China, Bewick-Moreing made Hoover a junior partner in the firm. For the next seven years he traveled extensively with and without his family. Despite their frequent travels, the Hoovers were able to establish houses in London and Palo Alto, California.[121]

In 1908, Hoover left Bewick-Moreing to establish his own consulting firm in which he acted as a "doctor of sick mines." As such, he dispensed mining advice around

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[114] Martin L. Fausold, *The Presidency of Herbert C. Hoover* (Lawrence, KA: University of Kansas Press, 1985), p. 2.

[115] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, pp. 65-66.

[116] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, pp. 66-68.

[117] Fausold, p. 6.

[118] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, p. 72.

[119] Fausold, p. 6.

[120] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, p. 72. Fausold, p. 6.

[121] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, p. 76.

the world and amassed a sizable fortune. In 1910, Hoover turned from his mining career to a career in public service.[122]

At the outbreak of World War I, Hoover was asked to lead the American Citizens' Relief Committee in London. Through this committee, 500 volunteers aided 120,000 Americans trapped by the war to return home. Later the same year he was called on to aid the Belgians who were starving as the result of the British blockade. Through the Committee for the Relief of Belgium (CRB) Hoover was able to move 4,500 tons of food through the blockade.[123]

When the United States entered the war in 1917, Hoover went to Washington, DC, to become Woodrow Wilson's food administrator.[124] As such, "Hoover's job was to organize Americans to increase production, diminish consumption and avert wartime profiteering and inflation, all the while hewing to his own preference for voluntary cooperation over federal fiat."[125] To do so, Hoover's Food Administration made extensive use of the press to mass market such food conservation practices as "Meatless Mondays" and "Wheatless Wednesdays."[126]

In 1920, he made an unsuccessful bid for the presidential nomination and then in 1921 was appointed secretary of commerce.[127] As secretary of commerce, Hoover made a department that was formerly a "themeless hodgepodge" into a "dynamic agency."[128] During his administration Hoover strove to standardize many manufactured products "ranging from milk bottles and auto tires to kitchen plumbing and gas meters."[129] He also addressed issues such as affordable housing, zoning laws, highway safety, children's rights, regulation of radio broadcasts, airline safety, and public works.[130]

Hoover won, almost unanimously, the Republican nomination for the 1928 presidential election. According to biographer Martin Fausold, Hoover then launched a "superb campaign," but his "inexperience in electoral politics would bode ill in his dealing with members of Congress after the election and in facing future elections, but adept organization and a very fine public image sufficed for this campaign."[131] A period newspaper advertisement indicates how publicists "packaged" Hoover and his ideas to appeal to the masses:

> For the Presidency, the Republican Party turns AGAIN to a man of the people to a BLACKSMITH'S son, and Iowa ORPHAN and country school boy, raised by his own efforts and his own merits to a plane of distinction in MORE fields of usefulness than any man the nation has ever privileged to place in the White House.

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[122] Fausold, p. 7.
[123] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, pp. 81-82. Fausold, p. 8.
[124] Fausold, p. 9.
[125] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, p. 88.
[126] Richard Norton Smith, Maureen H. Harding, and Timothy Walsh, *Herbert Hoover Library & Museum: A Guide to the Exhibit Galleries* (West Branch, IA: Herbert Hoover Library and Museum, 1993), p. 21.
[127] Fausold, p. 11.
[128] Smith et al, *Guide to Exhibit Galleries*, p. 31.
[129] Smith et al, *Guide to Exhibit Galleries*, pp. 33-35.
[130] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, p. 100.
[131] Fausold, pp. 25-26.

It presents a CIVILIAN with the military knowledge of a trained SOLDIER. It presents an EXECUTIVE who has already remodeled Federal administration, simplified its machinery, destroyed its red tape, reduced the cost and expanded the scope of departmental action.

It offers a HUMANITARIAN whose heart has never questioned RACE or a CREED - and a LOYAL citizen pledged by platform, record and declaration against the hazard of foreign entanglement.

And he has done his job in America, through Democratic and Republican regimen alike.

No Presidential candidate ever before had the same range of contact with the problems of capital and labor - with the conditions under which we severally do our daily chores.

The essential principle of the Republican Party is the SAFEGUARDING and IMPROVEMENT of those conditions - the protection of prosperity against the pauper wages and products of Europe and Asia.

Herbert Hoover, qualified by years of familiarity with foreign agriculture, foreign factory standards, foreign living scales, foreign methods, foreign resources, and foreign strategy, is the ONE man to plan and conduct the defense.

A vote for Hoover is a vote for belching smoke stacks, [illeg.] furnaces, [illeg.] hammers, busy looms, [illeg.] and permanent agricultural relief - a vote for peak production, for steady employment, for the song of the riveter[,] for more automobiles - a vote for better government[,] sounder business practice, for full time and fuller pay envelopes - a vote for impartial litigation, for the integrity of the Constitution, for continued equality before opportunity and the law - a vote for national SAFETY, SOLVENCY and SOBRIETY - and national ideals.[132]

Hoover's "New Day" platform focussed on a more efficient government with reduced expenditures, tariff protection, good international relations, continued prohibition, shorter work days for laborers, more public works, and the creation of a Federal Farm Board.[133] Hoover won the election with 444 electoral votes over Democrat Al Smith's 87 and carried all but six states.[134]

Today, many state in hindsight that Hoover's personality was not suited to the presidency. Hoover himself knew this shortly after World War I when he commented, "'I do not believe that I have the mental attitude or the politician's manner. . . . Above all I am too sensitive to political mud.'"[135] Franklin Roosevelt, too, foresaw Hoover's troubles as president. He wrote to a voter in September 1928:

> I have known Mr. Hoover personally for many years . . . and would be the last one to decry his abilities as an administrator of a department, but that very quality which enables him to take some particular brand of activity and by concentration of effort, carry whatever the project may be to a triumphant conclusion, is a very serious handicap to a man in the Presidential office, where what is needed is a

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[132] "The Republican Party Offers Herbert Hoover for President," *Madison County Eagle*, 2 November 1928.

[133] Fausold, p. 23. Smith et al, *Guide to Exhibit Galleries*, p. 43.

[134] Fausold, pp. 30-31.

[135] Smith et al, *Guide to Exhibit Galleries*, p. 20.

wide mind that can take up one subject after another during the day and find itself equally at home in all of them.[136]

One of Hoover's major hindrances as a politician was his aloof attitude. Co-workers in the Wilson administration used adjectives and images such as "impatient," "cold," and like "a cockroach sliding around a porcelain bathtub" to describe his impersonal manner.[137] Another handicap to easy discourse was his desire to control situations. Ted Joslin, Hoover's press secretary starting in 1931, described Hoover's approach to conferences during the Depression:

> With the assembling of the conferees, who almost invariably did not have the slightest ideas why he had asked them to come to the Executive Mansion, he would outline the situation confronting him and the country and then produce the written program he had prepared. If it was acceptable to them, he then produced a statement for publication that he had also prepared in advance, rather than leaving to discussion the nature of the announcement that was to be made. He left nothing to chance.[138]

Hoover's aloofness and controlling nature were magnified in the public sphere by his lack of charisma and refusal to share his personal life with the press. Rapidan Camp featured quite prominently in Hoover's control of the press. A story detailing the press corps' difficulties appeared during Hoover's first summer in office:

> The new difficulty - which lies in 'covering' the doings of the President at his summer camp on the Rapidan river in Virginia from a distance of 33 miles by auto, if any - makes past handicaps fade into miniature. . . .
>
> Mr. Hoover issued orders that he was not to be trailed by the newspaper men after the fashion in which they so devotedly sniffed after President Coolidge, reaping their rewards in the innumerable 'human interest stories' which such trips almost invariably produce.
>
> The Hoover order was absolute and final. Not only were newspaper men not welcome as members of the party at the camp, but Mr. Hoover was not to be followed on the road out of Washington along the 90-odd mile route to the camp. Secret Service men were to enforce the order, as they did for President Wilson.
>
> Largely, according to the newspaper men, out of fellow feeling for the trials of the secret service corps at the White House, the order was obeyed on Mr. Hoover's first jaunt through the country. The President motored through the countryside of northern Virginia with no press harassments of any kind.
>
> Afterward, however, newspaper men decided that the trips should be covered somehow. When the President departed for a week-end holiday, the press processional tailed out behind. Arrived at Criglersville, Va., the doughty

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[136] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, p. 52.

[137] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, p. 90.

[138] Kendrick A. Clements, "Herbert Hoover and the Fish," *Journal of Psychology* 10 (3): 345 (1983).

cohorts of the public were completely and irrevocably stumped, however. The obstacle there is stumping them yet.

Not being members of the Presidential party, they are not to be allowed to cross the Marine-constructed bridge across the Rapidan at Criglersville. Eight miles on the other side of the bridge is the camp. . . .

"I asked five persons in the President's party to call me by telephone at Panorama when the President was scheduled to leave the camp," said one veteran correspondent discussing his last attempt to handle the story of a Hoover outing. "Nobody called. I found out by calling the White House in Washington, a hundred miles or more away."

It is thus much easier to get the facts by remaining at the White House which is connected by direct wire to the camp, than to try to pick up information by any conceivable method on the outing. This direct wire is in excellent use when Mr. Hoover is at the camp, and he talks frequently to cabinet members, his secretaries and others. These will often give out information as to what is happening in the camp, whereas from either Panorama or Orange, the chance of learning anything are virtually non-existent.[139]

In addition to shutting the press out of his personal retreat, Hoover also disappointed reporters by his conduct of semi-weekly press conferences. He initially told them that he would hold the conferences from which they could quote his remarks directly. However, within three weeks, reporters were required to submit questions in advance for screening. Hoover then resorted to giving reporters handouts from which to quote or providing little information at all.[140] The above article continues:

Meantime, the weekly White House conferences are proving almost barren. Some among the columnists have expressed themselves on the subject, and all have agreed here that the conferences are unsatisfactory, no matter how widely different their attitude toward the President. The general view is that President Hoover has not adapted himself yet to the condition of Presidential publicity, but that given time he will do so.

The fact that he does not care to discuss what, from the national view, must be considered as trivialities of the day's news, concededly injures his publicity chances. On the other hand, most correspondents sympathize with his view that such minutiae are not the proper concern of the Chief Executive of the United States, and that only on matters of some importance to the whole nation should his views be expressed.[141]

As a result Hoover's public image suffered:

The public barely knew him. To most Americans, he was a rubber face perched atop a stiff size 17 collar, blandly assuring them that nothing fundamentally

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[139] "White House is Best News Source," 13 July 1929.
[140] Fausold, p. 47.
[141] "White House is Best News Source," 13 July 1929.

> wrong afflicted their economic system. They saw nothing of his private anguish, or of the dozens of personal bequests he made to individuals in need.[142]

To add to Hoover's troubles, the Democratic party hired two men whom he called "masters of political attack" to lead the Democratic National Committee in Washington. Jouett Shouse was the executive director and Charles Michelson was the publicity director for the Committee. Hoover described the phenomenon created by this office years later in his *Memoirs*:

> From the office of Shouse and Michelson came a ceaseless torrent of ghost-written speeches supplied to Democratic Senators, Congressmen, and other party leaders. The attack included also a continuous flood of press releases and radio propaganda. The *Congressional Record* alone shows hundreds of such attacks. A President cannot with decency and with proper regard for the dignity of his office reply to such stuff. And in my case, some of the old-guard Republican leaders in the Senate and the House, who had been defeated in their Presidential ambitions in 1928, certainly did not exert themselves energetically in their traditional duty to counterattack and expose misrepresentations.[143]

Michelson's attacks on Hoover included allegations of his involvement in oil and sugar scandals and an over-exaggeration of his involvement in the Bonus March scandal.[144] From July 1929 to August 1930 alone, Michelson produced 406 negative press releases about the president.[145] Because of Hoover's unwillingness to express his viewpoint, all the public encountered were the negative reports generated by the Democrats.

Also, the president's job was changing. The pace of the job picked up as the country floundered in the Depression and technologies such as the telephone caught on. According to Fausold, presidents before World War I spent as little as two hours on office work and spent two or three hours meeting the public and the press. The greater magnitude of Hoover's office work is indicated by the increase in secretaries from one before to four during Hoover's term. Hoover's telephone usage was far greater than that of his predecessor. While Coolidge made about 12,000 phone calls on average per month, Hoover made 42,000 per month, or about 150 per day.[146] As noted by Coolidge, with the increasing demands of and the increasing security surrounding the presidential office, the need for a presidential retreat also rose.

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[142] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, p. 34.

[143] Herbert Hoover, *The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover: The Great Depression, 1929-1941* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1952), pp. 219-220.

[144] In the summer of 1932 thousands of World War I veterans arrived in Washington, DC demanding to be paid bonuses which had been pledged in 1924, but were not to be paid until 1945. Most of the marchers left peacefully when Congress funded their travel home at Hoover's request. A group continued to occupy condemned government buildings. Hoover asked that these people be removed from the buildings to their nearby camps. Secretary of War Patrick Hurley decided they should be moved out of the business district to Camp Marks. General Douglas MacArthur took the situation further by driving the people beyond Camp Marks using tanks, guns, and tear gas. These extreme measures taken without Hoover's knowledge were easily exploited in the press (Fausold, p. 201). Hoover, *Memoirs*, pp. 221, 223, 225.

[145] Fausold, p. 101.

[146] Fausold, p. 47. Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 111.

Hoover used Rapidan Camp as a getaway and an informal meeting location. The most famous meeting Hoover conducted there was with Britain's Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald regarding naval disarmament. Their meeting was a prelude to the London Naval Conference at which they hoped to determine the number of warships operated by the United States, Great Britain, Japan, France, and Italy. The meeting between Hoover and MacDonald was a success. However, due to misunderstandings on the part of some countries and the deliberate stalling of others, the London Naval Conference accomplished little.[147]

While Hoover was aloof to the press and the public, he was not unaware of the country's problems and their impact on its citizens. Hoover's personal wealth garnered during his years in mining allowed him personally to ease, in a small way, the burdens of the country and some people. Hoover was the first president to "give away" his salary. In addition, he anonymously gave $25,000 of his personal funds yearly in response to pleas for aid from victims of the Depression.[148]

Understandably, history will forever link Hoover's presidency with the Great Depression. In late life he would dryly joke that "[h]e was the only man in recorded history . . . who had been credited with the fabulous economic knowledge to start a worldwide depression on his own."[149] While Hoover did not start the Depression, he is blamed for prolonging it.

The inception of the Great Depression can be traced back to the end of World War I when a world-wide glut of agricultural products decreased the United States' export of such products. Because more than half of all Americans lived on farms or in rural communities, the "sickness" of the agricultural market affected many people nationwide. Also problematic was industry's use of profits during the boom years of the 1920s. Industry put most of its profits into increasing production and gave little back to its employees. This practice created a glut of durable goods and rendered employees unable to consume the excess.[150] The banking industry also contributed to the problem:

> The United States had too many banks, and too many of them played the stock market with depositors' funds, or speculated in their own stocks. Only a third or so belonged to the Federal Reserve System on which Hoover placed such reliance. In addition, government had yet to devise insurance for the jobless or income maintenance for the destitute. When unemployment resulted, buying power vanished overnight. Since most people were carrying a heavy debt load even before the crash, the onset of recession in the spring of 1930 meant that they simply stopped spending.

A severe drought in 1930 further exacerbated the situation.[151]

The problems in the United States were compounded by economic problems abroad. Hoover blamed the United States' depression specifically on the problems in Europe. These problems included the depreciation of the currency exchange rate;

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147 Fausold, p. 173.
148 Smith et al, *Guide to Exhibit Galleries*, p. 48.
149 Fausold, p. 405.
150 Fausold, pp. 65-66.
151 Smith et al, *Guide to Exhibit Galleries*, pp. 66-67, 53-54.

economic speculation; inadequate lending systems; bank failures; measures taken for economic advantage such as tariffs, trade quotas, cartel arrangements, and export subsidies; and the small number of imports accepted by the United States.

While the European crisis negatively impacted the United States, historian Charles P. Kindleberger in *The World in Depression, 1929-1933* places the blame for Europe's problems squarely on the United States. He asserts that the Depression was caused by the United States not assuming Great Britain's former position as the world's economic leader after World War I. Roles the United States failed to fulfill included purchasing "distressed" foreign commodities, providing "liquidity" to countries in difficulty, and sustaining the "flow of long-term capital." While all of these issues were percolating from 1918 onward, it was not until October of 1929 that the American stock market "crashed" indicating the recession that lead to the Depression.[152] While Hoover did not cause the Depression, he is often faulted for not being more aggressive in relieving the country's problems through government programs.

Hoover's approach to the Depression was based partly on the actions of past presidents in similar situations. Financial panics had occurred in the 1830s under Martin Van Buren, the 1850s under James Buchanan, in the 1870s under Ulysses Grant, and in the 1890s under Grover Cleveland.

> None of these presidents did much to stem the deflation in prices, contraction of investment, and loss of jobs that resulted - for the simple reason that standard economic theory held there was little if anything they could do. Then, in 1921, a post war slump led President Warren Harding to name Hoover as chairman of a special conference to deal with unemployment.[153]

In addition to the past lack of governmental intervention and reigning economic theory, Hoover also limited his actions based on his own philosophies of individualism and American corporatism.

Hoover set forth his philosophy by emphasizing the importance and power of individuals in a pamphlet called *American Individualism*. He wrote, "'The divine spark does not lie in agreements, in organizations, in institutions, in masses or in groups. Spirituality with its faith, its hopes, its charity, can be increased by each individual's own effort. And, in proportion as each individual increases his own store of spirituality, in that proportion increases the idealism of democracy.'" Conversely, he viewed heavy-handed leadership with suspicion: "'many men came to believe that salvation lay in mass and group action. . . . They conceived that this leadership could be continued without tyranny; they have forgotten that permanent spiritual progress lies with the individual.'"[154]

When it became evident that relief efforts for victims of the Depression were necessary, Hoover looked to local volunteer organizations to provide them. According to Fausold, "Red Crosses, Community Chests, YMCAs and settlement houses; here were

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[152] Fausold, p. 78.

[153] Smith et al, *Guide to Exhibit Galleries*, p. 52. There were also financial panics under Andrew Jackson and Theodore Roosevelt [Clifford Tobias to author, 10 December 1999].

[154] Herbert Hoover, *American Individualism*, as quoted in Fausold, pp. 18-19.

the building blocks of what Hoover called the Individualizing State."[155] Yet, these small local agencies were not equipped to deal with the magnitude of the nation's problems. As the Depression dragged on the "individuals" became restless and looked to the federal government: "more and more types of Americans were becoming noticeably weary of the president's continued emphasis on mutual self-help, local government's responsibility, 'growth of character,' and the avoidance of 'opiates of government charity.'"[156] They wanted help from the top, but what help they received was too little and too late.

Also limiting the government's role in Depression relief was Hoover's philosophy which has been dubbed "American corporatism." "This was Hoover's belief in a voluntary interaction of segments [industry, labor, and government] which would avoid an excess of government regulation that might 'extinguish the enterprise and initiative which had been the glory of America.'"[157] In terms of the Depression, Hoover saw the federal government as only part of the solution and did not proceed with government programs as aggressively as many would have liked.

In the spirit of American Corporatism and Individualism, one of Hoover's early efforts to cure the nation's economy was to hold conferences with the leaders of industry, labor, and local government. His intent in meeting with the industry and labor sectors was to encourage employers to keep employees on the payroll at the same rate of pay so they could continue to spend money to boost the economy. They were also encouraged to start new construction projects to create more jobs. In return, Hoover encouraged laborers to withhold or withdraw wage demands. Hoover also asked local governments to increase their programs of public works. He hoped that with these sectors of the economy voluntarily working together, the tide of the Depression could be stemmed. Unfortunately, industry was only able to maintain the status quo for a year and then the situation worsened.[158]

The federal government took part by urging the Federal Reserve System to extend more credit to increase the public's buying power; increasing government spending on public works; and aiding farmers through the Agriculture Marketing Act. To help matters abroad, Hoover placed a moratorium on all intergovernmental debts in order to keep money in place to stabilize foreign currency. As matters worsened, his efforts increased, but never kept pace with the situation. The President's Organization on Unemployment Relief (POUR) was organized in mid-1931. The Emergency Relief and Construction Act was passed in mid-1932. "The bill was path breaking and might have boded well for relief of the unemployed had the depression not been descending so rapidly." Despite the ongoing Depression, Hoover remained publicly popular until early 1932.[159]

Hoover's term as president did have its share of successes. For example, Hoover was considered the "'the first conservationist president since Theodore Roosevelt.'"[160] This label was the result of a successful early-1920s campaign to popularize Hoover based on his love of fishing and the outdoors. He was made the honorary president of the

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[155] Fausold, p. 40.
[156] Fausold, p. 133.
[157] Fausold, p. 27.
[158] Fausold, pp. 74-76.
[159] Fausold, pp. 82, 97, 143, 149, 199, 155.
[160] Fausold, p. 57.

Izaak Walton League, "the large and effective fisherman's conservation organization."[161] As secretary of commerce Hoover created federal regulations regarding oil pollution, commercial and sport fishermen, fish stocking, Alaskan seals, flood control, and irrigation. As president he increased the National Park Service's budget by forty-six percent and expanded the area of the national parks and monuments by forty percent.[162] Other presidential accomplishments include planning a series of dams for the Tennessee Valley and California; initiating prison reform focussed on education and rehabilitation; reorganizing the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and establishing the Veterans' Administration, Anti-trust Division of the Justice Department, and Federal Bureau of Prisons.

Probably encouraged by his many accomplishments, Hoover was unaware of his own unpopularity and asked to be renominated by the Republican Party for the 1932 election. He and his closest followers thought he had a chance of winning the election up until the votes were counted. In November 1932 he lost with only fifty-nine electoral votes against Franklin Roosevelt's 472.[163]

After this loss Hoover still worked toward bringing the on-going Depression to a close. However, Congress was loath to assist a lame duck president, so Hoover tried to enlist Roosevelt's support for his programs. So as not to tie his own hands later, Roosevelt avoided lending any support and made Hoover's last five months in office unproductive. So much so that Congress passed legislation for future inaugurations to take place in January to avoid such a lengthy transition period.[164] Unfortunately, bad blood between the two continued after Roosevelt's election. To keep an eye on Hoover's activities, Roosevelt had Hoover's mail opened, his telephone tapped, and Hoover himself followed. Hoover's sons were also singled out for investigation in an attempt to implicate any member of the family in wrong-doing. These investigations produced nothing beyond paranoia in Hoover's circle.[165]

Hoover was not idle in the years following his presidency. He retired to the Waldorf Astoria in New York City instead of his Palo Alto home because he wanted to be close to the locus of activity.[166] In 1939, Hoover was again feeding the hungry in Europe when he organized aid for Poland and Finland. In 1941, he dedicated a library (later called the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace) he financed at Stanford University. He served on the boards of New York Life Insurance and Stanford University. He also raised money for non-profit organizations including the Boys Clubs of America. In 1962 he attended the dedication of the Hoover Library in his home town of West Branch, Iowa. Hoover remained active in the political arena as an organizer and as an advisor. He twice reorganized the executive branch of the federal government, once in 1946 under Truman and again in 1953 under Eisenhower. He later advised the Kennedy administration.[167]

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[161] Clements, p. 335.
[162] Clements, p. 335.
[163] Fausold, pp. 194, 212, 218.
[164] William Seale, "Lou Henry Hoover and the White House," in *Lou Henry Hoover: Essays on a Busy Life*, ed. Dale C. Mayer (Worland, WY: High Plains Publishing Company for Herbert Hoover Presidential Library Association, 1994), p. 95.
[165] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, pp. 187-188.
[166] Seale, in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. 95.
[167] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, pp. 291-292, 206, 72. Smith et al, *Guide to Exhibit Galleries*, p. 58. Smith, *Uncommon Man*, pp. 372, 409, 23.

When not otherwise occupied, Hoover wrote. According to Smith:

> It didn't come naturally. Hoover's style tended to freeze-dry historical events. . . . Larded with documentation, his serious works suffered as well from their author's insecurity. Instead of permitting an early draft's casual flow to remain, Hoover worked over the prose - tortured it, some said - until it was drained of vitality. . . . He was, not surprisingly, a difficult man to edit.[168]

Among Hoover's serious works are *The Challenge of Liberty* (1934) on individualism and collectivism; *Memoirs of Herbert Hoover* (1951-52); *Ordeal of Woodrow Wilson* (1958); and *An American Epic* (1959) regarding the Commission for Relief in Belgium. Late in life he wrote a lighter illustrated book called *Fishing for Fun – And to Wash Your Soul* (1963) on his favorite outdoor activity which he no longer practiced.

On 16 October 1964 in his Waldorf Astoria apartment, Herbert Hoover died at the age of ninety as the result of massive internal bleeding.[169] He is buried in West Branch, Iowa, beside Lou Henry Hoover at the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site.

Lou Henry Hoover

Lou Henry Hoover was born to Florence Weed and Charles Delano Henry on 29 March 1874 in Waterloo, Iowa. She had one sister named Jean. The family lived in Iowa until 1887 when it moved to California in an attempt to alleviate Florence Henry's asthma. Charles Henry was a banker in Waterloo and then opened the first bank in Whittier, California. In 1890, the family moved to Monterey, California, so Henry could start another bank there.[170]

According to Lou Henry Hoover biographer Helen Pryor, because he did not have a son, Charles Henry raised his daughter Lou much like a boy. He taught her to love the outdoors and physical activity.[171]

> By the time she was six years old, her father had taken her fishing, trapping, hiking, and overnight camping. Those outdoor activities expanded after the family moved to California. She played with both boys and girls in the usual childhood games and enjoyed roller skating, baseball, tennis, horseback riding, and biking.[172]

In addition to a love of the outdoors, Lou Henry's parents nurtured her intellect, confidence, and leadership skills. According to Carroll:

> Lou Henry Hoover was an unpretentious yet exceptional individual from childhood - intelligent, educated, and articulate. Reared by parents who prized education, the natural environment and philanthropy as well as the values of

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[168] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, p. 312.
[169] "Herbert Hoover Dies; 31st President was 90," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 21 October 1964.
[170] Dale. C. Mayer, "A Quick Review of a Busy Life," in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. ix. Helen B. Pryor, *Lou Henry Hoover: Gallant First Lady* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1969), pp. 7, 14.
[171] Pryor, p. 4.
[172] Jan Beran, "Lou Henry Hoover and Women's Sports," in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. 50.

> industry, frugality, kindness, and compassion. Lou Henry Hoover was self-confident, adventuresome, practical, and independent - one who could do many things well and often simultaneously. She was a person who set her own agenda, an individual whose character and personality in adult life reflected leadership traits already evident in her childhood and adolescence.[173]

Lou Henry graduated from San Jose Normal School in 1893. She had probably enrolled in the school to become a teacher, but upon graduation went to work at a bank instead. The following year she became a substitute teacher in Monterey. Shortly thereafter she heard a geology lecture given by John Casper Branner and enrolled in the geology department of Stanford University in the fall of 1894. There she met Herbert Hoover to whom she was engaged in 1898. Lou Henry had departed from the usual female pursuit of an English degree and in 1898 became the first female to graduate from Stanford University with a degree in geology.[174]

Upon graduation Lou Henry returned to Monterey again to substitute teach. While there, she helped her mother establish the Pacific Grove Chapter of the American Red Cross in 1898. She soon became the secretary-treasurer of the Monterey Chapter.[175]

Lou Henry married Herbert Hoover in a civil ceremony at her parents' Monterey home on 10 February 1899 and the journey to China served as their honeymoon. She then accompanied Hoover on his travels around the world with Bewick-Moreing and later as a "doctor of sick mines." The Hoovers' first child, Herbert Hoover Jr., was born in London on 4 August 1903. Their second child, Allan Hoover, was also born in London on 17 July 1907. Within weeks of birth, each boy was indoctrinated into the Hoovers' peregrinations by traveling to Australia and Burma respectively.[176]

From 1907 to 1912, while not tending to children and mines, the Hoovers worked jointly to translate from Latin a sixteenth-century mining and metallurgy textbook, Georgious Agricola's *De Re Metallica*. The combination of Herbert Hoover's knowledge of mining and Lou Henry Hoover's knowledge of Latin allowed them to successfully complete the project. The Hoovers privately printed 3,000 copies of the 598-page translation and sold them for one-fifth of their actual cost. The Mining and Metallurgical Society of America awarded them a gold medal in 1914 for their efforts.[177]

Due to their transient lifestyle, Lou Henry Hoover set up many different households and at times commuted between the homes of her husband and her children. The Hoovers' first home base was a Hyde Park flat in London in 1901. In 1908, they found a larger London home called "Red House" near Kensington Gardens. In the mid-1910s, Lou Henry Hoover and the boys moved to Palo Alto, California, so that they could attend American schools. Hoover remained in London thus requiring family members to shuttle back and forth to visit. By the early 1920s the Hoovers had homes in London (Red House, purchased 1908), Palo Alto, California (623 Mirada Drive, construction

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[173] Rosemary F. Carroll, "Lou Henry Hoover: The Emergence of a Leader, 1874-1916," in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. 14.

[174] Carroll, in Mayer, *Busy Life*, pp. 17-18. Pryor, pp. 29, 21. Rebecca Christian, "'Don't Forget Joy!': Lou Henry Hoover and the Girl Scouts," in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. 36.

[175] Pryor, p. 30. Carroll, in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. 26. Mayer "Introduction: A Quick Review of a Busy Life," in *Busy Life*, p. ix.

[176] Pryor, pp. 68, 71.

[177] Carroll, in Mayer, *Busy Life*, pp. 24-25. Mayer, "Quick Review," in *Busy Life*, p. x.

started 1919), and Washington, DC (2300 S Street, purchased 1920). While the boys were educated in all three locations, they spent most of their time in California schools.[178]

Like Herbert Hoover, Lou Henry Hoover was a firm believer in voluntarism. She did her share by participating in women's organizations. At the outbreak of World War I, the Hoovers were in London. While Herbert Hoover led the American Citizens' Relief Committee, Lou Henry Hoover led the Society of American Women in London. She had been elected vice president of the organization in 1910 and assumed the presidency in 1914. Through this Society she organized canteens in London railway stations, maintained an American Women's War Hospital, operated six Red Cross ambulances, and supplied economic relief and jobs for British women in need.[179]

In the United States Lou Henry Hoover became involved with the recently founded Girl Scouts of America. Lou Henry Hoover joined the leadership ranks in 1917 and remained involved until her 1944 death. She served as acting commissioner, troop leader, council member in Palo Alto, chairman of the board of directors, national president, and honorary vice president.[180] Hoover's troop was called "Troop 8." As described by a former member:

> Troop 8 . . . was made up of fifteen- to eighteen-year-old girls . . . . [in text] who were members of other troops but worked with Mrs. Hoover as a group to be called upon for participation in civic demonstrations, parades, international conferences, and so forth. We served at international Scout luncheons, demonstrated Scouting to the public and perhaps were the first Senior Service troop.[181]

In addition to a service organization, Hoover saw the Girl Scouts as a forum for sharing her views on women. She told the 1926 Girl Scout Convention:

> I believe that even after marriage it is possible for a woman to have a career.' When asked what she thought of the woman who spends all her time taking care of her home, she replied, 'I think she is lazy. The modern home is so small there is little work to do. The baby? It isn't a baby for long. There is no reason why a girl should get rusty in her profession during the five or six years she is caring for a small child.[182]

Perhaps she felt that because she "had it all," others could too.

Based on her avid interest in sports and the outdoors, Lou Henry Hoover was invited to be the vice president of the Women's Division of the National American Amateur Federation (NAAF). She held this position until 1928, but remained involved with the organization until 1940.[183]

Lou Henry Hoover also spent time helping Herbert Hoover with his humanitarian efforts. During World War I, she raised money for Hoover's CRB. Although she

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[178] Pryor, pp. 60, 76, 80. Smith et al, *Guide to Exhibit Galleries*, pp. 21-22.
[179] Carroll, in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. 29. Pryor, p. 98.
[180] Christian, in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. 38.
[181] McMullin, "Girl Scouts," p. [4].
[182] Pryor, p. 144.
[183] Beran, in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. 49.

disliked public speaking, she traveled through the United States telling Americans about the plight of Belgium. She was able to raise $1,000,000 in the San Francisco Bay region alone. When Hoover became food administrator in 1919, Lou Henry Hoover became a spokesperson for the conservation of food.

> Lou Hoover did her best to sell the idea of food conservation to other women. She left no stone unturned to involve everyone concerned with food in the movement. She helped to enlist the housewives, public eating places, wholesalers, and retailers, to become card-carrying members of the Food Administration.[184]

In addition to public speaking, Lou Henry Hoover also took to the air waves. She advocated Hoover's conservative views and a positive outlook in the face of crisis during the Depression. Because Hoover's views coincided with her own she upheld

> the president's position that volunteerism and individual initiative, rather than government relief programs, were preferable responses to the economic distress. Her activism on behalf of this conservative position has not commended itself to historians of the institution of the first lady.[185]

At the behest of secretary of agriculture Arthur Hyde, Lou Henry Hoover made a radio broadcast to 4-H members encouraging young people to set a positive example during the Depression. She broadcasted from Rapidan Camp on 22 June 1929.[186]

> She urged them [4-H members] to be helpful to their neighbors in unfortunate circumstances and to learn how to do without things cheerfully, instead of submitting to an aimless day-to-day fretful worry. She suggested that they make use of the materials at hand in the United States, and as an example directed their attention to the active campaign of research and promotion which was endeavoring to discover new uses for American cotton.[187]

Lou Henry Hoover's favorite vehicle for volunteer action was the Girl Scouts. She felt that young women could play a major role in the relief of the poor and unemployed during the Depression. Unfortunately, like many of her husband's programs, "the distress that the American people confronted in 1931 and 1932 was far too great for the meager resources of the Girl Scouts, for all their dedication."[188]

In addition to mobilizing the Girl Scouts, Lou Henry Hoover also tried to fulfill the requests she received as First Lady through local welfare and service organizations such as the American Red Cross, Parent Teachers Association, General Federation of Women's Clubs, and the American Friends Service Committee. If these avenues did not yield a solution, she sometimes provided anonymous bequests from her own pocket.[189]

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[184] Pryor, pp. 93-94, 107.
[185] Lewis L. Gould, "A Neglected First Lady: A Reappraisal," in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. 66.
[186] Beran, in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. 65.
[187] Pryor, pp. 195-196.
[188] Gould, in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. 76.
[189] Beran, in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. 70.

When not involved in the community or enjoying the outdoors, Lou Henry Hoover could be found indoors knitting, reading, or typing correspondence. She began knitting for soldiers during World War I and then continued for her pleasure and for the benefit of her grandchildren. She is described as knitting "constantly" and, according to photographs and personal remembrances, often knit while at Rapidan Camp. She often typed her own letters on a typewriter she called "Miss Corona."[190]

One possible non-correspondence project that may have passed through Miss Corona, is Lou Henry Hoover's research into the history and historic furnishings of the White House. With the help of friend and aide Dare Stark McMullin, Hoover embarked on the first inventory and research of the White House furnishings. In particular, she was interested in determining which old objects were purchased new for the house versus those that were bought much later as antiques.

A triumphant moment in this project was when Lou Henry Hoover discovered furniture in the Monroe law office in Fredricksburg, Virginia, that was originally purchased by Monroe for the White House. She had these objects reproduced and installed them in the Rose Parlor, or what came to be called the Monroe Room.[191]

Lou Henry Hoover's handling of new furnishings for the White House bears a resemblance to her treatment of Rapidan Camp. Her goal in purchasing new furniture was to make the White House more comfortable while not "destroying its authentic character." In this process she bought fifty comfortable chairs for use during movies or conferences in the east end of the long second-story hall. She also bought bookcases to line this hall. If it were not for the large, ornate arched window, the west end of the hall could be mistaken for a room at the camp because it is filled with wicker chairs, a large sisal rug, and live plants.[192]

When Hoover left office, Lou Henry Hoover continued her involvement with service and non-profit organizations. She continued with the Girl Scouts and also took leadership roles in Pro America, the California League of Women Voters, Republican Women's Activities, and the Salvation Army. She also continued to support Herbert Hoover's causes such as World War II relief for Belgium and France.[193]

Also with her husband in mind, Lou Henry Hoover worked with son Allan to purchase Herbert Hoover's birthplace in West Branch, Iowa. For $4,500 she bought the small structure which had been converted into a summer kitchen by a local family. The restored birthplace cottage was the first portion of what later became the Herbert Hoover National Historic Site.[194]

In the early 1940s, Lou Henry Hoover was advised by her physician to decrease her activities due to fatigue. Nevertheless, on 7 January 1944 after attending an afternoon concert she returned to the Waldorf Astoria where she died of a heart attack. She was buried in Alta Mesa, California until the 1964 death of Herbert Hoover. At that time both

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[190] Pryor, pp. 185, 173. Christine Vest Witcofski to friend, ca. 1965. Smith et al, *Guide to Exhibit Galleries*, p. 22.

[191] Pryor, p. 168. Seale, in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. 94.

[192] Pryor, pp. 167-168. Photograph, 1930-1932, Collection XX205 10AV "B," McMullin, D.S., Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, Stanford, CA.

[193] Mayer, "Quick Review," in *Busy Life*, p. xi.

[194] Richard Norton Smith, "Carrying On: Lou Henry Hoover as a Former First Lady," in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. 120.

were buried in West Branch, Iowa.[195] Will Irwin wrote an obituary for Lou Henry Hoover in the Girl Scout magazine, *The American Girl*:

> She kept up her scholarly interests all her life. When she broke into the conversation whether it was on the mining business or American politics or Chinese history, she knew what she was talking about. Tolerant of human frailties, she did not tolerate them in herself. She was almost too kind. The people whom she helped over the hard places with money, with sympathy, and with counsel must have run into the thousands. Never, even in the darkest days of the depression which hung over the White House like a cloud, did she give any sign of waning courage. She died the youngest woman of her years I have ever known.[196]

Herbert Hoover Jr.

Herbert Hoover Jr. was born to Lou Henry and Herbert Hoover on 4 August 1903. When he was five weeks old he joined his parent's peripatetic lifestyle by traveling with them to Australia. During the 1910s, Lou Henry Hoover and her sons lived part of the time in Palo Alto, California, and Washington, DC, so that the boys could attend school in America. Herbert Jr. went to school at the Stanford Campus School in California, a Friends school in the Washington area, and then to Palo Alto High School.[197]

During the summer of 1919 he worked for his Uncle Theodore Hoover at his California ranch. In 1921, Herbert Jr. began his studies at Stanford University. Because his parents were living in Washington, DC, he spent at least part of his college years living in the Stanford dormitories. He announced his engagement to fellow Stanford student Margaret "Peggy" Watson in 1924. The following year Herbert Jr. graduated from Stanford, married Peggy Watson, and moved to Massachusetts to study business administration at Harvard University. Herbert Jr. and Peggy had three children, Peggy Ann, Peter, and Joan.[198]

By 1930, Herbert Hoover Jr. was working for Western Air Express.[199] That summer he was accused of using his relationship to the government to increase his company's air mail contracts. At that time he submitted his resignation, but it was refused. The story resurfaced again a few years later as part of a Senate inquiry attempting to implicate Herbert Hoover or his family in crimes.[200]

The Herbert Hoover Jr. family visited Rapidan Camp in early August of 1929, in late August of 1930, and mid-September 1930.[201] While there, they participated in camp

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[195] Pryor, pp. 245, 251.
[196] Pryor, p. 248.
[197] Pryor, pp. 68, 80, 106, 115.
[198] Pryor, pp. 116, 139, 141,142, 187.
[199] "Herbert Hoover Jr. has Chest Infection," *Madison County Eagle*, 26 September 1930.
[200] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, p. 189.
[201] Guest Lists August 1929 – November 1929, "Rapidan Guest Lists, 1929," Box 190, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. Guest Lists April – October 1930, "Rapidan Guest Lists, 1930," Box 190, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

activities with other guests including horseback riding, horseshoe pitching, hiking, fishing, and piecing together puzzles.[202] In fact, there is an extant home movie showing young Peggy Ann fishing with her grandfather Herbert Hoover.[203] William Starr Myers, a guest of the Hoovers on two occasions when Herbert Hoover Jr. was at the camp, described him in his diary: "Herbert Hoover, Jr., here, an exceptionally good-looking, attractive man, with lovely brown eyes like his mother, but quite deaf, had an accousticon on the table at dinner. Is a 'wizard' at picture puzzles."[204]

In September of 1930, Admiral Joel T. Boone diagnosed Herbert Hoover Jr. with a mild case of tuberculosis and a digestive complaint. His condition was attributed to his constant work and run-down condition.[205] He took a leave of absence from his job and spent the next several weeks until 21 October convalescing at Rapidan Camp. Boone later wrote of the convalescence:

> Herbert spent almost two months at the President's camp at the Rapidan, confined to bed in a tent [Five Tents] on higher ground than where his father's cottage and guest cottages were so there would be a certain element of isolation, and he could have a view from his tent to gaze upon lovely vegetation, sizable mountains, and beautiful skies. . . . The President and Mrs. Hoover could go and see Herbert quite frequently for most of the weekends that he was there. Mrs. Hoover spent considerable time in President and Mrs. Hoover's cottage on the Rapidan while Herbert was under treatment there in the Shenandoah Mountains. I, as the physician, could go back and forth readily by automobile to visit the patient. I kept in very close touch by telephone with his male nurse and his wife, and was able to keep the President constantly informed how Herbert was doing. All these factors contributed to the President's peace of mind as far as possible when he had the concern for his sick son, whom he loved deeply. Had the President been far removed from his son in the early period of his illness, it is understandable that there could have been such mental disturbance as to produce an interference with the President's conduct of the affairs of state.[206]

Helen Hartley Greene White later recalled the Hoovers' decision to announce that Herbert Hoover Jr. had tuberculosis:

> Up until this time, tuberculosis was a taboo subject -- most people did not admit to having T.B. Between Dr. Boone, who was the White House physician at the time, and because of President and Mrs. Hoover's knowledge of the importance of this diagnosis and what truthful information could mean to the public as a whole, they came to the brave, rather heartbreaking, conclusion that

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[202] "Friends Surprise Hoover with Party," *Washington Star*, 11 August 1929. "Lindbergh's Horseshoe Champion of Rapidan; Hoover Sees Him Defeat Others at Camp," *New York Times*, 13 August 1929.

[203] "Herbert Hoover and Peggy Ann Hoover Fishing at Rapidan Camp," ca. 1931, Film MP-66-146, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[204] Myers, Diary, 29 August 1930, p. 680.

[205] "President's Son Will Leave Rapidan Camp for Asheville," *Page News & Courier*, 21 October 1930.

[206] Boone, "Autobiography," p. xxii-477.

they should publicize the fact and give good publicity to the diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis. They knew that it was a disease that struck anybody anywhere, yet was curable if diagnosed early and treated properly.

When the announcement was made from the White House that a diagnosis of tuberculosis had been made, it created quite a stir. But it was good, because finally the whole problem could be discussed out in the open. Herbert was sent to Asheville, North Carolina, with his wife Margaret, and was put under adequate treatment. Publicity was given to this whole question, and his progress to eventual good health. Much credit should be given to President and Mrs. Hoover for their courage in making the decision they did.[207]

After the camp was closed for the year in 1930, Herbert Jr. went to a bungalow overlooking Asheville, North Carolina, for the winter. While he recovered in North Carolina, Peggy and their three children stayed at the White House in order to be close to him.[208]

When Myers again saw Herbert Hoover Jr. in 1931, he noted his improved health: "The President evidently much worried about the health of Herbert Jr., who spent last winter in Ashantee, & who has now arrested case of tuberculosis. Looks so much better than last year." He also remarked, "HIS WIFE, 'Peggy' Hoover is a dear."[209]

By the mid-1930s, Herbert Hoover Jr. was teaching business economics and aeronautics at the California Institute of Technology.[210] Herbert Hoover Jr. passed away prior to 1971.[211]

Allan Hoover

Allan Hoover was born to Lou Henry and Herbert Hoover on 17 July 1907. He was named after Hoover's Uncle Allan Hoover. He traveled around the world with his family starting at the age of five weeks when he went to Burma. During the 1910s Allan lived variously in Palo Alto, California; Washington, DC; and London with his mother and brother. While in California he attended the Stanford Campus School, in Washington he attended an area Friends school, and in London he attended a private school. In 1921, while his parents were in Washington, DC, Allan lived with his Uncle Theodore so that he could attend Palo Alto High School. In 1924 he began his studies at Stanford University and then later pursued a graduate degree in business administration at Harvard University.[212]

Allan Hoover visited Rapidan Camp several times each year. In 1929, he paid social visits and convalesced there for three weeks in August for a stomach disorder. In 1930, he went to the camp three times taking breaks from his studies at Harvard and a

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[207] Helen Hartley White, Transcription of oral history interview, 27 October 1966, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA, p. 23.

[208] "Leave for Asheville," 21 October 1930.

[209] Myers, Diary, 24 May 1931, p. 698.

[210] Pryor, p. 223.

[211] Darwin Lambert to Chuck Anibal, 26 August 1988, "Hoover," Darwin Lambert Papers, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[212] Pryor, pp. 71, 77, 79-80, 102, 106, 129, 140, 173.

summer position in a New Jersey radiator factory. In 1931, he spent three June weekends at the camp.[213]

By the mid-1930s, Allan Hoover was working at a bank in Los Angeles. Like his father and brother, Allan Hoover was accused of financial misdeeds during the Roosevelt administration, this time concerning the Agricultural Adjustment Act. He did own a few shares in a company receiving money under the act, but he was only entitled to two dollars in profit, not the alleged $20,000. Like the allegations against the other Hoovers, this came to nothing but added to the edginess of those in the Hoover circle.[214]

In 1935 Allan assisted Lou Henry Hoover in buying Herbert Hoover's birthplace cottage in West Branch, Iowa. In March of 1937 he married Margaret "Coby" Coberly and went to live on a small ranch.[215] They had three children; Alan Henry on 15 November 1938, Andrew on 9 November 1940, and Lou Henry on 9 January 1943.

Allan and Margaret Hoover gave an oral historical interview in 1986, but Allan has since passed away. His papers, now at the Hoover Library, were opened in the mid-1990s, and are still being processed.[216]

Admiral Joel T. Boone

Joel T. Boone was the White House physician during the administrations of Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover. He is the only person credited with being at Rapidan Camp on every occasion that Herbert Hoover was there. Boone shared the cabin named "The Creel" with Hoover's secretary Lawrence Richey.[217]

Joel Thompson Boone was born in St. Claire, Pennsylvania, in 1890. He studied at Mercersburg Academy and Hahnemann Medical College in Philadelphia. Upon entering the Navy, Boone went to the Naval Hospital in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. He was later stationed at the Naval Medical School in Washington, DC, and the Naval Training Station in Norfolk, Virginia. He was assigned to the Marines in 1915 and saw action during World War I.[218]

He then served as White House physician during three presidential administrations. During Hoover's term, he took an active part in Rapidan Camp. He was one of the party of six that first visited the headwaters of the Rapidan. For safety reasons, Boone was always at the camp when the president was there. He was involved with the health of all members of the Hoover family. When Lou Henry Hoover injured her back during a fall, he managed her care at the White House and Rapidan Camp. He diagnosed

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[213] Guest Lists 1929. Guest Lists 1930. Guest Lists 1931.

[214] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, p. 189.

[215] Lou Henry Hoover to Gertrude Bowman, 7 April 1937, "Rapidan Camp, General 1928-1938 & Undated," Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[216] Allan and Margaret C. Hoover, Transcription of oral history interview, 9-10 August 1986, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. Dale C. Mayer, "The Documentary Legacy," in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. 130.

[217] Joel T. Boone to Philippi Harding Butler, 8 November 1962, "Rapidan Camp, Restoration,1962-1963," Box 77, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[218] Jean R. Hailey, "Adm. Joel Boone, Physician to 3 Presidents, Dies," *Washington Post*, 4 April 1974.

Herbert Hoover Jr.'s tuberculosis and managed his care at Rapidan Camp and Asheville, North Carolina.[219]

To Boone's credit, Herbert Hoover never spent a day in bed due to illness during his term. Boone tried to ensure the president's continued health by encouraging him to exercise and relax. Boone initiated Hoover's "medicine ball cabinet" which met each morning (except Sundays) at the White House to play "Bull in the Ring."[220] Hoover's participation in the medicine ball cabinet successfully increased the president's daily exercise level and reduced his weight (see "Camp Activities: Ball Games").

In addition to daily exercise, Boone felt Rapidan Camp was an important contributor to Hoover's health because it helped him relax and reduce stress. According to Boone:

> The President could recuperate from fatigue faster than anybody I have ever known. As he had tremendous powers of concentration, he had tremendous powers of relaxation once he surrendered himself to taking periods to relax and rest mentally and physically.[221]

He said of Rapidan Camp, "It was one of the most relaxing places that I have ever known."[222]

While at the camp Boone, Richey, and, on occasion, Mrs. Helen Boone engaged guests in activities. Boone introduced horseshoe pitching to the camp. Boone and Richey included people in activities such as horseshoes, Ping-Pong, and puzzles. According to Helen Hartley Greene White, the Boones "were adept at dinner banter" concerning the workings of Washington among other topics.[223]

Boone's later career involved time in World War II. In 1948 he became executive secretary of defense and then served as chief of the Joint Plans and Action Division, Office of Medical Services, Department of Defense. In 1950, he was reassigned as general inspector, Medical Department Activities. He retired from the Navy in late 1950 and became medical director of the Veterans' Administration. He retired completely in 1955 due to ill health.[224]

In the 1960s, Boone assisted Shenandoah National Park with the refurnishing of Rapidan Camp. He was instrumental in contacting others with knowledge of or objects from the camp. In the mid-1960s, he also dictated and/or wrote his reminiscences regarding the Hoover administration. Boone died in April 1974 at the age of eighty-four.[225]

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[219] Boone, "Autobiography," pp. xxii-64 to xxii-66. Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 19. "Mrs. Hoover is to Return Soon to Camp in Va," *Page News & Courier*, 11 July 1930. "Leave for Asheville," 21 October 1930.

[220] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 102. Boone, "Autobiography," n.p, between xxii-117 and xxii-139. "Hoover Carries Rocks in Helping to Build Camp Swimming Pool," *Washington Star*, 21 July 1929.

[221] Boone, "Autobiography," p. xxii-162.

[222] Boone, "Autobiography," p. xxii-139.

[223] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 43. Greene, "Who? Me?," p. 34.

[224] "Physician to 3 Presidents," 4 April 1974.

[225] "Physician to 3 Presidents," 4 April 1974.

Lawrence Richey

Lawrence Richey was a long-time associate who worked with Herbert Hoover when he was food administrator, secretary of commerce, and president. They remained close until Richey's 1959 death.[226]

As secretary to the president, Richey was in charge of Hoover's personal affairs, correspondence, and office management.[227] Likely in connection with Hoover's personal affairs, Richey took responsibility for coordinating the details of Rapidan Camp. He dealt with William E. Carson during the selection, purchase, road building, and trout stocking phases of the project. He also coordinated with James Y. Rippin during the design phase of the camp.

Once the camp was built, Richey was a frequent visitor. In 1929, he visited the camp four times, once with his wife, in four months. In 1930 and 1931, Richey was at the camp for fifteen weekends of the season. Mrs. Richey visited the camp only one of these many times in May 1931. Like Boone, Richey was a staff member at the camp. In his autobiography, Boone mentions spending a lot of time with Richey at Rapidan Camp. Like Boone, Richey was expected to engage guests in activities like horseshoes and puzzles. At camp and in Washington Richey was also a member of Hoover's medicine ball cabinet.[228]

After Hoover's presidential term ended, Richey was among those who arranged for the disposition of the Hoovers' belongings at the camp. In 1937, when the Hoovers were moving back to California, Richey was instrumental in the retrieval from storage and sending of items to California. Ironically, in 1949, Richey was on a committee of "Washington civic leaders" tasked with finding original objects and returning them to the camp in an effort to present the restored "Brown House" as a memorial to the Hoovers. This project did not result in the planned restoration. In 1954, Richey accompanied Hoover on a trip to Rapidan Camp during the occupation of the National Capital Area Council, Boy Scouts of America.[229]

In 1959, the National Park Service contacted Hoover regarding the disposition of the decaying camp buildings. Hoover referred Park Service officials to Richey and Boone. This group decided that all buildings except "The Brown House," "The Prime Minister," and "The Creel" would be demolished. Boone and Richey also wanted to save "Town Hall" and the "Mess Hall" but the buildings were thought too badly deteriorated to be saved.[230]

Unfortunately, Richey died before the restoration was completed. He was a guest of Hoover's in New York City for the 1959 Christmas and New Year holidays. He attended a reception given by Hoover and then died on a plane flying from New York to

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[226] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 2.

[227] Fausold, p. 41.

[228] Guest Lists 1929. Guest Lists 1930. Guest Lists 1931. Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 43.

[229] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 142. Lou Henry Hoover to Gertrude Bowman, 7 April 1937. "Shrine to Hoovers Rises at Rapidan," *New York Times*, 5 June 1949. Carl Irving, "Most of Hoover's Rapidan Camp to be Torn Down by Park Service," *Washington Post*, 11 May 1959.

[230] R. Taylor Hoskins to M.E. Beckman, 15 May 1959, Folder 15, Catalogue # 13004, Resource Management Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA. Joel T. Boone to Philippi Harding Butler, 31 May 1963, "Rapidan Camp, Restoration,1962-1963," Box 77, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

Washington, DC. Boone wrote of Richey to Ray Schaffner of the National Park Service ten years later:

> He was a most valuable associate of Mr. Hoover for a long period of years and intensely devoted to whom he referred with respect and affectionately as 'the Chief.' Mr. Hoover reposed absolute confidence in Larry Richey. They had a long career together and each seemed to know exactly how to meet many of the problems which were incumbent on the President to solve and act upon. In lots of ways Larry Richey was a superb 'man Friday.'[231]

Major Earl C. Long

Major Earl C. Long was intimately involved with the Rapidan Camp project from start to finish. He participated in the selection of the site, the construction of the buildings, the day-to-day running of the camp, and the disposition of property at the end of Hoover's term.

Earl Cecil Long was born in Clayton, New Jersey in 1883. From 1901 to 1905 he studied engineering at the University of California. By 1909 he was a second lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps. He moved up the ranks and became a major, the rank he held during the Rapidan Camp period, in 1924.[232]

Long was a member of the Hoover party who initially visited the site at the headwaters of the Rapidan. In May 1929, Long was among the commanding officers assigned to manage the Marines at Rapidan Camp. He was initially in charge of construction and was to be superseded by a Lieutenant Bell, then in charge of the Marines guarding the site, who would run the camp once the buildings were complete. This change never occurred and Long continued to run the completed camp. Long's day-to-day concerns included the management of the Marines under his command; maintenance of the buildings, water supply, sewage system, roads, and trails; and procurement of materials and provisions for the camp.[233] In a 1935 recommendation to the secretary of the Navy, Hoover described Long's role:

> Major Long's duties at Rapidan were varied. He was instrumental in locating, laying-out, and constructing the Camp. He had entire charge of the Camp after completion and his management left nothing to be desired. His courtesy, tact, and efficiency in contact with the many guests who visited the Camp added greatly to the pleasure of all concerned and was a credit to the Marine Corps.[234]

Although in charge of the Marines, Long occupied a position much like staff members Boone and Richey. Long, and occasionally Mrs. Long, occupied a cabin in the

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[231] Joel T. Boone to Ray Schaffner, 17 July 1969, "Hoover," Darwin Lambert Papers, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[232] "Colonel Earl C. Long, U.S. Marine Corps." Unpublished biography, n.d., Marine Corps History and Museums Division, Headquarters United States Marine Corps, Quantico, VA.

[233] Boone, "Autobiography," n.p., insert after xxii-183e. "President Hoover is a Week-Ender at His Rapidan Retreat," *Madison County Eagle*, 24 May 1929. Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 28.

[234] Herbert Hoover[?] to secretary of Navy, 1 March 1935, Folder 14, Catalogue # 13004, Resource Management Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

president's camp, ate meals with guests, and participated in recreational activities with guests. Long appears in photographs of a small party of friends and staff members at "The Brown House" (see ill. 20). On at least one occasion when Lou Henry Hoover was receiving women newspaper writers at the camp, Mrs. Long, among others, aided her with the reception.[235]

At the end of Hoover's term, Long assisted with the disposition of the camp's furnishings ensuring that the Hoover's personal belongings were removed while those belonging to the Navy remained. Long was relieved of his duties at Rapidan Camp when Roosevelt came into office. Long continued to move up the ranks in the Marine Corps and served in World War II. He retired as a major general and moved to Menlo Park, California in 1946.[236]

In the early 1960s, Boone contacted Long seeking information related to the construction and running of the camp for the National Park Service restoration project. Long supplied the National Park Service with detailed guest lists for every weekend the Hoovers were at camp and some documents related to the camp including his *Detachment Regulations and Orders for the Guard, Marine Detachment, Camp Rapidan.*[237]

Support Staff

- Lou Henry Hoover's Secretaries

Lou Henry Hoover had a staff of two, if not three, secretaries at all times. These women often spent time working and staying at Rapidan Camp. They slept and worked in "The Slums" which contained four bedrooms and an office. They occasionally left the camp to make room for guests, usually riding back to Washington in the cars that brought the guests.[238]

The secretaries' roles at the camp were similar to those of Boone, Richey, and Long. They were staff members who stayed in the president's camp, ate occasional meals with guests, and participated in recreational activities with guests. According to Greene, when the secretaries were too busy to eat in "Town Hall," "trays were brought to [their] desks when [they] were swamped with details." They were expected to play hostesses when Lou Henry Hoover was unable to do so. In this capacity, they went horseback riding with guests and escorted guests to the Hoover school. In their spare time, all of the secretaries enjoyed playing Ping-Pong in "Town Hall."[239]

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[235] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 31. "Women Writers Visit Rapidan but Miss the Diplomatic Log." Newspaper article, Unknown newspaper, 13 July 1930, "Rapidan Camp, General, 1928-1938 & Undated," Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[236] Frederic Bates Butler to Taylor Hoskins, 13 August 1963, "Camp Rapidan Restoration,1962-1963," Box 77, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. "Long Biography," Marine Corps History and Museums Division.

[237] Taylor Hoskins to Frederic Bates Butler, 4 September 1963, "Camp Rapidan Restoration,1962-1963," Box 77, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[238] Greene, "Who? Me?," pp. 29, 31.

[239] Greene, "Who? Me?," pp. 32-33, 30. Myers, Diary, 29 August 1930, p. 680.

While at the office the secretaries attended to a variety of clerical tasks. In the mornings, the Marines brought the mail which had been air-dropped at the Marine camp. This the secretaries sorted into personal items for the Hoovers and correspondence that they could answer themselves with form letters. They took dictation from Lou Henry Hoover and then typed letters for her. They also made numerous telephone calls to the White House. A good portion of their time at camp was spent making arrangements for camp guests including the coordination of cars and rooms with guest arrivals and departures. While the guests were in residence, the secretaries checked the rooms in the morning and evening:

> Each room was freshened in the morning, checked by us to see that all was in order; that there were fresh native flowers and some fruit and current books on the night stands. In the evening we again checked that the beds were turned down and that a pitcher of ice-water was in place by each bed; that the birch-bark lamps were turned on.[240]

From existing records and correspondence it appears that five different women acted as secretaries to Lou Henry Hoover during her husband's presidential term.

- Philippi Harding Butler

Philippi Harding was born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1899. Like the Hoovers, she attended Stanford University, graduating in 1920. She was Lou Henry Hoover's secretary from 1920 to 1924. In 1924 she moved to China upon marrying Army Lieutenant Frederic Bates Butler. The Butlers had three children.[241]

The Butlers moved back to Washington, DC in the early 1930s when Lieutenant Butler became assistant to Colonel Ulysses S. Grant III in charge of buildings and grounds. When Ruth Fesler was leaving Lou Henry Hoover's employ to marry in 1931, Butler again became her secretary. Frederic Butler was involved with the storage of the Hoovers' possessions when they were removed from Rapidan Camp and stored in Washington, DC. Philippi Butler was heavily involved with the disposition and shipping of these objects when the Hoovers were moving to California in 1937.[242]

Butler later assumed the task of processing Lou Henry Hoover's personal papers. Boone contacted Butler in the early 1960s asking for help and information for the National Park Service restoration of Rapidan Camp. She was able to supply written information, her memories, and two original framed maps that hung in the camp buildings.[243] In 1967, she provided an oral history interview regarding her memories of her time with the Hoovers.

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[240] Greene, "Who? Me?," pp. 31-33.

[241] Philippi Harding Butler, Transcript of oral history interview, 12 September 1967, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA, preface. "Mrs. Hoover's Aid Will Marry in May," *Madison County Eagle*, 10 April 1931.

[242] "Aid Will Marry," 10 April 1931. Frederic Bates Butler to Taylor Hoskins, 13 August 1963. Lou Henry Hoover to Gertrude Bowman, 4 March 1937, Gertrude Bowman Papers, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[243] Philippi Harding Butler to Joel T. Boone, 14 November 1962, "Rapidan Camp, Restoration,1962-1963," Box 77, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential

- Mildred Hall Campbell

There is little information available regarding Mildred Hall, later Mildred Hall Campbell. She was one of Lou Henry Hoover's secretaries from at least February 1929, if not earlier. During the conceptual and construction stages of the camp, Hall handled a lot of the correspondence with James Rippin. It also appears that she may have managed Lou Henry Hoover's personal accounts because Hall wrote letters regarding the camp to retailers such as Wanamaker's, manufacturers such as Rustic Hickory, architect James Rippin, and a friend named Mrs. Milbank who had made purchases for Lou Henry Hoover.[244]

In the early 1960s, Boone consulted Campbell regarding the restoration of Rapidan Camp. He wrote to Butler that Campbell had some ideas for the restoration, but she does not seem to have been very deeply involved with the project.[245] She wrote her memoirs of the Hoover era in 1971.

- Ruth Fesler Lipman

Ruth Fesler was born in Minnesota in 1896. Like the Hoovers, she attended Stanford University, graduating in 1918. She pursued graduate studies at George Washington University from 1926 to 1927. She entered Lou Henry Hoover's employ in January of 1928 and then accompanied the Hoovers on a trip to South America they took between Hoover's election and inauguration.[246]

Fesler attempted to help Lou Henry Hoover furnish Rapidan Camp, but seems to have had little success because the Chinese lanterns she purchased were too large for the cabins and the gingham curtains she found were not the right color. On another occasion she bought canteens and pack bags for the camp.[247]

Library, West Branch, IA. Philippi Harding Butler to Taylor Hoskins, 12 June 1963, "Rapidan Camp, Restoration,1962-1963," Box 77, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[244] Mildred Hall on behalf of Lou Henry Hoover to James Y. Rippin, 22 February 1929, "Correspondence James Y. Rippin," Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. Mildred Hall to David F. Cox of Wanamaker's, 29 August 1930, "Rapidan Camp Furniture and Equipment, 1929-1931," Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. Rustic Hickory Furniture Company to Mildred Hall, 27 September 1929, "Rapidan Camp Furniture and Equipment, 1929-1931," Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. Mildred Hall to Mrs. Milbank, 31 August 1929, "Rapidan Camp, Misc., 1929," Box 193, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[245] Joel T. Boone to Philippi Harding Butler, 18 December 1962, "Rapidan Camp, Restoration,1962-1963," Box 77, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[246] Ruth Fesler Lipman, Transcription of oral history interview, 26 September 1967, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA, preface. Joel T. Boone to Philippi Harding Butler, 13 February 1963, "Rapidan Camp, Restoration,1962-1963," Box 77, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[247] Lou Henry Hoover to Dare Stark McMullin, 15August 1929. D.W. Walford, Receipt, 30 September 1930, "Rapidan Camp Furniture and Equipment, 1929-1931," Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

Fesler served as Lou Henry Hoover's secretary until May of 1931 when she married Robert Lockwood Lipman. The Lipmans had two sons. After Lou Henry Hoover's 1944 death, Lipman assisted Philippi Harding Butler with processing her personal papers.[248] In 1967, she gave an oral history interview regarding her memories of her time with the Hoovers.

- Dare Stark McMullin

Dare Stark was born in Johannesburg, South Africa in 1896. She lived there until 1907 when her family moved to the United States. They first lived in Ohio, then Los Angeles, California, and then Palo Alto, California. She graduated from Palo Alto High School and went on to Stanford University. There she received from the English department an A.B. in 1917 and an M.A. in 1918. Her father, Herbert Stark, was a mining engineer and graduate of Stanford University. She was a long-time friend of Lou Henry Hoover's.[249]

Dare Stark lived with the Hoovers and worked for Lou Henry Hoover as a secretary for a short time in the early 1920s when Herbert Hoover was secretary of commerce. She went to California to marry Hays McMullin whom she divorced in 1930. The same year she returned to Washington to serve as Lou Henry Hoover's social secretary. She lived at the White House to the end of Hoover's presidential term.[250]

In addition to her duties as social secretary, McMullin also served as Lou Henry Hoover's chief research assistant in her White House research project.[251] This project included taking an inventory, assessing the objects (original objects versus recently purchased antiques), photographing the rooms, and writing a report on their findings. According to Seale,

> McMullin's research was excellent. Days spent in pantries and attics and in the records of the Officer in Charge of Public Buildings (there being as yet no National Archives) revealed a treasure trove. Every object was duly photographed and entered into the catalog, which remains today an indispensable research resource.[252]

Dare Stark McMullin also assisted Lou Henry Hoover with the furnishing of Rapidan Camp. After the unsatisfactory attempts made on her behalf by Ruth Fesler, it seems that Hoover brought in McMullin to set things straight. Prior to McMullin's arrival, Hoover lamented, "You [McMullin] really would put on your sunbonnet and come over to take charge of it [the camp]! It needs your touch on so many corners. - and flat places."[253] Butler and Lipman later recalled that McMullin was in charge of

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[248] Lipman, Oral History, preface. Philippi Harding Butler to Joel T. Boone, 14 November 1962.

[249] Dare Stark McMullin, Transcription of oral history interview, 11 September 1967, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA, p. 0. McMullin, "Girl Scouts," p. [7].

[250] McMullin, Oral History, p. 0. McMullin, "Girl Scouts," p. [7].

[251] McMullin, "Girl Scouts," p. [7].

[252] Seale, in Mayer, *Busy Life*, p. 92.

[253] Lou Henry Hoover to Dare Stark McMullin, 15 August 1929.

furnishings: "Dare she [Lipman] thinks had most to do with furnishings and such details."[254]

McMullin returned to California with the Hoovers and continued to work for them on the Stanford Campus. After Lou Henry Hoover's death, she wrote a tribute to her for the Girl Scouts called "Lou Henry Hoover and the Girl Scouts" and continued to do research for Herbert Hoover. Boone was disappointed that McMullin did not help with the early 1960s National Park Service restoration project.[255] She did, however, provide an oral history interview in 1967.

- Helen Hartley Greene White

Helen Hartley Greene was born to Professor Charles Wilson and Flora Rachael Hartley Greene. During the summer of 1930, she served as a temporary secretary for Lou Henry Hoover filling in during the vacations of permanent secretaries Ruth Fesler and Mildred Hall. In the 1940s she lived in the San Francisco area and was the occasional summer secretary for Herbert Hoover.[256]

According to her 1966 oral history interview and her 1980 memoir "Who? Me? A White House Secretary!," Greene was driven to Rapidan Camp on her first day of work. As detailed above, her account of her time at the camp illuminates the daily lives of all of Lou Henry Hoover's secretaries.

- Secret Service

As it is now, the Secret Service was a ubiquitous presence during the Hoover administration. Secret Service men accompanied the Hoovers every time they went to the camp including their initial trip to see the Rapidan site. En route to the camp, the Secret Service either drove or trailed the Hoovers in cars. While at the camp, according to Greene, "Two secret service guards were always in sight and not more than 15 to 20 yards away from the President and Mrs. Hoover at all times."[257] Besides protecting the Hoovers, one of the Secret Service's functions was to prevent the press from crossing the Rapidan River bridge at Criglersville, thus keeping them eight miles away. Extra Secret Service men were allocated for camp trips when guests such as British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald were visiting.[258]

While the Secret Service men slept at the Marine camp, they spent their waking hours trailing the Hoovers or in the "Duty Office" maintaining communication with the White House. According to Boone:

> all too frequently when we reached camp a Secret Service man would come out from the "box" and tell Richey to call the White House at once. In some periods there was one crisis after another, and sometimes the President would decide to turn right around and go back to Washington.[259]

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[254] Philippi Harding Butler to Joel T. Boone, 14 November 1962.
[255] McMullin, Oral History, p. "0." Joel T. Boone to Philippi Harding Butler, 13 February 1963.
[256] White, Oral History, preface.
[257] Greene, "Who? Me?," p. 28.
[258] "White House is Best News Source," 13 July 1929. Boone, "Autobiography," p. xxii-230.
[259] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 102.

In addition to protection and communication, the Secret Service at times also provided guests with assistance with their recreation. For example, Colonel Starling, the head of the Secret Service detachment at the camp, provided guest "Chick" McCracken with a riding habit and horse so that she could accompany Lou Henry Hoover on a ride.[260]

- Marines

Major Earl C. Long of the United States Marine Corps was involved with the Rapidan Camp project as early as the choosing of the site in early 1929. Marines started to arrive at the camp en masse in mid- to late-April 1929. At that time there were three officers commanding platoons: Lieutenant Bell was in charge of the guards and Major Long and Captain Philips were in charge of those doing construction and maintenance. The detachment numbered about five hundred. Aside from the guards, the Marines cleared brush, provided water service, erected tents and cabins, cut trails, exterminated snakes, and worked on the short span of road leading from the county road to the president's camp. While James Rippin designed the camp buildings, the Marines made their own arrangements for obtaining materials and constructing the buildings. The majority of the construction materials and the provisions for the Marine detachment came by truck from Quantico, Virginia.[261]

Some questioned the use of Marines and government materials for the construction of Rapidan Camp. For those involved in the project the dividing line was clear. Hoover owned the land on which the camp was built and any furnishings and possessions he purchased for it. Hoover also purchased the materials for the construction of the buildings. However, the camp buildings and any furniture built by the Marines belonged to the government. It was Hoover's intention to turn the camp over to the nascent Shenandoah National Park for the use of future presidents or the Park itself. The Marines as a rule did not work on Madison County roads.[262] The single exception to this policy was when

> in the summer of 1930 an engineer road regiment was employed for a few weeks in their annual road building exercise in resurfacing 2 or 3 miles of this road. It cost the Federal Government nothing as these men would have been occupied in road construction at some other point as part of their annual training.[263]

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[260] Sallie Lucille Lewis (Chick) McCracken, Transcription of oral history interview, 1 September 1970, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA, p. 5.

[261] "Marines are Arriving," 26 April 1929. "Hoover is a Week-Ender," 24 May 1929. Herbert Hoover to William E. Carson, 2 August 1929. "Hoover to Rid His Camp of Snakes and Moonshine," *Washington Herald*, 12 June 1929. Earl C. Long to Lawrence Richey, 30 July 1932, "Food/Agriculture from AG Department, Staff Levels of Marines," Box 191, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[262] Earl C. Long to Taylor Hoskins, 28 August 1963, Envelope 3, Resource Management Records, # 13004, Shenandoah National Park, VA. Earl C. Long to Lawrence Richey, 30 July 1932.

[263] Republican National Committee, "The Camp Hoover Built." Pamphlet, 1932, Box 190, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA, p. 5.

The Marines were stationed at a camp a short distance from the president's camp on what was known as the "Graves property."[264] It was not a part of Hoover's property holdings; it was leased from R.S. Graves expressly for the Marine camp.[265]

The Marine camp shelters were tents for the first few years. The only early wooden structures were the mess hall, commander's office, and sick bay.[266] In addition to the Marines, the Marine camp housed any Secret Service men and chauffeurs who slept at the camp. In response to complaints lodged by the chauffeurs, Boone wrote a report for Richey in 1930 regarding conditions at the Marine camp. Of the shelters he wrote:

> The White House chauffeurs occupy two tents with board floors, screened porches, skeleton supporting woodwork and screen[e]d doors. They are situated on the highest piece of ground occupied by the Marine Detachment. The Head Chauffeur believes the location is the best in the camp. A lavatory with cold running water is installed in each of these tents. No other tents in the entire camp, except the officer's, the Secret Service men's and the Hospital tent have any such facilities. . . . All tents with the above exceptions are wall tents with board floors and no screening.[267]

He continued by describing the furnishings of the chauffeur's quarters: "The same type of beds are provided the chauffeurs including linen sheets and pillow-cases and blankets as are provided for the President's guests in his own camp. Towels are likewise provided."[268] In addition to sleeping quarters, the Marine camp also contained buildings equipped with bathing and toilet facilities, a mess hall, an office, a garage, stabling for horses, and hospital facilities.

Once the president's camp was built, Long assumed command of the entire detachment consisting of two platoons, one guard and one maintenance. While the president's camp was open there were about 100 to 125 men stationed at the Marine camp. Roughly forty percent of these men were guards whose jobs were to guard nine different posts in and around the camps. The number of sentries needed depended on who was in camp. Hoover required twenty-two, Lou Henry Hoover required seventeen, and when neither was in camp eight were required. The remaining sixty percent of the Marines worked in service and maintenance capacities. Men in non-specialist positions included those in the motor transportation, corral, and mess sections. Specialists included carpenters, plumbers, electricians, telephone operators and linesmen, maintenance men for the president's camp, a stone mason, a tinner and armorer, a painter, and a caretaker for the Cabinet camp.[269] They were also responsible for fire protection. The coming and going of guests created added responsibilities including inspecting the guest cabins'

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[264] Sources do not agree as to the distance between the two camps. Distances vary from a quarter to a full mile.

[265] Alex Stuart, park division superintendent, to Earl C. Long, 18 May 1929, Folder 14, Catalogue # 13004, Resource Management Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[266] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 30.

[267] Joel T. Boone to Lawrence Richey, 3 August 1930, "Food/Agriculture from AG Department, Staff Levels of Marines," Box 191, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[268] Joel T. Boone to Lawrence Richey, 3 August 1930.

[269] Earl C. Long to Lawrence Richey, 30 July 1932.

mechanical systems, turning "street lights" on and off, coordinating mail drops, and moving furniture. At times, the Marines also aided guests in their recreation by providing horses, leading horseback rides, and furnishing fishing gear, among other things. During the off-season, only a dozen men remained at the camp.[270]

When Hoover left office, Long was reassigned to another location and a skeletal crew of six Marines remained as guards and caretakers at the camp. The Marines remained in this capacity until 1939. At that time, the Marines were withdrawn, Navy equipment was removed, and a caretaker was hired.[271]

- Mess Servants

When Hoover decommissioned the presidential yacht *USS Mayflower* and began to use Rapidan Camp as a weekend getaway, some of the former mess servants were transferred to the camp. In August of 1929, at least eight former *USS Mayflower* employees were brought to the camp. Former chief petty officer J.W. Yeager became chief commissary steward. The Filipino chef "Java," one of the many chefs on the *USS Mayflower*, served as chef at the camp in 1929. Six other Filipinos acted as waiters. Sometime between this early stage and the dissolution of the camp in 1932, the number of Filipino waiters/cabin boys increased to twelve.[272]

The Filipinos served as waiters at meals in "Town Hall," at "The Brown House," and outdoors. They also conducted errands for guests. Guests were informed by notices in their cabins that the "Cabins - have no bells. If you want anything you will have to tell a Filipino boy before hand, or ask the orderly at the 'office' to send one for you."[273] The Filipinos also brought refreshments to guests and staff members during the day. According to Helen Hartley Greene White:

> At about four o'clock a boy would appear at the door with the inevitable tall glass of iced orange juice and cookies. . . . I soon learned that these waiters would pop up at the most unexpected places, each morning and afternoon with this refreshing drink for everybody.[274]

On at least one occasion, a special concession was made so that the Filipinos could better do their jobs. Richey purchased "Dixie Fire Kindlers" from South Carolina because "The Filipinos have difficulty building fires without the kindlers."[275]

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[270] Long, *Detachment Regulations*, pp. 20, 67, 69, 73, 16-17. George Cole Scott, "The First Waters of Virginia," draft article for *Field & Stream*, July 1931, "Rapidan Camp, General 1928-1938 & Undated," Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 30.

[271] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 129.

[272] "Hoover Preparing for Visit to Camp," *Washington Evening Star*, 11 August 1929. Boone, "Autobiography," n.p., insert after xxii-183e. "List of Navy Personnel at Camp Rapidan, Season of 1932," 2 December 1932, "Rapidan Camp, General 1928-1938 & Undated," Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[273] Untitled camp information posted in guest cabins, 1929-1932.

[274] Greene, "Who? Me?," p. 33.

[275] Lawrence Richey to N.P. Webster, 1930, "Rapidan Camp, Long, Major E.C., 1929-1930," Box 190, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

George Cole Scott, in an article for *Field and Stream Magazine*, recounted his experience with a Filipino cabin boy:

> Just as I was starting off the particularly friendly little Filipino boy who took care of me ran up with a tiny paper packet of beef.
>
> "What's this for?" I asked.
>
> "Beef, sir. Put him on hook and catch big trout."
>
> Beef on a trout fly! That was too much for a seasoned fly fisherman. Never would I be guilty of such unorthodox methods, even though the Filipinos are noted fishers and hunters. But even as I said it I remembered the times I had used with success the good old fashioned fishing worm -- when nobody was looking, so I put the packet in my pocket for good luck.[276]

Mildred Hall, in a letter accompanying changes she made to Scott's manuscript, wrote clarifying the overall use of beef as bait at the camp:

> Now we come to the crucial matter of the beef bait! I am perfectly certain that the President never uses anything of the kind nor knew that it was being profferred [sic] to visitors. The Philipinos are marvelous fishermen and hunters. And what I think is that your own Philipino boy took a great fancy to you and was just giving you a good chance! So I added a few words that would convey the impression that it *was* the Philipino's idea and not the President's practice. I am sure he will be extremely amused when he hears about it.[277]

During the dissolution of the camp, in a letter offering commendations for all of the Filipino servants, Lou Henry Hoover wrote especially of Juan Clarin:

> I wish to call to your particular attention the services of Juan Clarin, Philipino boy, and to ask you to recommend him for whatever promotion may be possible. He has been the special cabin boy for the President and myself during our four summers on the Rapidan, when ou[r] camp was cared for by a squad of Philipinos.
>
> Juan not only took excellent care of our cabin and was ever willing, efficient and resourceful in his duties, but he also took his part most gladly in the general routines of the camp.[278]

Guests

The Hoovers invited guests to Rapidan Camp virtually every weekend they were there. They never journeyed to the camp to be alone. Even on the rare occasion when

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[276] Scott, "First Waters," p. 2.

[277] Mildred Hall to George Cole Scott, 10 August 1931, "Rapidan Camp, General 1928-1938 & Undated," Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[278] Lou Henry Hoover to Captain Vernon, 21 December 1932, "Rapidan Camp, General 1928-1938 & Undated," Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

there were no invited guests, there were always White House staff members to fill out a party. Greene describes one of her early meals at the camp: "Needless to say I was all ears listening to what was being said by The President and Mrs. Hoover, Major Long, Dr. and Helen Boone, and Mildred Hall, who were the only persons present. It was a rare occasion without outside guests being there."[279]

The Hoovers' habit of inviting guests to the camp was an extension of a long-standing practice they had developed before Hoover came into office. They enjoyed inviting visitors to the White House and camp for the variety, conversation, and diversion they provided. According to Boone:

> The Hoovers' proclivity for entertainment of guests for breakfast, lunch, and dinner was carried on by them after they entered the White House. Rarely knew a day that they did not have guests at every of the meals. Of course, there were mornings when President and Mrs. Hoover had breakfast alone. Sometimes I was the only person with them. It might be well said that as a rule, they entertained at least three times a day. Mrs. Hoover felt that the President needed these social contacts and outlets after his very busy days at the office. She really knew whom to invite to suit his interests and moods at the particular time. Guests were a cross-section of most interesting people, many walks of life. The Hoovers were so well traveled and so wonderfully read, they could converse on any subject.
>
> The Hoovers' habit of entertainment was carried on at the Rapidan camp. It became a great vehicle for entertainment, for bringing people together for business reasons, as well as social enjoyment.[280]

The composition of the guest list changed depending on whether the Hoovers were at camp together or separately. When Hoover alone was at the camp, there were usually no women present because there was no hostess to entertain them. When Lou Henry Hoover was in camp alone, the majority of the guests were women.

The guests at the camp were drawn from different quarters in the Hoovers' lives and were invited to Rapidan for different reasons. Family members (the Hoover children and Lou Henry Hoover's sister Jean Large) and friends (the Milbanks, the Rippins, and Mark Requa) were certainly invited for purposes of socializing and relaxation. To fulfill their curiosity in meeting other rich, famous, and interesting people of the day, the Hoovers invited the Lindberghs, the Edsel Fords, the Theodore Roosevelt Jrs., Henry Luce, and Mrs. Thomas Alva Edison, among others.[281] Sometimes the Hoovers used the camp as a retreat for particular groups of people such as Hoover's medicine ball cabinet and Lou Henry Hoover's troop 8.

There were also the inevitable politically motivated groupings of guests. Hoover brought British Prime Minister MacDonald, MacDonald's Principal Private Secretary Sir Robert Van Sittart, Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson, and Chief of the American

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[279] Greene, "Who? Me?," p. 29.

[280] Boone, "Autobiography," pp. xxii-64e to xxii-64f.

[281] According to extant guest lists, Thomas Alva Edison and Winston Churchill were not guests at the camp as some sources state. In fact, Churchill is said to have called Hoover an S.O.B. for sending food to the Belgians during World War I.

Section of the Foreign Office R.L. Craigie together in 1929 to discuss world peace and naval disarmament. In 1931, in an effort to reduce government spending, "The various departmental heads in turn were to be taken up to the peace and quiet of the fishing stream to ponder over ways and means of paring their budgets." Thus, the 1931 season kicked off with four departments meeting with the president in four weekends: in May the Department of War, Department of the Interior, and the Post Office Department and the Navy Department in early June.[282]

In addition to guests invited to meet with or work out problems with the president, Hoover also invited politicians whom he wanted to reward or with whom he wanted to gain favor. In 1930, attached to a complete list of Republican congressmen was a note from Richey to a Mr. Newton reading, "Will you please go over the attached list and check the ones you think we should take care of, marking them 1, 2, and 3, in the order in which they should be taken care of." Then a tentative list of four senators and sixteen congressmen was drawn up for the weekend of 21 June 1930.[283]

Members of the press were invited to the camp for a day on at least two occasions. Boone later described the disastrous results of the visit made by the male contingent:

> Twenty-three newspapermen and photographers covering the White House had been invited to the Rapidan by the President the week previous. . . . It was very difficult for the President to be a showman. He certainly was no actor and hated even seeming to play one. Richey and I helped to direct the scenes and setting as to where the different people would sit, what they would do, which included the President riding a horse -- much to his evident annoyance -- relaxing in easy chairs with Mrs. Hoover, etc., etc. Larry and I had to do a good deal of missionary work to counteract some bad reactions from newspaper reporters and photographers, because there was evidence for need of smoothing out injured feelings and that those special guests were not given the freedom they expected to have when they were invited up to the Rapidan for a day interviewing and photographing the President and Mrs. Hoover in their camp setting. Regrettably, the President looked bored, not gracious that day. . . . Richey and I tried to cover up and see to it that the newspaper reporters and the cameramen had a delightful outing and earnestly hoping they would not go away feeling otherwise. When Richey and I got back to our cabin at the end of the day after the newspapermen and cameramen had left the camp, we felt pretty low in spirits and were aware that a great opportunity for particularly good publicity had been missed. We deplored the fact that the President showed an unhappy state of mind in their presence, that he was not responsive to the questioning of the reporters as readily as he was on most every other occasion; and that he did not give of himself freely and amiably posing for photographs and pictures of all sorts around his camp.[284]

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[282] John S. Gregory, "All Quiet on the Rapidan," *Outlook and Independent*, 5 August 1931. Guest Lists 1931.

[283] Lawrence Richey to Mr. Newton, 3 June 1930, "Rapidan Camp, Misc. Lists, 1930," Box 190, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[284] Boone, "Autobiography," pp. xxii-1220 to xxii-1221.

Lou Henry Hoover's reception for female reporters was much more enjoyable as the 13 July 1932 *Washington Evening Star* headline indicates: "Mrs. Hoover Hostess at Delightful Party at the Rapidan Camp for Newspaper Women."

Hoover also occasionally invited people with local concerns to spend time at the camp. For instance, one August afternoon Thomas H. MacDonald, chief of the Bureau of Public Roads; H.K. Bishop, engineer of the Virginia Roads Bureau; S.H. Marsh, engineer for the Virginia Conservation and Development Commission; and George Freeman Pollock were invited to the camp for lunch. During this lunch meeting the group discussed Skyline Drive which was under construction at the time.[285]

- The Lindberghs

Colonel Charles and Anne Morrow Lindbergh were invited to Rapidan Camp at least three times and accepted the invitation twice in August of 1929 and 1930. The Lindberghs took part in several of the typical camp activities including horseback riding, pitching horseshoes, and playing Ping-Pong. The press was particularly interested in Rapidan Camp when the Lindberghs were there and wanted to make the stories concerning them even more colorful by increasing the Lindberghs' roles there. Newspapers credited Lindbergh with being the best at pitching horseshoes and having gone horseback riding when in fact Boone was his match at horseshoes and Lindbergh never rode a horse while at the camp.[286] According to Boone:

> The Lindberghs and I had some pleasant talks and pitched horseshoes happily together. He and I not only pitched against each other, but we teamed up at times against other players. It was thought by the guests that Lindbergh and I were the best horseshoe pitchers in the weekend party. Some of the newspapers in writing up Lindbergh's pitching horseshoes at the Rapidan camp wished to narrate that I was the best player, but I had urged them not to do that for anything, but to feature Lindbergh. The story about him were to be a more pleasing one for the youth of the nation.[287]

Anne Morrow Lindbergh and Lou Henry Hoover were credited with arranging a birthday party for Herbert Hoover when, in fact, daughter-in-law Peggy Hoover had done so.[288]

Lindbergh presented the Hoovers with a lamp with a parchment map lampshade which stood in "Town Hall." Lou Henry Hoover wrote of this lampshade in 1937, "The lamp shade on which Lindbergh wrote his name over his Atlantic flight, the boys would never forgive me if I lost."[289]

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[285] "Explain Skyline Trail to Hoover." Newspaper article, Unknown newspaper, 2 August [n.d.], Folder 5, "Clippings #3," Box 12, Series II, L. Ferdinand Zerkel Papers, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[286] "Horseshoe Champion," 13 August 1929. Lou Henry Hoover to Dare Stark McMullin, 15 August 1929.

[287] Boone, "Autobiography," p. xxii-147c.

[288] Lou Henry Hoover to Dare Stark McMullin, 15 August 1929.

[289] Lou Henry Hoover to Gertrude Bowman, 20 April 1937.

- British Prime Minister Ramsay and Ishbel MacDonald

In early October 1929, British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald arrived in Washington, DC to meet with Hoover regarding world peace in general and naval limitations in particular. On the afternoon of Friday, 5 October, Hoover and MacDonald departed for Rapidan Camp. It appears that MacDonald was not anticipating a weekend's sojourn into the woods because according to Boone:

> The Prime Minister asked the nature of the camp and how far away it was. He was told it was a hundred miles away. The President briefly described the camp. The Prime Minister then realized he did not wish to wear the clothes he was attired in to the camp. The President saw that he was a bit disconcerted so he said to the Prime Minister, 'Come along with me.' The President took him to the elevator and up to the living quarters on the second floor of the White House, then to the northeast large beautiful pink bedroom. . . . The President said: 'I will fit you out in a suit of my clothes.' The men were quite near of size.[290]

Later, with Lou Henry Hoover at the wheel, the First Lady and MacDonald's "attractive 26-year-old daughter," Ishbel, drove to the camp.[291]

While her father met with Hoover, Ishbel MacDonald spent time with Lou Henry Hoover. They explored the outdoors on foot and horseback. MacDonald also learned from Boone how to pitch horseshoes and ate her first corn on the cob.[292]

The meeting between Hoover and MacDonald was preliminary to the convening of a conference on naval limitations including the United States, Britain, France, Japan, and Italy. Coolidge had made an earlier attempt at naval disarmament in 1927 which was thwarted by, among other things, Britain's unwillingness to accept parity with the United States. Thus, Hoover chose to address Britain's concerns on a personal level before approaching the other countries. The impetus for disarmament was a desire to stop the increased building of warships that had commenced during World War I because nations were finding the expenses burdensome. However, nations did not want to slow production unless others did the same. The hope was that the "Big Five" nations could come to an agreement regarding the ratios of warships allotted to each.[293]

According to Fausold, during the weekend Hoover and MacDonald spent at the camp:

> the leaders discussed the possibilities of placing a limitation on naval auxiliary ships, freedom of the seas in time of war, the presence of the British navy in the Western Hemisphere, and even the smuggling of liquor from the British possessions into the United States, which was a problem during prohibition.

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[290] Boone, "Autobiography," pp. xxii-229 to xxii-230.
[291] "Rapid Driving of First Lady Thrills Guest," *Washington Herald*, 7 October 1929.
[292] "Rapid Driving," 7 October 1929. Boone, "Autobiography," p. xxii-232.
[293] Lambert, *Hideaway*, pp. 69, 67.

> In reality, however, little of substance came from this highly publicized meeting. Few of the items on the agenda were consummated.[294]

Of the main issues, the men agreed only on the non-interference with food ships in times of war.[295] The two countries did not agree on parity in warships until the London Naval Conference of 1930. The main results of the Rapidan meeting was that communication between the United States and Britain was greatly eased and the two countries agreed not to use military force against one another. On 10 October 1929, Hoover and MacDonald released a joint statement:

> Our conversations have been largely confined to the mutual relations of the two countries in the light of the situation created by the signing of the Peace Pact. Therefore, in a new and reinforced sense the two governments not only declared that war between them is unthinkable . . . [in text] On the assumption that war between us is banished, and that conflicts between our military or naval forces cannot take place, these problems have changed their meaning and character and their solution, in ways satisfactory to both countries, has become possible.[296]

The London Naval Conference in January 1930 was also only a partial success because the countries involved were "constrained by political situations at home." The French and Italians left the conference, so only a three-way agreement could be made. This agreement gave the United States and Britain naval parity. Japan agreed to a seventy-two percent ratio in small cruisers and destroyers and parity in submarines. "France and Italy could not agree on their relative strengths and only partially accepted the final treaty."[297] The United States Congress ratified the London Naval Treaty on 22 July 1930.[298] Despite its partial success, historians consider the London Naval Treaty "'a great and possibly the last practical accomplishment toward disarmament.'"[299]

MacDonald's visit, when considered in context of its ultimate results, is perhaps overstated in the history of Rapidan Camp. This overstatement is because MacDonald was the first and only foreign diplomat to visit the camp. Also, the two cabins in which Ramsay and Ishbel MacDonald were named respectively "The Prime Minister" and "Ishbel" leaving a lasting reminder of their visit.

Another reminder of their visit is the mythic "log" on which Hoover and MacDonald were thought to have sat during their discussions. It seems that such a log was designated only after popular demand required it (see ill. 8). According to Boone:

> Because they heard that a decision of great international importance was made, sitting on a log high up in the mountains of Virginia at the President's Rapidan Camp, President Hoover and Prime Minister MacDonald came out once or more,

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[294] Fausold, p. 173.
[295] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 77.
[296] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 79.
[297] Fausold, pp. 175-176.
[298] Lambert, *Hideaway*, pp. 79-80.
[299] Brent Tartar. "'All Men Are Equal Before Fishes': Herbert Hoover's Camp on the Rapidan." *Virginia Cavalcade* (Spring 1981): 161.

sat on a log so that the story could be told that they made their decisions sitting on a log beside the Rapidan stream. Decisions, of course, were made indoors.[300]

When asked in July 1930 where the famed log was

> Mrs. Hoover laughed, explaining that there is no one log so identified. Having been asked the question many times, she asked the President to point out to her one on which they sat during their conferences. One day while walking beside the Rapidan he showed a log on which they rested. Since then a freshet has swept it across the stream, a little railing has been attached and it is now used as a footbridge.[301]

Later, the apocryphal log took on a life of its own. In 1935, a representative of the National Park Service "gave assurance . . . that the stump, site of the Hoover-MacDonald conversations, also will be preserved." This was not the case, however, because in circa 1940, a reporter lamented, "The log on which the former President held his famous talk with Ramsay MacDonald has been dragged up by an outdoors fireplace and is being slowly devoured by woodpeckers." As late as 1969, the "log" was a topic of discussion. Raymond Henle, in charge of the Hoover Oral History Project, wrote to R. Taylor Hoskins, "Isn't it too bad that the Ramsay MacDonald log rotted away. It was of considerable historic interest. Did the Park Service ever consider placing a simulated log? It would be nice, don't you think." Hoskins replied saying that "consideration has not been given to a simulation of any of the natural features which are part of the ecological history of the Park."[302]

Camp Activities

The Hoovers and White House physician Joel T. Boone were not alone in their belief that relaxation in natural surroundings was important to health and success. According to Braden, starting in the late nineteenth century

> social reformers of the Progressive era, building on earlier attempts to breach the stern Calvinist work ethic, were trying to persuade Americans of the value - indeed the necessity - of leisure time. They recommended this as the way for workers to renew their physical energy, attain mental health, and solidify family relationships.[303]

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[300] Boone, "Autobiography," p. xxii-232.

[301] "Women Writers Visit," 13 July 1930.

[302] "Park Service Promises Hoover Camp Will be Kept in Repair," *Washington Star*, 2 October 1935. "Hoover Hill Camp Ending in Dry Rot," *New York Times*, 21 March [1940?], "Rapidan Camp Printed Material," Box 262, Herbert Hoover, Post-Presidential Papers, 1933-64: Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. Raymond Henle to R. Taylor Hoskins, 18 June 1969, appendix to Butler, Oral History.

[303] Donna R.Braden, *Leisure and Entertainment in America* (Dearborn, MI: Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village, 1988), p. 9.

John Muir, the author of the 1901 *Our National Parks* describes the widespread national interest in exploring wooded areas for health:

> The tendency nowadays to wander in wildernesses is delightful to see. Thousands of tired nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; the wilderness is a necessity; and that mountain parks and reservations are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life. Awakening from the stupefying effects of the vice of over-industry and the deadly apathy of luxury, they are trying as best they can to mix and enrich their own little ongoings with those of Nature, and to get rid of rust and disease.[304]

By the conclusion of the First World War leisure was considered an end in itself. People were encouraged to engage in the restorative activities of their choice in order to fulfill themselves and live well.[305]

The Hoovers and their guests engaged in a variety of indoor and outdoor "restorative" activities at Rapidan Camp. Judging from extant accounts, it seems that they spent a majority of daylight hours outdoors and then resorted to indoor activities after dark. There were facilities and equipment for activities to fit nearly every taste.

The activities the Hoovers pursued at Rapidan Camp should not be viewed as unique to the camp, but as activities the Hoovers pursued at other times and places. Rather than dictating activities for the Hoovers, the camp enabled them to engage in the leisure activities of their choice. From her childhood, Lou Henry Hoover had been interested in camping, hiking, and horseback riding. Likewise Herbert Hoover was a seasoned fisherman, enjoyed supervising the building of dams in city parks, and regularly exercised with a medicine ball at the White House.

- Hiking

One of Lou Henry Hoover's favorite diversions was hiking through the woods surrounding the camp. She often recruited guests to join her on these excursions which could include a natural history lesson:

> Her [Lou Henry Hoover's] feet are shod in flat-heeled walking shoes. Any minute she may suggest a hike along the mountain trails. Stops are made on the rustic bridges to peer at the fish darting below or to listen to the bubbling cascades.
>
> Mrs. Hoover covers many miles a day. Her record hike for one day is 22 miles. Half that is hardly anything at all. Sometimes she starts out with a jar or basket in her hand to fill with woodsy plants that grow along the way. . . . For those not as sure-footed as Mrs. Hoover there are peeled balsam walking staffs.[306]

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[304] John Muir, *Our National Parks* (1901, reprint, Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981), p. 1.

[305] Braden, p. 10.

[306] "Autumn Gives Golden Setting," 23 October 1931.

Besides tramping through the woods observing flora and fauna, there were a few destinations around the camp. One was a fire tower atop Fort Mountain with a commanding view of the area. Carson arranged for the construction of the tower as a diversion for the Hoovers' guests. He wrote to the Virginia state forester:

> I want a tower built on Fort Mountain above the President's summer camp in Madison county, such as is used in Forestry operation for fire protection. This tower should be built with stairs on the inside, so that ladies could ascend it without danger. . . .
>
> If you are short of money in your Bureau to do this, I will provide it. There is only one thing I want -- that is action -- step on it!
>
> The deck of the tower should be large enough for a large party; the tower to be used not only as a lookout for fire protection, but for observation for the President and his friends.[307]

Hikes could also lead to the Hoover school or the tops of nearby mountains. Besides the attraction of the fire tower, topping Fort Mountain earned guests a special notation in the guest book. Myers wrote in his diary, "Mr. Jas. Yardley Rippin, of Ossining, N.Y. . . . and I walked to top of Fort Mountain (3952 ft., I think is the altitude) by the trail, in 55 min., & back down the face of the mountain, following a telephone line, thus getting our names with 'AA' in the guest book used for the purpose. Lovely view, but hazy."[308]

- Horseback Riding

Lou Henry Hoover also favored horseback riding with guests. The horses were stabled at the Marine camp and brought for use to a hitching rack at the southwest corner of Rapidan Camp. The horses were brought to the hitching rack upon request and at 9:30 AM and 2:00 PM daily when the presidential party was in camp. Three Marines were also on hand to accompany the party opening gates and administering first-aid.[309]

Among the guests who accompanied Lou Henry Hoover on her horseback rides were Anne Morrow Lindbergh, daughter-in-law Peggy Hoover, and W.P. and "Chick" McCracken. Years later, Chick McCracken described an exhausting weekend of riding and hiking with the Hoovers:

> [W]hen we got up there [to Rapidan Camp] Mrs. Hoover wanted to go horseback riding. I hadn't been on a horse in fifteen years at least. I said, 'But I don[']t have a habit,' and she said, 'But, my dear, I have one for you,' and Colonel Starling, who was the head of the Secret Service, got me fixed up and I got on this old Marine horse. The horse belonged to a Marine captain and was used for leading, and he kept trying to get ahead of all the horses going up to the top of this mountain to a plateau where there were a lot of young bulls. One of the bulls took

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[307] William E. Carson to Chapin Jones, state forester, 20 August 1929, Box 189, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[308] Myers, Diary, 30 August 1930, p. 680.

[309] Long, *Detachment*, p. 16.

out after the horse and myself, and, shall I say, my derriere hit that saddle so many times that I called out: 'I thought I'd come horseback riding but I didn't think I'd be a toreador.' So when we got back to the camp that night, all the men bet that I wouldn't sit down and eat my breakfast the next morning -- Mr. Hoover and Mr. Jahncke, who was the Assistant Secretary of the Navy and . . . Colonel Starling said, 'Now you go sit in a tub of hot water, so I sat in a tub of hot water, and the next morning word came through that Mrs. Hoover wanted me to go again, and I said, 'Oh, my heavens, I can't face it.' Well, here I had joined all these men, and when I got there I said, 'Where is Mrs. Hoover?' and Mr. Hoover said, 'I just wanted to see if you were a good enough sport to go again,' and I thought to myself: 'It's hell what one will do for his country.'

I saw it through. Then after lunch he wanted to go walking up this stream, so all of us went on up -- quite a hike -- and I was so sore I could hardly put one foot before the other, not having been on a horse in so many years.[310]

- Dam Building

Dam building frequently occupied guests during the Hoovers' first season at Rapidan Camp. Damming water was not a new activity for Hoover. According to Philippi Harding Butler:

> A favorite weekend or Sunday entertainment of Mr. Hoover, which of course included everybody, was to go to the park, to some secluded little stream, and the men would all turn up their trousers, take off their shoes, and pitch in and build a dam -- Mr. Hoover just as energetically as any others.[311]

Some period newspaper accounts reported that Hoover was damming the Rapidan River to create swimming pools, but in fact he was making pools in which to fish for trout. The *New York Herald* described the dam building at the camp:

> Only the men participated in the labor, which consisted of blocking the headwaters of the Rapidan River to provide pools in which trout may gather. Several of the men donned high rubber boots and waded into the stream, seeking large stones and carrying them to the dams, where they were set in place by others.[312]

Charles Lindbergh was reportedly among the dam builders. W.P. McCracken wrote of his experience with the dams: "Just after we got back to the camp they discovered that one of the dams which had been built several weeks before was leaking badly, so they brought out the hip boots and four or five o[f] us pitched in and blocked the leaks so that the water once more went over the top."[313]

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[310] Sallie McCracken, Oral History, pp. 5-6.
[311] Butler, Oral History, p. 15.
[312] "President Leads Dam-Building at Virginia Camp," *New York Herald*, 12 August 1929.
[313] W.P. McCracken Jr. to W.P. McCracken Sr., 29 August 1929.

Different sources give different accounts of Hoover's participation in the dam building projects. A 1929 cartoon entitled "Hoover Makes His Guests Haul Rock" depicts Hoover as a taskmaster supervisor in suit and hat watching his guests heft large boulders around the river (see ill. 9). The *Washington Star* stated, "President Hoover not only served as architect and chief engineer in constructing the dam to form the pool, but helped by carrying rocks and boulders and helping to put them in position."[314] Boone later wrote, "The President did more directing than actual lifting of the rocks. Occasionally he would lift, use a crowbar. He would sit on the bank a good part of the time or up on his porch and give directions, with everyone perfectly agreeable in complying with them."[315]

- Fishing

The primary motivation for building Rapidan Camp at the headwaters of the Rapidan River was for Hoover to pursue his favorite hobby of fishing. Carson obtained the fishing rights along the river near the camp so that Hoover and his guests would have exclusive rights to the fishing in the area. Because the mountain people had fished the river clean before Hoover's arrival, Carson had the Rapidan River stocked with fish. According to Mildred Hall, "The mountaineers had fished it [Rapidan River], as well as the neighboring streams, quite empty. In fact, when they could get it, they put in dynamite and cleaned out the whole stream for a long distance at one time."[316] Stocking streams was in keeping with Hoover's conservation work as secretary of commerce when he encouraged the restocking of depleted waters. On at least one occasion, Hoover left the Rapidan for a day of fishing in the nearby Shenandoah River.[317]

To celebrate Hoover's choosing Madison County for the location of his camp, the local Izaac Walton league members presented him with a rod and reel. The Hoovers occasionally purchased fishing equipment from Washington-area sporting goods stores. In June 1929, they purchased three "enameled" fish lines, three fish reels, and four leaders. In August, they purchased three "special" rods and two different models of fly fishing rods. Presumably, most of the equipment purchased for the camp was for the use of guests who accompanied Hoover on his fishing trips.[318]

Hoover's fishing at Rapidan Camp was limited by the Virginia trout fishing season. Despite Carson's efforts to lengthen the trout season that extended from 1 April to 30 June, Hoover and the state Fish and Game Commission would not allow such an exception. The Fish and Game Commission, however, did encourage Hoover to fish for bass from 1 July to 15 March. A self-imposed limitation Hoover placed on his fishing

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[314] "Hoover Carries Rocks," 21 July 1929.

[315] Boone, "Autobiography," p. xxii-186.

[316] Mildred Hall to George Cole Scott, 10 August 1931.

[317] Clements, p. 335. "President Hoover Fishes Near Luray Saturday," *Page News & Courier*, 29 July 1930.

[318] "President Hoover Builds a Swimming Hole," *Madison County Eagle*, 26 July 1929. D.W. Walford, Receipt, 29 June 1929, "Rapidan Camp Furniture and Equipment, 1929-1931," Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. A.G. Spalding & Bros., Receipt, 18 August 1929, Box 76, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

was that he would not fish on Sundays. It is unclear whether or not this policy was based on his religious beliefs.[319]

Several home movies taken by Lou Henry Hoover attest to Hoover's love of fishing. In several clips, he appears in hip boots, sport coat, and hat with rod in hand and creel at his side. He casts and recasts, occasionally lifting a fish proudly into the air before quickly depositing it in the creel. In one movie he fishes with young granddaughter Peggy Ann. Whether an indication of Hoover's prowess as a fisherman or of the deference paid him by others, Hoover topped the only extant "Fish Catch" lists for 18 April and 9 May 1931. In April when Hoover caught twenty fish, his guests caught between one and fifteen. In May when he caught fifteen, the others caught two to twelve.[320] In *Fishing for Fun*, Hoover's late life observations on fishing, Hoover shares some of his advice on fishing:

> If you are fishing mid-stream, you must have those special waterproof pants which reach from inside hobnailed shoes to your armpits. You must carry an iron-pointed staff to prevent your being washed downstream. When that happens, the waterproof pants fill with water and you sink. If you have the good sense to hold onto the iron-pointed staff, you possibly save your life. But you will need to buy a new rod and reel.
>
> When you do not get anything on a dry fly, you descend to a wet one. As that fails, you begin to think about the need of fish for dinner and to show the other guests at the auto camp. Then you try hardware of different sorts. Failing with these, you take on the cans of salmon eggs or worms that you have hidden in your secret pockets. This has long been classified TOP SECRET.[321]

Hoover not only enjoyed the sport of fishing, but he enjoyed the solitude, commune with nature, and humility that it afforded him. During his speech on Madison County Day in 1929, Hoover said, "fishing is an excuse and a valid reason of the widest range of usefulness for temporary retreat from our busy world. In this case it is the excuse for return to the woods and streams with their retouch of the simpler life of the frontier from which every American springs." He continued:

> I have discovered the reason why Presidents take to fishing - the silent sport. Apparently the only opportunity for refreshment of one's soul and clarification of one's thoughts by solitude to Presidents lies through fishing. As I have said in another place, it is generally realized and accepted that prayer is the most personal of all human relationships. On such occasions as that men and women are entitled to be alone and undisturbed. Next to prayer fishing is the

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[319] A. Willis Robertson to William E. Carson, 3 July 1929, "Rapidan Camp, Carson W.E. Correspondence, 1929," Box 189, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. Mildred Hall to George Cole Scott, 10 August 1931.

[320] " Hoover and Peggy Ann Hoover Fishing," ca. 1931, Film. "Fish Catch at the Rapidan Camp," 18 April 1931, 9 May 1931, "Fish Catch 1931," Box 190, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[321] Herbert Hoover, *Fishing for Fun – And To Wash Your Soul*, ed. William Nichols (New York: Random House, 1963), pp. 55-57.

most personal relationship of man and of more importance than the fact itself, everybody concedes that the fish will not bite in the presence of the public. Fishing seems to be the sole avenue left to Presidents through which they may escape to their own thoughts and may live in their own imaginings and find relief from the pneumatic hammer of constant personal contacts, and refreshment of mind in the babble of rippling brooks.

Moreover, it is a constant reminder of the democracy of life, of humility and of human frailty - for men are equal before fishes. And it is desirable that the President of the United States should be periodically reminded of this fundamental fact - that the forces of nature discriminate for no man.[322]

The other enjoyment Hoover and his guests gained from fishing was eating the fish they caught. According to a period newspaper account, fish was among the favored fare for evening meals.[323]

Besides fishing for sport and food, Hoover also kept pet fish in a manmade pool near "The Brown House." These large rainbow trout may have been the vestiges of rainbow trout let loose in the river in 1929. A. Willis Robertson from the state Fish and Game Commission wrote to Carson in October 1929:

> Early tells me that the Bureau of Fisheries has introduced Rainbow trout in the Rapidan. In my opinion this was a great mistake and I would strongly urge that no Rainbow be introduced in these waters. The Rainbow is a California fish and should never be introduced into Virginia waters where brook trout are indigenous.[324]

Mildred Hall later wrote of Hoover's pet fish:

> They are rainbow trout and are such cannibals that they are not permitted the run of the stream. And yet they got so tame with their artificial feeding that no one has the heart to fish for them, - excepting unknowing persons like Peggy Ann [Hoover's young granddaughter]. The rainbows that you got down the stream and the few others there are the ones that escaped during a freshet, and a special premium is offered for the catching of them![325]

According to extant receipts, the rainbow trout's "artificial diet" included beef hearts purchased especially for them.[326]

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[322] Herbert Hoover's Address at Madison County Courthouse, 17 August 1929, "Rapidan Camp Deeds, Leases, Correspondence, 1929-1930," Box 191, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[323] "Our Efficient President," *Washington News*, 12 August 1929.

[324] A. Willis Robertson to William E. Carson, 28 October 1929, "Rapidan Camp, Carson W.E. Correspondence, 1929," Box 189, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[325] Mildred Hall to George Cole Scott, 10 August 1931.

[326] Earl C. Long to Lawrence Richey, "Notes on Administration of Commissary Department at Camp Rapidan," 20 October 1930, "Rapidan Camp, Guest Lists, 1930," Box 190, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA, p. [8].

- Pitching Horseshoes and Archery

Boone is credited with introducing the pitching of horseshoes to the Rapidan Camp repertoire. The Hoovers did not pitch horseshoes, but it was a popular activity among the other guests. While Ishbel MacDonald enjoyed learning and then perfecting horseshoe pitching, it seems that it was more popular with male guests.[327]

One particularly competitive weekend in the horseshoe pits was the August 1929 weekend when the Lindberghs were in camp. The newspaper accounts list Colonel Lindbergh as horseshoe champion, Secretary of Agriculture Arthur Hyde second, and Boone and Herbert Hoover Jr. as third. Boone claimed that he was equally as skilled at pitching horseshoes as Lindbergh, but asked the reporters to make Lindbergh "champion" to increase public interest.[328]

On some weekends, horseshoe pitching was an activity visited over and over in an almost addictive fashion. W.P. McCracken describes one such weekend:

> Saturday morning after breakfast we started in pitching horseshoes. I think on the whole session I won a few more games than I lost, but doubt if I averaged more than 60 per cent winnings. We did not keep track of the games won or lost.
>
> About 10.30 Saturday morning we left camp to go to the barbecue at Madison, Va. It was a typical country affair. . . .
>
> We arrived back at camp about 2.30, spent the rest of the afternoon pitching horseshoes and playing baseball. . . .
>
> Sunday morning we had another round of horseshoes. . . .
>
> After dinner [midday meal] we pitched some more horseshoes.[329]

It seems that the newly found or remembered skill of horseshoe pitching could dominate the weekends of some male guests. Even Ramsay MacDonald could not be kept from the horseshoes during his naval disarmament talks:

> The Prime Minister would rush out where we were pitching horseshoes and he would ask me to teach him how to pitch horseshoes, which I did. He didn't learn the game as quickly as his daughter; however, he gave very little time to it because of his absorption in the conferences throughout the day with President Hoover.[330]

Another target-oriented game that did not enjoy the popularity of horseshoe pitching was archery. Although there are no extant written accounts of guests engaging in archery, there is a June 1929 receipt for a straw target, a bow, and six arrows.[331] This straw target is seen in the background of a Hoover-era photograph of the "Town Hall"

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[327] Boone, "Autobiography," p. xxii-232.
[328] "Horseshoe Champion," 13 August 1929. Boone, "Autobiography," p. xxii-147c.
[329] W.P. McCracken Jr. to W.P. McCracken Sr., 29 August 1929.
[330] Boone, "Autobiography," p. xxii-232.
[331] D.W. Walford, Receipt, 30 September 1930.

porch.[332] Archery became a popular activity for men and women at American summer resorts as early as the 1870s and 1880s.[333]

- Ball Games

Although less commonly mentioned than fishing or horseshoes, there were also ball games at Rapidan Camp. On the afternoon of Madison County Day, 17 August 1929, when they could tear themselves away from the horseshoes, guests played baseball.[334]

Although not often mentioned, the president and members of his "medicine ball cabinet" likely indulged in games of "Bull in the Ring" while at camp because in November 1930, two medicine balls were purchased for Rapidan Camp.[335] A 12 December 1929 "LIST OF MEN EXERCISING DAILY WITH THE PRESIDENT" includes fourteen names, most of whom were in Hoover's cabinet. One weekend at Rapidan Camp, 18 April 1931, was specifically called "medicine ball team week-end." Those invited were Secretary of the Interior Ray Lyman Wilbur, Secretary of Agriculture Arthur Hyde, Justice Harlan Stone, Solicitor General Thatcher, Assistant Secretary of the Navy Ernest Jahncke, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Heath, Senior Secretary Walter Newton, columnist Mark Sullivan, Boone, and Richey.[336]

Other purchases which offer a glimpse into other ball games are tennis rackets and balls and a croquet set.[337] Lawn tennis and croquet became popular in the United States after the Civil War. They were games typically played at clubs and resorts by both men and women because they were considered social, rather than competitive activities.[338]

- Campfires

Although the outdoor fireplace was a major feature at Rapidan Camp, it is not clear how often campfires took place. According to W.P. McCracken, "On both Saturday and Sunday night [August 1929] we had a big camp fire out-of-doors. Sat around and talked until bed time."[339] McCracken's account details an early point in the camp's history, possibly before the completion of "Town Hall." Therefore, he may have described the precursor to the evenings spent fireside in the community cabin where the Hoovers and their guests generally retired after dinner and before bedtime.

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[332] Photograph, 1930-1932, Negative 110-20, Shenandoah National Park, VA.
[333] Braden, p. 237.
[334] W.P. McCracken Jr. to W.P. McCracken Sr., 29 August 1929.
[335] A.G. Spalding & Bros., Receipt, 25 November 1929, "Rapidan Camp Receipts, 1929-1930," Box 193, Herbert Hoover Personal Papers, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. A.G. Spalding & Bros., Receipt, 18 August 1929.
[336] Guest List, 18 April 1931.
[337] A.G. Spalding & Bros., Receipt, 18 August 1929.
[338] Braden, p. 237.
[339] W.P. McCracken Jr. to W.P. McCracken Sr., 29 August 1929.

- Working and/or Meeting

Interspersed with the president's rest and relaxation at Rapidan Camp were various meetings and commitments. Among the first such meetings at the camp was that between Hoover and secretary of agriculture Hyde regarding the appointment of eight men to the newly created Federal Farm Board. In late July 1929 Hoover met with top-ranking officials in the Department of War concerning the reduction of Army expenditures. Early October 1929 found Hoover and Prime Minister MacDonald discussing naval disarmament and world peace at the camp. In August of 1930 Hoover entertained H.K. Bishop, engineer of the Virginia roads bureau; S.H. Marsh, engineer for the Virginia Conservation and Development Commission; and George Freeman Pollock at lunch. At that time the invited men described the proposed Skyline Drive to the president.[340] In 1931, Hoover

> announced a series of week-end 'economy conferences' at the camp. The various departmental heads in turn were to be taken up to the peace and quiet of the fishing stream to ponder over ways and means of paring their budgets.
>
> With a great fanfare, Secretary of War Hurley and the General staff chiefs headed the procession [in May].[341]

In addition to meetings with guests, the Hoovers also gave radio broadcasts to the nation from Rapidan Camp. Herbert Hoover broadcast the dedication of the war memorial at Ithaca University and Lou Henry Hoover spoke to members of 4-H Clubs of America regarding their efforts and attitudes during the Great Depression.

- Radio

Rapidan Camp was equipped with at least two radios, one in "Town Hall" and the other in living room of "The Brown House." As early as September 1929, the *New York Times* mentioned a radio at the camp. In 1930, a "Majestic Radio Set," or combination radio and phonograph were donated to the camp.[342] However, there are few indications that guests spent much time listening to the camp's radios. Myers wrote in his diary:

> Went to the President['s] own cabin & from his sitting room heard his broadcast from the 'Town Hall' nearby for the dedication of the Cornell War Memorial at Ithaca. Mrs. Hoover, Mr. & Mrs. Herbert Jr., Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt Jr., & Mr. & Mrs. Edsel Ford also there. The President looks very well and welcomed us most kindly. When he came in after broadcasting, said to me, 'Well, what did you think of it?'[343]

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[340] "Skyline Trail," 2 August [n.d.].

[341] Gregory, 5 August 1931.

[342] B. Grisby to Lawrence Richey, March 1930, "Rapidan Camp, Radio, 1930-1931," Box 192, Herbert Hoover Personal Papers, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[343] Myers, Diary, 23 May 1931, p. 698.

- Meals

The meals at Rapidan Camp were prepared by Marine chefs and served by Filipino waiters, former members of the *USS Mayflower* crew. The Filipino chef "Java," one of the many chefs on the *USS Mayflower*, served as chef at the camp in 1929 (see "Support Staff: Mess Servants"). Food supplies were brought to camp by truck. During the first season at camp, food was obtained from local sources. However, the quality was found lacking and, at greater expense, a better quality of food was transported from Washington, DC. Myers describes this food as "Food (sent down from the White House) of the best quality, but simple, good fare."[344]

Meals were served three times and snacks a couple of times daily. On the sign posted in guests' cabins, Lou Henry Hoover stated, "Meals - are served fifteen minutes after the warning bell, to those who arrive. Others eat when they are ready!"[345] As the sign suggests, meals were informal affairs. Breakfast was usually served at 8:00 AM in the "Mess Hall." It was a large "American breakfast" composed of bacon, eggs, hotcakes, and coffee. According to period newspapers, Hoover enjoyed occasionally preparing ham and eggs himself for guests. Helen Hartley Greene White also recalled orange juice and muffins being served at breakfast. Myers reported having for breakfast trout that Hoover had caught the afternoon before. Breakfast was by design a large meal which allowed guests to approach a full day at or outside camp with a full stomach. For those at camp, the Filipino cabin boys brought around glasses of orange juice at 10:00 AM.[346]

Lunch appears to have been at no particular time and was the most changeable meal of the day. Guests could take lunch and snacks with them when they went abroad for hikes and horseback rides. Those fishing or working on dams might also take food with them rather than trek back to the "Mess Hall." According to one source, Hoover was fond of taking food with him to cook over a fire outside camp. Such a cooked picnic lunch included broiled chops or steak, bacon, roasted corn, and coffee. Even at camp, lunch could be served in several locations. The most common site was the "Mess Hall," but lunch could also be served in front of "Town Hall" overlooking Hemlock Run or on the front porch of "The Brown House." Long complained of the added expense and loss of food when "regular" lunches were changed into picnic lunches or specific foods were substituted for others at the last minute. The only specific lunch-related foods mentioned in extant documents are the corn-on-the-cob that Ishbel MacDonald enjoyed during her October 1929 stay and the grilled steak Lou Henry Hoover served the newspaper women in July 1930.[347]

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[344] "Hoover is a Week-Ender," 24 May 1929. Earl C. Long to Lawrence Richey, "Notes on Commissary Department," p. [8]. Myers, Diary, 29 August 1930, p. 680.

[345] Untitled camp information posted in guest cabins, 1929-1932.

[346] Greene, "Who? Me?," pp. 31-32. "Our Efficient President," 12 August 1929. "Hoover Shines in Chef's Role at River Camp," *Washington Herald*, 3 August 1929. Myers, Diary, 24 May 1931, p. 698.

[347] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 41. Hornaday, 12 June 1932. Earl C. Long to Lawrence Richey, "Notes on Commissary Department," p. [8]. "Rapid Driving," 7 October 1929. "Women Writers Visit," 13 July 1930.

Mid-afternoon snacks or teas were also features of the camp. Helen Hartley Greene White recalled having orange juice and cookies daily at 4:00 PM. Long mentioned the numerous teas that Lou Henry Hoover hosted at Rapidan Camp.[348]

The mid-afternoon fare was necessary to tide guests over until the usual 8:00 PM dinner hour. Dinner was another large meal that usually boasted at least one meat cooked over an outdoor grill. Main courses included broiled steak, broiled fish, broiled or fried chicken, and roasted Virginia-cured ham. According to Long and extant food receipts this list can be lengthened to include leg of lamb, rib roast, lamb chops, and hamburgers. Among the accompanying foods were roasted potatoes and hot waffles. Coffee was served as a beverage and cakes, chocolates, and candies completed the meal.[349]

Other foods that appear in extant receipts that could have been served with any meal include a wide variety of fruits and vegetables; dairy products including cream and milk; and breads such as white, whole wheat, and rolls.[350] Long described his task of buying produce for the camp: "It has been requested by the White House that nothing but the best and plenty of all seasonable fruits be obtained."[351] In keeping with the Hoovers' "dry" position on Prohibition, no alcohol was served at Rapidan Camp. Orange juice was the ubiquitous beverage. Guests, staff members, and newspaper accounts mention drinking orange juice throughout the day. As observed by Helen Hartley Greene White, "Whole carloads of oranges must have been shipped from California."[352]

- Special Occasions

There were few special occasions celebrated at Rapidan Camp. In fact, the only two mentioned in extant documents are Herbert Hoover's fifty-fifth and fifty-sixth birthdays. On both occasions, the "Mess Hall" was specially decorated for the event. Daughter-in-law Peggy Hoover decorated the room in 1929:

> Peggy brough[t] her decorations from Washington also. They consisted of two big, squarish, tallish glass fish ponds borrowed with their very artistic contents from the Bureau of Fisheries. There were not only a lot of little gold fish and sardinelike fish but a most artistic set of greenery to go with it. This she placed in the center of either end of the table and between then had a green island of most lovely five-finger ferns. . . . It made a lovely table, not forgetting to mention her green linen and other checkered napkins.[353]

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[348] Greene, "Who? Me?," p. 33. Earl C. Long to Lawrence Richey, "Notes on Commissary Department," p. [8].

[349] "Autumn Gives Golden Setting," 23 October 1931. "Premier and President Chat," *Washington Star*, 6 October 1929. Earl C. Long to Lawrence Richey, "Notes on Commissary Department," p. [8]. New York Beef Company, Receipt, September 1930, "Rapidan Camp Expenses (Food) 1930," Box 190, Herbert Hoover Personal Papers, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[350] Andrew A. Anselmo, Receipt, 31 August 1930, "Rapidan Camp Expenses (Food) 1930," Box 190, Herbert Hoover Personal Papers, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. Chevy Chase Dairy, Receipt, 31 August 1930, Box 190, Herbert Hoover Personal Papers, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. New York Beef Company, September 1930.

[351] Earl C. Long to Lawrence Richey, "Notes on Commissary Department," p. [8].

[352] Green, "Who? Me?," p. 33.

[353] Lou Henry Hoover to Dare Stark McMullin, 15 August 1929.

Hoover's guests gave him birthday gifts related to fishing:

> Various silly presents had been given to Daddy during the day time but the one that caused the most amusement was from the Secretary of Agriculture (Governor Hyde of Missouri). All the presents had to do with fishing so his was very appropriate: They were in long little boxes that especially prized fish flies come in and one had a regulation leader with a funny looking kind of bug on the end. The Secretary in presenting it said he understood from the paper that the President was recently the recipient of a $1000 rod and $500 reel so in order that he might have appropriate bait for such expensive tackle he was presenting him with a $10,000 fly, -- the same being the corn Borer or Bore Wevil appropriation and so on, presenting more and more expensive 'flies' until he reached the Mediterranean Fruit Fly. I must say as trout flies they all looked a bit gummy and homemade.[354]

For Hoover's fifty-sixth birthday in 1930, Lou Henry Hoover contrived the decorating scheme herself. Boone described the scene years later:

> On this particular birthday Mrs. Hoover had some very interesting favors at each person's place in the little mess hall at the camp. The table was all decorated like a camp. Sawdust was put around the center and then bright blue crepe paper strips were used to represent Mill and Laurel Prongs and the Rapidan itself. Stones were placed all along the banks and the streams. Moss was put on some of the stones and then Boris, the President's valet, made a couple of little bridges out of twigs. Birdhouses were used to represent the cabins. There was a pool made of glass and a lot of celluloid fishes were in the streams and in the pond on the tables. Small branches were used as trees. The effect was very good and made a fine table decoration on a large table for 24 people being seated thereat. The Philippine cook made a beautiful cake with 56 candles on it and built a small revolving table for the cake.[355]

- Discussion

Conversations between the Hoovers and their interesting guests were a pervasive feature of Rapidan Camp. There is little extant evidence to document the nature of the camp's casual discussions, but the Hoovers and the Boones were noted conversationalists. Hoover was noted for his willingness to listen to others and then offer his views when asked. At times he just listened. Boone said, "'He didn't move in on conversation aggressively . . . but would participate passively, thinking about what was being discussed. If those present showed they wanted to hear him, however, he would talk entertainingly on almost any subject.'"[356] Discussions could take place over meals, on hikes or rides, or seated under the trees. Lou Henry Hoover's wide-ranging conversations during hikes were well-known. One account states, "Across stepping stones and fallen

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[354] Lou Henry Hoover to Dare Stark McMullin, 15 August 1929.
[355] Boone, "Autobiography," p. xxii-428.
[356] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 103.

logs, Mrs. Hoover leads the way, chatting to her guests of many things. Her guests marvel at her wide knowledge."[357]

At camp, discussions often took place either in the "Town Hall" or on the porch of the "Town Hall." Because the "Town Hall" boasted two fireplaces, two separate conversation groups were possible. According to the *Christian Science Monitor*, "usually the men gather around one fireplace to discuss politics and affairs of state and the women around the other to chat with Mrs. Hoover on various subjects."[358] Myers wrote in his diary of a discussion around the men's fireplace:

> Dinner at 7.45, - afterwards we went to the 'ell,' & I sat on a bench with my back to the fire, & took part in one of the most interesting discussions of my life, which lasted for about 1 3/4 hrs., until the Pres. arose at 10.25 & said good night. He sat at my right, about 3, or 4 feet off, on a couch, then Asst Post Genl Philp, Asst. Sec. Heath, Mark Sullivan, Ex-Gov. J.P. Goodrich (of Ind.), Mr. Reynders, Mr. Henry M. Robinson (of Los Angeles) said to be Mr. Hoover's closest personal adviser) [sic] and J.N. Darling, I think others, as Dr. Boone, Sec. Richey, etc., came & went from time to time. We began with Civil War military history, then got into politics, and range up and down.[359]

When the Hoovers invited guests to "The Brown House" similar discussions took place on the porch, in the living room, or in the sitting room of that cabin.

- Ping-Pong

There was a large Ping-Pong table located in "Town Hall" for indoor diversion. Here men and women, guests and staff members played against one another, especially in the evenings. It seems that in the course of one evening, if interest was high, several people tried their hands at playing. Myers wrote, "Margaret had a great time playing Ping-Pong with Mrs. McMullin, Miss Hall, Dr. Boone, Mr. Richey & Asst. Sec. (of the Treasury) Terry K. Heath."[360] Ping-Pong was particularly popular among Lou Henry Hoover's secretaries who challenged each other and guests at the table. They were not proclaimed to be the best players, but men and women alike seem to have taken top honors at the game. The *New York Times* dubbed Mrs. Edgar Rickard "an expert at the Ping-Pong table."[361] In August 1930, a "prize" was awarded to the winner of a Ping-Pong tournament:

> Mrs. Hoover at the close of the meal [lunch], called upon ex-Gov. Goodrich (of Indiana) to present to Mr. Darling the prize for winning the Ping-Pong tournament. It was the top of a tin baking-powder can, with a hole through it, and a long piece of blue cloth which was hung around his neck.[362]

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[357] "Autumn Gives Golden Setting," 23 October 1931.
[358] "Autumn Gives Golden Setting," 23 October 1931.
[359] Myers, Diary, 30 August 1930, p. 681.
[360] Myers, Diary, 29 August 1930, p. 680.
[361] "Mrs. Hoover Closes the Rapidan Camp," *New York Times*, 5 December 1932.
[362] Myers, Diary, 31 August 1930, p. 682.

- Puzzles and Board Games

Piecing together "picture" puzzles was a popular indoor and outdoor pastime. An extant photograph shows Boone and Richey working on a puzzle on a table beneath the trees. Another shows a puzzle "in progress" on a table on the "Town Hall" porch. [363] Some of the puzzles were quite large and intricate requiring the work of many guests over the course of a weekend to complete. Boone recalled one engaging puzzle:

> One [puzzle] I had there was very absorbing. It was an 1800-piece one which Mr. and Mrs. Milbank brought to the camp the last time they were at the Rapidan. Working on it with me for a while on this large intricate puzzle were Senator Vandenburg and Mark Sullivan. Even the President became intrigued and helped out towards the end of getting the puzzle together. I was pleased when he would sit down and work on the puzzle, for it would seem to thoroughly relax him and take his mind off other things, as it did for me.[364]

Boone, Richey, and Herbert Hoover Jr. were particularly interested in piecing together puzzles. By the end of Hoover's presidential term, there were two boxes of puzzles to be removed from Rapidan Camp.[365]

Seemingly less popular tabletop diversions were board games. There were a backgammon table, a chess board, and other games in "Town Hall" but no mention of anyone using them.[366] In a picture of one of the "Town Hall" fireplaces, a backgammon board lies open on a low stool. A picture of the "Town Hall" porch includes a chess or checkerboard set up for play.[367]

- Knitting

According to Smith, Lou Henry Hoover knit "endlessly." Her needles were not idle during her time at Rapidan Camp. On the signs posted in the guests' cabins, she listed "knitting" as one of the activities which took place in "Town Hall." Presumably she knit there after dinner near one of the fireplaces. She also knit outside and in "The Brown House." When Christine Vest Witcofski saw the restored "Brown House" one of the features she missed most about the Hoover era was Lou Henry Hoover's knitting. Extant photographs depict Lou Henry Hoover knitting out on the grassy bank of Hemlock Run. In one she appears with Herbert Hoover and their dog "Weegie." The knitting in

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[363] Photograph, 1930-1932, Negative 110-50, Shenandoah National Park, VA. Photograph, 1930-1932, Negative 110-20, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[364] Boone, "Autobiography," p. xxii-842.

[365] Typed inventory of goods to ship or store – Camp and S. Street, ca. 1933, "Hoover Household Shipments, 1920-1933," Philippi Harding Butler, Personal Papers, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[366] "Packing Lists to February 1, 1933," ca. 1 February 1933, "Hoover Household Shipments, 1920-1933," Philippi Harding Butler, Personal Papers, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. "Autumn Gives Golden Setting, 23 October 1931.

[367] Photograph, 1930-1932, Negative 1799, Shenandoah National Park, VA. Photograph, 1930-1932, Negative 110-20, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

her lap is connected via strands of yarn to a bag sitting atop a short, possibly Clore-made, stool.[368]

- Reading

One of the solitary activities in which the Hoovers and their guests participated was reading. The Hoovers had long been voracious readers forever seeking reading material. While living in China, Lou Henry Hoover wrote imploring her family to send them the latest books and magazines from the United States.

Despite its out-of-the-way location, Rapidan Camp was well-supplied with the latest newspapers, magazines, and books. Periodicals were dropped by airplane. Hoover received the daily newspapers while still in bed. Boone described Hoover's approach to newspapers: "'He practically absorbed the papers . . . - even the sports pages. He had followed sports ever since his years at Stanford - was like a boy in relation to sports. But he read the other news too - almost everything.'"[369]

Books were located on bookshelves in "Town Hall." Current books and newspapers also were placed on guests' bedside tables. Books came to the camp with guests, were ordered from a library, were gifts to the White House, or were purchased by Lou Henry Hoover.[370] Of particular note were the "mystery stories" favored by Herbert Hoover. According to the *Christian Science Monitor*, in the "Town Hall" a "good-sized bookshelf is filled with late books, with a whole section devoted to mystery stories with which the President likes to read himself to sleep."[371]

In addition to periodicals and the latest novels, the camp was also stocked with information regarding the local flora, fauna, and history of the Rapidan Camp area. Some of this information; including a booklet on local trees, pictures of native birds, and a booklet on local history; was provided by the Virginia superintendent of schools. Other information requested, but not necessarily received from the superintendent concerned mammals, flowers, fish, and snakes.[372] Presumably these materials were requested so that the Hoovers and their guests could answer questions regarding the local flora and fauna they encountered on their many excursions.

- Convalescing

In marked contrast to the many physically demanding outdoor activities undertaken at Rapidan Camp, the camp was also seen as a place for family members to convalesce when ill or injured. In August 1929 Lou Henry Hoover took her son Allan to the camp while he recovered from a "minor stomach disorder." During July he spent two

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[368] Smith, *Uncommon Man*, p. 120. Untitled camp information posted in guest cabins, 1929-1932. Christine Vest Witcofski to friend, ca. 1965. *New York Herald Tribune*, Photograph, 20 August 1932, Number 1932-35A, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[369] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 103.

[370] Greene, "Who? Me?," p. 31.

[371] Greene, "Who? Me?," p. 31. "Autumn Gives Golden Setting," 23 October 1931.

[372] Raymond V. Long, superintendent of schools, to Lawrence Richey, 6 August 1930, "Rapidan Camp, Books for Camp Library, 1930," Box 189, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

weeks in bed at the White House and then in early August went to the camp for more rest.[373]

In 1930, Lou Henry Hoover injured her back in a fall at the White House. As soon as she was able to move, Boone advised her to go to rest at Rapidan Camp. She brought a wheel chair with her in July, but soon discarded it.[374]

The illness for which Rapidan Camp was best known was Herbert Hoover Jr.'s case of tuberculosis (see "Herbert Hoover Jr."). In September of 1930, Boone diagnosed Herbert Hoover Jr. with a small tubercular spot on his lung and an "inflamed" digestive system. Because of its proximity to Washington, DC and its cool climate, Hoover Jr. was sent to the camp to convalesce until the first frost. In October he was moved farther south to Asheville, North Carolina. At Rapidan Camp, Hoover Jr. spent his time in bed at "Five Tents." There he was cared for by a male nurse, his wife Peggy, and Lou Henry Hoover.

Activities Not at the Camp

While there were plenty of activities for camp guests to enjoy, outside offers of more recreational equipment were declined. The most notable offer was a scheme in which Carson wished to coerce the towns surrounding the camp to each fund an entertainment facility such as a swimming pool, a billiard table, or a bowling alley. In answer to a letter to Richey detailing this plan, "NO" was written in large block letters next to the offending paragraph.[375]

A Typical Weekend[376]

The size of a Rapidan Camp party could range from a small group of twelve to the maximum the camp could hold, twenty-five. For most guests, a weekend at Rapidan Camp started with a three to three-and-a-half hour car ride from Washington, DC. Those not in Washington usually traveled to meet a White House car which then transported them to the camp. The Hoovers and their guests left for the camp either in late afternoon on Friday (about 4:00 PM) or early in the morning on Saturday (7:00 to 8:00 AM). At times there were guests who went to or left from the camp on their own schedules: arriving a day late, spending only an afternoon, leaving early, etc.

With a 4:00 PM Friday departure from Washington, guests arrived at camp around 7:00 or 7:30 PM with a little time to spare before dinner. During that time they could wash, change clothes, and settle into their cabins. Dinner was served in the "Mess Hall" around 8:00 PM. After dinner the Hoovers and their guests would repair to the "Town Hall" or to the living room of "The Brown House" for after-dinner conversation

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[373] "Mrs. Hoover Nurses Her Younger Son at Mountain Camp," *Washington Star*, 15 August 1929.

[374] "Mrs. Hoover to Return Soon," 11 July 1930.

[375] William E. Carson to Lawrence Richey, 5 September 1929, "Rapidan Camp, Carson W.E. Correspondence, 1929," Box 189, Herbert Hoover Presidential Period, 1929-33: President's Personal File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[376] The following section is drawn from information supplied in William Starr Myers' diary entries, Sallie McCracken's Oral History, the 1929 letter from W.P. McCracken Jr. to W.P. McCracken Sr., and Helen Hartley Greene's account, "Who? Me?."

and activities. The Hoovers generally retired to their cabin to relax alone and sleep around 10:00 to 10:30 PM. Guests and staff members often stayed up later than the Hoovers.

Breakfast was served at 8:00 AM in the "Mess Hall." Early risers could squeeze in a walk or fishing trip before the morning meal. After breakfast, guests could remain in camp taking part in on-site recreation, could leave camp on a hike or horseback ride, or could stray a short distance from camp fishing in or damming up the Rapidan River. It seems likely that the party split up and pursued a variety of activities from after breakfast to just before dinner. Those going far afield or not inclined to return until late afternoon carried their snacks and lunch. For those who were in camp during the day, snacks (or tea) were served around 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM. Lunch was served roughly at midday in the "Mess Hall," in front of "Town Hall," or on "The Brown House" porch. If guests were scheduled to attend one of the Hoovers in the afternoon, guests were generally given an hour after lunch in which to rest before their appointments.

Several factors influenced how people used their time at the camp: the reason they were invited, their sex, and with whom they were spending time. While people of both sexes participated in most of the activities, there were certain dividing lines partially influenced by the interests of Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover. Herbert Hoover, depending on the goal of the weekend, could be found in meetings, fishing, building dams, or reading and resting. Lou Henry Hoover spent her time primarily hiking and riding horseback, but could also be found knitting and reading. Guests accompanying Herbert Hoover could join him in fishing or dam building. Guests accompanying Lou Henry Hoover often took hikes and horseback rides with her. Male and female staff members could stand in place of their hosts in entertaining guests. Men spending time with Richey and Boone were likely to engage in their favorite on-site activities of horseshoes, piecing puzzles, and playing Ping-Pong. Women in the company of Lou Henry Hoover's secretaries were likely to hike, ride horses, or play Ping-Pong. Although no extant accounts describe guests hiking, riding, or reading alone, it seems likely that some people did. George Cole Scott described a solo fishing trip.[377]

When the presidential party left Washington for the camp on Saturday morning, it generally arrived just before lunchtime. Guests washed, changed, and settled before going to lunch. After lunch they participated in work or recreational activities until before dinner time. Although dinner dress was informal, it seems that most people washed and dressed for the 8:00 dinner hour.

Most guests departed the camp after lunch on Sunday afternoon, but Hoover family members, staff members, and selected guests often stayed until Monday morning. On Monday morning those remaining rose early, ate breakfast at 6:00 or 7:00, and left the camp between 6:30 and 7:30 AM. They generally arrived in Washington, ready to work, between 9:30 and 10:30 AM.

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[377] Scott, "First Waters," p. [2].

Neighbors

- Madison County Day, 17 August 1929

The Madison County Chamber of Commerce was quick to organize a large-scale event for August 1929 in order to "formally welcome" the Hoovers "as residents of Virginia and Madison County." The *Madison County Eagle* described the upcoming day boastfully:

> Saturday is not only going to be Madison county's biggest day, but the biggest day in the United States of America or any of its possessions.
>
> Herbert Hoover, ruler of the greatest nation on earth is to be the guest of his neighbors in the county which he has honored by selecting it for his summer playground, where for the nonce he can put aside the great responsibilities and cares the American people have willed he should bear. . . .
>
> Proud and grateful that he chose a spot within its confines for his fishing preserve and desiring to tell him so, the citizens of the county invited Mr. Hoover to pay them a visit next Saturday.
>
> He accepted and promised a short, informal address in response to expressions of thanks. So Saturday was designated 'Madison County Day,' and mighty preparations were begun.[378]

Highlights of the day included Governor Harold F. Byrd flying to the event in a blimp, speeches, and, of course, food. The speakers for the day included Carson, Byrd, Hoover, and Dr. Clore, the head of the chamber of commerce. The speeches lasted for half an hour and then lunch was served to a crowd of 10,000 people.[379] The Hoover party originally planned to return to the camp for lunch, but decided to stay and sample the local fare. According to W.P. McCracken, a member of the Hoover party:

> About 10.30 Saturday morning we left camp to go to the barbecue at Madison, Va. It was a typical country affair. . . . The barbecue was held at the County Fair Grounds and they had a crowd of about 10,000 people, who all came in automobiles. It was a beautiful day, but a trifle warm in the sun. After the speeches and music we gathered in the Grove and partook of fried chicken, potato salad, Virginia ham sandwiches and sweet potato pie.[380]

The food was made by the citizens of Madison County who produced so much that the leftovers were sent to the Marines at Rapidan Camp.[381]

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[378] "Madison County Day at Hand," *Madison County Eagle*, 16 August 1929.
[379] "Madison County's Glorious Day," *Madison County Eagle*, 23 August 1929.
[380] W.P. McCracken Jr. to W.P. McCracken Sr., 29 August 1929.
[381] "Glorious Day," 23 August 1929.

- Mountain People and Hoover School

During excursions from camp on horse and foot, the Hoovers and their guests met the "mountain people" who dwelled near Rapidan Camp. Ray McKinley Buracker, or the "possum boy," became the most famous of the mountain people. The origins of and the true possum boy story are unclear, but the president's meeting Ray Buracker is believed to have been the inspiration for the Hoover school.

The essence of the story is that Ray Buracker, son of a local mountain family, visited Herbert Hoover on his fifty-fifth birthday, 10 August 1929. The impetus for the boy's visit is given variously as encouragement from Lou Henry Hoover, Boone, or the press corps. The boy brought a possum for the president. Again, it is unclear whether the possum was a gift of the boy's own devising, it was Boone's or the press corps' idea, or Hoover asked for the possum. At any rate, Hoover offered Buracker five dollars in return for the animal. While at the camp, Buracker met Charles Lindbergh. Accounts of this meeting also vary. Some emphasize the backwards lifestyle of the mountain people by stating that Buracker had never heard of Lindbergh, while others play up Lindbergh's fame by claiming that even a mountain boy said "'Why it's Lindy!'"[382]

Apparently during Hoover's meeting with Buracker, he learned that there were several nearby mountain children who had never been to school. Hoover then met with Ray's father, George Buracker, who acted as a part-time preacher and community leader in the area. Buracker, who himself had never gone to school and could not read, agreed to advocate the idea of a local school for the mountain children. There were five nearby families containing about twenty children. Hoover agreed to supply the money for a schoolhouse and materials if the Commonwealth of Virginia would supply funds for a school teacher.[383]

On 24 February 1930, the Hoover or Rapidan school opened to receive seventeen children.[384] According to the *Harrisonburg Daily News Record*:

> The Rapidan School House has served as a church on Sunday and a community center for the adults as well as for the youths of the mountains in that neighborhood, the President having provided radio and motion pictures. He had built an apartment at one end of the school house for the teacher, equipped with all the modern conveniences, such as a frigidaire, etc. He also presented her with a horse that she might keep in touch with the homes of her pupils and for her recreation.[385]

The school house was located on a 1.58-acre tract purchased by Hoover. The first teacher at the Hoover school was Christine Vest, trained at Berea College in Kentucky. She taught at the school until March 1933, when she left to marry Louis Witcofski, a

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[382] "Whether Prearranged or Not, Visit of Mountain Boy to Camp Provides an Interesting Sidelight on Local Hill Side[?]." Newspaper article, Unknown newspaper, ca. 1930[?], Folder 15, Catalogue # 13004, Resource Management Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[383] "President Heads Drive to Educate Blue Ridge Children," *Page News & Courier*, 6 September 1929.

[384] Untitled draft didactic labels for Rapidan Camp, ca. 1960.

[385] "Hoover Picked Camp in Blue Ridge to Help Park Plans," *Harrisonburg Daily News Record*, 13 January 1933.

pharmacist's mate in the Marines at Rapidan Camp.[386] Lucy Yowell was a later teacher at the school. She taught classes for mountain children, mountain adults, and Civilian Conservation Corps workers. Enrollment in the school decreased as the mountain people moved out of the park in the later 1930s. Eventually the school was dismantled, taken to the Big Meadows area, and used as a ranger station and residence.[387] The building, "Big Meadows Hoover School," is listed on the National register of Historic Places as a contributing resource in the Big Meadows component of the Skyline Drive Historic District (Boundary Expansion), approved 12 September 1997.[388]

- E.A. Clore Sons, Inc.

E.A. Clore Sons, Inc. is a family-owned furniture factory located in Madison, Virginia. The earliest Clore to make furniture in America (the earliest Clores came from Germany) was Moses Clore in 1830. According to the *Madison County Eagle*, "E.A. Clore and Sons have a furniture plant that would be an asset to any community and their business is growing by leaps and bounds."[389]

In April 1930, the Clore factory was selected to reproduce a small-scale replica of "The Brown House" to occupy the Madison County float at a state apple blossom festival in Winchester, VA.[390]

In July 1930, Lou Henry Hoover toured the Clore business seeing the factory equipment and showroom in the process. While there she purchased two small walnut chairs, oak splints to make seats for the chairs, and two foot stools.[391] The Hoovers commissioned the Clores to make other pieces of furniture for the camp, but the number of Clore objects at the camp is unclear. According to Mildred Hall Campbell, "Mrs. Hoover had the Clore Furniture Factory - a local place - make the beds and chairs and other furniture out of native wood."[392] In 1937 when Lou Henry Hoover was dealing with the disposition of her camp furniture she wrote to Gertrude Bowman regarding "two of the beds (made near Criglersville)."[393] Unfortunately, there are no extant, identifiable pieces of Clore furniture currently at Rapidan Camp.

The enterprise burned in October, 1930 so records of sales to the Hoovers were destroyed. The furniture produced by Clore has changed little over the years, but in a current catalogue only two objects, a foot stool and a child's chair, are similar to objects in 1929-1932 photographs of "The Brown House."

A visit to the Clore showroom confirmed that the company's current products do not resemble the Hoover's camp furnishings. Daniel Clore, patriarch of the current

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[386] "Hoovers Deed Summer White House to State," *Madison County Eagle*, 13 January 1933. Joel T. Boone, "Introduction," in Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. v. "Hoover School Needs Funds for Reopening." Newspaper article, Unknown newspaper, 11 October [ca. 1933], Folder 6, "National Park Clippings," Box 11, Series II, L. Ferdinand Zerkel Papers, Shenandoah National Park, VA. Christine Vest Witcofski to friend, ca. 1965.

[387] Lambert, *Hideaway*, pp. 98-99.

[388] Clifford Tobias to author, 10 December 1999.

[389] "Mrs. Hoover Impressed with Furniture Plant," *Madison County Eagle*, 11 July 1930.

[390] "Summer White House on Madison County Float," *Madison County Eagle*, 25 April 1930. "First Lady Buys 2 Chairs in Shop in Hollow for Grandchildren," *Page News & Courier*, 25 July 1930.

[391] "Impressed with Furniture Plant," 11 July 1930.

[392] Campbell, Memoir, p. 10.

[393] Lou Henry Hoover to Gertrude Bowman, 20 April 1937.

operation and involved in the making of furniture for the Hoovers, could not identify positively objects in Hoover-era photographs of the cabin. The only object he felt confident in attributing to Clore manufacture is an oak-splint-woven screen located in Lou Henry Hoover's bedroom. However, Daniel and other Clore family members agreed that Clore may have made much of the wooden furniture in the photographs as a special order.

On 20 October 1930, the Clore factory burned to the ground. This was the second time in five years because it had burned down in 1927.[394] To help rebuild the factory, the Hoovers and their fellow-Madison countymen offered loans. Within a month the Clore's neighbors had raised $400 and the Hoovers had contributed $200 towards the $5,000 loan the Clores needed to rebuild. In return for the Hoovers' generosity, the Clores named a table and a chair after their grandchildren, Peter and Peggy. When the factory was rebuilt the Hoovers received the first piece of furniture made: a four-poster bed for Rapidan Camp.[395] E.A. Clore Sons, Inc. continues to make furniture today.

William E. Carson Trust (1932-1934)

Through a deed of trust the Hoovers made William E. Carson the trustee of Rapidan Camp and the Hoover school properties on 20 December 1932. Carson was to hold the property in trust for the Commonwealth of Virginia until it was condemned as part of Shenandoah National Park. The Hoovers removed their belongings from the camp and left all that was made or purchased by the Marines for the use of future presidents.[396]

The Rapidan Camp tract was appraised at $24,346 during the condemnation proceedings. In February 1934, Hoover and his associates learned that the Eagle Hardwood Lumber Company of Charlottesville, Virginia, was filing a cross-claim on the property.[397] In March 1934, Carson wrote to Richey:

> the Eagle Lumber Company which bought up extensive areas of timber lands in the Blue Ridge Mountains before the [First World] war, but has long been out of business, has come to life under the stimulation of the substantial award allowed for the Hoover tract, and is claiming title under an old patent.

The matter was resolved late in 1934 with a compromise between the parties in which a sum of $26,461.90 was divided as follows: as Hoover's trustee, Carson was

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[394] "The Clore Family Maintains Furniture-Making Tradition," *Madison Eagle Bicentennial Edition*, 16 April 1992.

[395] The design of this bed is unknown. Faye C. Fishback, "The E.A. Clore Family." Photocopy, 1984, E.A. Clore Sons, Inc., Madison, VA. "Mrs. Hoover Gets First Piece of Furniture," *Madison County Eagle*, 17 April 1931.

[396] Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover, Deed of trust to William E. Carson, 20 December 1932, Madison County Deeds, Book 51, pp. 331-334, Madison County Courthouse, Madison, VA. Frederic Bates Butler to Taylor Hoskins, 13 August 1963.

[397] Shackelford & Robertson to Herbert Hoover, 17 February 1934, "Rapidan Camp, Correspondence 1932-1938," Box 262, Herbert Hoover, Post-presidential Papers, 1933-64: Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

awarded $23,461 and the Eagle Hardwood Lumber Company was awarded $3,400 for its portion of the property.[398]

Hoover's donation of 165.58 acres to the new Shenandoah National Park was, according to period newspapers, the largest single donation of property to the new park. On 26 December 1934, the Commonwealth of Virginia deeded the condemned land to the United States of America.[399]

National Park Service Ownership (1935-Present)

The Rapidan Camp tract became a part of the newly formed Shenandoah National Park when the Department of the Interior accepted the condemned lands on 26 December 1935.[400]

- National Park Service Occupation (1935-1948)

As early as 1933, questions arose regarding the fate of Rapidan Camp. Hoover had donated the camp land and buildings with the intention that it be used as a fishing camp by the future presidents. Unfortunately, due to physical handicaps, his immediate successor could not make use of the camp.

In response to frantic phone calls from Carson and Virginia State Senators, Roosevelt agreed to visit Rapidan Camp in April 1933.[401] In preparation for this visit, buildings were repaired and ramps were placed over the steps to ease access. On 9 April Roosevelt made a day trip to the camp with Eleanor Roosevelt, his son John Roosevelt, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, and several others. Director of the National Park Service Horace M. Albright met the party at Panorama on Skyline Drive.[402]

When the party reached Rapidan Camp it was soon evident that Roosevelt would be unable to enjoy the camp because of its rugged terrain. Albright recalled:

> we found out as soon as we got there that the President couldn't handle that, couldn't have stayed around there. It wouldn't be a good place for him . . . [in text] He tried to walk a ways, but he couldn't, so - I happened to be one of the fellows right near him - we carried him down to the President's house. Put him on the porch. And later on he went through the place, and he said he thought the terrain was too rough. And I think we all understood that - although we were disappointed.[403]

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[398] "Hoover Camp Title is Finally Settled," 21 December 1934[?].

[399] "Hoover's Gift of Rapidan Camp Makes Him Largest Property Donor to Park," *Harrisonburg Daily News Record*, ca. 1933. Secretary of the interior to Herbert Hoover, ca. 1946, "D34 - Camp Hoover," Administrative Files, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[400] Secretary of the interior to Herbert Hoover, ca. 1946.

[401] "Va. Papers Laud Roosevelt Visit." Newspaper article, Unknown newspaper, 16 April 1933, Folder 7 "National Park Clippings," Box 11, Series II, L. Ferdinand Zerkel Papers, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[402] Lambert, *Hideaway*, pp. 125-126.

[403] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 126.

Roosevelt's stay amounted to a two-hour picnic lunch on the porch of "The Brown House." Although he said he would return, he never did. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) made preparations for this second visit that never occurred. Eleanor Roosevelt visited the camp again with a group of female friends.[404]

In 1934 park officials were asked to draw up plans for making the Rapidan Camp buildings self-sufficient by adding kitchens. The plans were drawn, but never acted upon.[405] In 1935, Harold Ickes considered the status of Rapidan Camp. He felt that although Roosevelt could not use the camp, it still should be kept for the use of future presidents. In the interim, the facilities were to be made available to Cabinet members and, occasionally, members of Congress. Those wishing to use the camp would apply for a use permit which would be issued "only with great discretion." According to Lambert, Ickes gave Secretary of the Navy Claude Swanson permission to use the camp indefinitely. The Swansons used the camp from 1935 to early July 1939 when Swanson died there. Upon Swanson's death, all Navy equipment was removed from the camp and the Marines were withdrawn. A caretaker was hired to serve in their stead.[406]

Because of the camp buildings' infrequent use, exposure to the weather, and temporary construction, maintaining them was an issue for the park very early in its ownership. As early as 1935, the park admitted that Rapidan Camp was in a state of disrepair, but that the buildings would be repaired as soon as possible.[407] They were not.

For a brief period in 1941 to 1942, the park considered allowing a concessionaire, Sky-Line Company, Inc., to operate the camp as guest lodging. To this end park employees were asked to take inventory of the appliances and tablewares available at the camp. This plan was scrapped in early 1942 when, in the midst of World War II, rubber and gasoline became rare commodities.[408]

In 1942 the issue of maintaining the camp buildings was addressed in no uncertain terms. In late February 1942 Superintendent Edward Freeland wrote to the director of the National Park Service asking whether Shenandoah National Park was responsible for the upkeep of these buildings "more or less of a temporary nature" and "reserved for special use." The buildings required considerable repairs. He also asked if some of the Marine camp buildings could be razed to aid in the maintenance of the president's camp and other park buildings.[409] The reply Freeland received was that Shenandoah was responsible for the maintenance of the buildings, that there was money for the salary of a caretaker and a small sum for repairs, that the park was to absorb the cost of the bulk of the repairs, and that the Marine camp buildings were not to be

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[404] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 126.

[405] The 1934 National Park Service generated plans exist for the three extant cabins, but no others. (Reed Engle, electronic message to author, 13 October 1999.)

[406] Charles E. Peterson, deputy chief architect, to Roland W. Rogers, 25 May 1934, "D34 - Camp Hoover," Administrative Files, Shenandoah National Park, VA. Harold Ickes, secretary of the interior, to Director Cammerer, 24 April 1935, "D34 - Camp Hoover," Administrative Files, Shenandoah National Park, VA. Lambert, *Hideaway*, pp. 128-129. Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 129.

[407] "Park Service Promises," 2 October 1935.

[408] A.E. Demaray to superintendent Lassiter, 12 July 1941, "D34 - Camp Hoover," Administrative Files, Shenandoah National Park, VA. Superintendent Edward D. Freeland to T. McCall Frasier, 27 April 1942, "D34 - Camp Hoover," Administrative Files, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[409] Superintendent Edward D. Freeland to T. McCall Frasier, 27 April 1942

razed.[410] This last mandate was reversed shortly thereafter because a crew razed the Marine camp buildings in 1944. Up until that time the caretaker had lived at the Marine camp. When the Marine buildings were removed, "The Creel" became the new caretaker's quarters.[411]

Two years after the successful removal of the Marine camp, Freeland began campaigning for the removal of the president's camp citing a lack of funds for maintenance and lack of usefulness to the general public. The regional director concurred stating that the buildings should be razed and the site allowed to return to "as nearly as possible its former natural state." The president's camp was not razed and was in the care of sixty-one-year-old E.B. Jewell in 1947.[412]

A new plan was on the horizon for Rapidan Camp in December 1947. At that time officials representing the National Capital Area Council, Boy Scouts of America, visited the camp to determine its suitability for use as a scout camp. Boy Scout use of the camp was debated for a short time. Some felt that a portion of a national park should not be reserved for the use of a special interest group. Some felt that the camp should be eliminated from the park and given to the Boy Scouts until such time as it was needed as a presidential camp. Finally, National Park Service officials consulted with Hoover who granted permission for the Boy Scouts to occupy the camp. Despite obvious shortcomings in the site (difficult access, no lake for water sports, cabins instead of the preferred tent sites), the Boy Scouts signed a twenty-year lease for the camp in 1948.[413]

- National Capital Area Council, Boy Scouts of America Occupation (1948-1958)

The Boy Scouts took occupation of Rapidan Camp in 1948. Scouts used the camp for short-term camping in the spring, fall, and winter seasons. There was also a four-week-long summer session during which resident staff members serving as trail leaders, craft leaders, and naturalists were on site.[414] The boy scouts also employed a year-round caretaker to live at and maintain the camp.

During a 1949 inspection trip, the acting chief ranger noted progress the scouts had made in adapting the camp to their needs and repairing the camp buildings. He was dismayed by the clearing of trees for the construction of tent frames, a fireplace, and a pit

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[410] Hillory A. Tolson, chief of operations, National Park Service, to superintendent, 11 March 1942, "D34 - Camp Hoover," Administrative Files, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[411] Superintendent Edward D. Freeland to regional director, 10 September 1946, "D34 - Camp Hoover," Administrative Files, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[412] Superintendent Edward D. Freeland to regional director, 10 September 1946. Thomas J. Allen, regional director, region 1, to director National Park Service, 13 September 1946, "D34 - Camp Hoover," Administrative Files, Shenandoah National Park, VA. Stanley Baitz, "Rapidan 'Ghost' Camp," *Sunday Star Pictorial Magazine*, 27 July 1947.

[413] Conrad L. Wirth, chief of lands, to Assistant Secretary C. Girard Davidson, 16 December 1947, Folder 7, Catalogue # 13004, Resource Management Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA. Herbert Hoover to Hon. Julius Krug, secretary of the interior, 18 February 1948, "Rapidan Camp Correspondence, 1932-1938," Box 262, Herbert Hoover, Post-presidential Papers, 1933-64: Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. Shenandoah National Park to National Capital Area, Boy Scouts of America, Lease, 1948, Folder 7, Catalogue # 13004, Resource Management Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[414] "Camp Herbert Hoover Guide Book," 1953, Folder 7, Catalogue # 13004, Resource Management Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA, p. 2.

toilet. He dispelled their idea of constructing a dam on Laurel Prong to create a swimming area. He described the work completed on the buildings:

> Considerable work has been done in the camp. Porches have been removed, partitions changed, and stoves and cooking utensils placed in all the lower cabins which include 'Trail's End,' 'The Slums,' 'Ishbell,' 'Prime Minister,' and 'The President's Cabin' and 'Town Hall.' A toilet similar to the one at the established tent campsite has been constructed between 'The Slums' and 'Ishbell' cabins.[415]

During the Boy Scouts' tenure, the park had repeated problems with the unauthorized removal of trees, the unauthorized construction of buildings, and the inability of the Boy Scouts to maintain the facilities within fire code. The Boy Scouts had issues with the water supply, adequate telephone facilities, road conditions and access, and the lack of a swimming area.

Also in 1949, an article appeared in the *New York Times* stating that a Washington-based civic group headed by Gertrude Bowman and Lawrence Richey was planning to restore "The Brown House" as a historic furnished interior to memorialize the Hoovers. According to the article:

> The Hoover cabin with its historic furniture will be preserved as it was when the Hoovers used it. It will not be occupied, but will be a memorial. The furnishings consist of twin beds, hand-made benches, tables, candlesticks, lamps, rugs, spreads and chairs. Other cottages will be gradually restored to the use of Boy Scout officers and as recreation rooms.[416]

The officials at Shenandoah National Park were not aware of this project which came to nothing except a change in name from "Rapidan Camp" to "Camp Hoover."[417] Until recently, "Camp Hoover" continued to be the common name for the site.

The Boy Scouts lost their caretaker in 1951, likely the aging E.B. Jewell, due to illness. In 1952, thirty-year-old Cletus Nichols was the caretaker for the Boy Scout camp.[418]

A 1953 promotional flier indicates how the camp functioned during the Boy Scouts' occupation. At that time there were nine sites available for troops to rent. Two sites were "cleared areas with water, latrine and firewood." There were three "equipped" sites which offered "tents, tent platforms, cots, kitchen and dining shelter, tables, benches, latrine, water and firewood." There were also four available cabins; "The Prime Minister," "Ishbel," "Trail's End," and "Mellon" (likely "The Slums"); which were equipped with "bunks, mattresses, water, tables, benches, latrine, lights, stove and

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[415] Thomas K. Garry, acting chief ranger, to superintendent, 15 March 1949, "D34 - Camp Hoover," Administrative Files, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[416] "Shrine to Hoovers," 5 June 1949.

[417] Thomas J. Allen, regional director, to Superintendent Freeland, 7 June 1949, Folder 7, Catalogue # 13004, Resource Management Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[418] Thomas R. Uffalman, camp director, to Shenandoah National Park, 25 July 1951, Folder 7, Catalogue # 13004, Resource Management Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA. "Rapidan Camp Kept in Repair by Scouts, Ready for Eisenhower," *Washington Evening Star*, 11 December 1952.

firewood." "The Creel" was still the caretaker's quarters and "Town Hall" functioned as storage and "Trading Post."[419]

The "Trading Post" supplied to troops nonperishable staple items while "Fresh meat, milk and produce [could] be secured by the Camp Staff on 24-hour notice." Scout troops planned and prepared their own meals at their individual camp sites.[420] A 1953 guide book provided troop leaders with menu suggestions for three meals a day. Breakfasts included fruits, hot and cold cereals, a hot dish of eggs or French toast, bread, and chocolate. Lunches included soups, vegetables, hot and cold meats, puddings, and fruit juice. Dinners included hot meats, potatoes, vegetables, and desserts.[421]

In addition to preparing meals, scouts were expected to maintain their camp sites and participate in appropriate camp-related activities. Like the Hoovers' guests, the Boy Scouts were expected to go on nature hikes through the woods. Starting in 1954, with the acquisition of two burros, the camp established a program of overnight burro trips. There were facilities for volley ball and quoits, but leaders were encouraged to limit these games in favor of other activities. In 1955 the list of games had expanded to include archery. Scouts also were encouraged to swim in streams and participate in wood crafting exercises. In terms of religious services, troops usually conducted their own community services. Catholic troops were encouraged to arrange for a priest to come to camp because the nearest local one was in Culpeper, twenty-five miles away.[422]

In 1954, the summer camp season was further enlivened when Herbert Hoover and Lawrence Richey visited Camp Hoover in June. During their visit they enjoyed a barbecue and Hoover shared memories of Rapidan Camp with the boys. Other visitors that day included Delmer H. Wilson, scout executive of the National Capital Area Council and Superintendent Guy Edwards of Shenandoah National Park.[423]

In May 1958, the National Capital Area Council, Boy Scouts of America terminated its lease with Shenandoah National Park. It cited as its reasons the lack of swimming facilities and budget issues. The president of the Boy Scouts of America wrote to the secretary of the interior:

> Unfortunately, we have arrived at a point where it is necessary, because of budget limitations, for us to discontinue the maintenance and operation of this property. We are no longer able to afford employment of a caretaker, utilities, maintenance of buildings, necessary vehicles, and other expenses involved. At the inception of this lease we received a Foundation grant of $50,000 for these purposes but these funds are now entirely expended -- largely on building restoration and maintenance -- and we have not been able to secure more additional funds.[424]

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[419] "Camp is Calling: Camp Hoover Summer Reservations," 1953, Folder 5, Resource Management Records, # 13004, Shenandoah National Park, VA. Andrew J. Murphy, assistant scout executive, to superintendent Guy Edwards, 4 December 1953, Folder 7, Catalogue # 13004, Resource Management Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[420] "Camp is Calling," 1953.

[421] "Camp Hoover Guide Book," 1953, p. 12.

[422] "Camp Hoover Guide Book," 1953, pp. 6-8.

[423] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 135.

[424] Philip Larner Gore, president, Boy Scouts of America, to Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton, 23 May 1958, in Herbert Hoover, Records for Tract #180.

By November of the same year, the Boy Scouts had removed all of its equipment from the site.[425]

- National Park Service Occupation (1958-Present)

When the Boy Scouts left, the National Park Service again consulted with Hoover regarding the fate of Rapidan Camp. He referred park officials to Boone and Richey for advice. With their guidance the park decided to retain three cabins: "The Brown House," "The Prime Minister," and "The Creel." Although Boone and Richey wanted to retain the "Town Hall" and "Mess Hall" because of their importance to the camp community, their poor condition precluded restoration. Less than a year after the Boy Scouts vacated the premises, the National Park Service razed twenty-one buildings dating from both the Hoover and Boy Scout periods. The remnants were sold as scrap for $331.[426]

The three remaining cabins were repaired and refurnished from 1960 to 1963 at a cost of about $28,000. R. Taylor Hoskins became superintendent of Shenandoah National Park in 1960 and soon thereafter tackled this job.[427] Boone was involved with researching the early furnishings and making connections with the Hoovers' former staff members. A good portion of the restoration was finished by the time Boone started to contact others to obtain information and photographs for a history of Rapidan Camp. In November of 1962, Boone wrote to Butler, "The cabin occupied by President and Mrs. Hoover has been completely restored, as have the Prime Minister's Cabin and Creel Cabin."[428]

In late 1962, Boone contacted Earl C. Long, Gertrude Bowman, and Lou Henry Hoover's five secretaries. Philippi Harding Butler and Long were the most helpful. Long supplied, among other things, complete lists of the guests who visited Rapidan Camp from 1929 to 1932. Butler offered suggestions of where objects such as the Navajo rugs might be found and her opinions on how the missing camp buildings could be interpreted to the public.[429]

One of Boone's tasks was to track down objects originally used in the camp buildings. By November 1962, Hoskins had already "located some of the furnishings and [had] made some others."[430] Unfortunately, Boone had little success locating additional items. Of the government-owned objects, Long informed him, "Much of the furniture was 'home made,' - on the spot, by Marines. It seems some considerable quantity has disappeared. Marines constructed furniture and it had one quality which I will vouch for, - sturdiness."[431] Finding the Hoover-owned objects removed from the camp proved

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[425] Taylor Hoskins to Sam E. Scruggs, director of camping, National Capital Area Boy Scouts of America, 5 November 1958, Folder 5, Catalogue # 13004, Resource Management Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[426] Joel T. Boone to Philippi and Frank Butler, 31 May 1963, "Camp Rapidan Restoration,1962-1963," Box 77, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA. "Camp to be Torn Down," 11 May 1959.

[427] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 139. Doug Cochran, "Hoover Camp Haven for Elite," *Page News & Courier*, 10 June 1971.

[428] Joel T. Boone to Philippi Harding Butler, 8 November 1962.

[429] Philippi Harding Butler to Joel T. Boone, 7 December 1962.

[430] Joel T. Boone to Philippi Harding Butler, 8 November 1962.

[431] Earl C. Long to Superintendent Taylor Hoskins, 28 August 1963, Envelope 3, Catalogue # 13004, Resource Management Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

equally challenging. Hoskins wrote, "I doubt that it will be possible to trace any of the original furniture that was stored in the Washington Navy Yard."[432] Even objects Boone located were inaccessible. He tracked some of the Navajo rugs to Rockwood, a Washington-area Girl Scout camp run by Gertrude Bowman. When Boone requested information regarding the rugs:

> She [Bowman] informed me that a number of furnishings went to the Girl Scout camp not far from the Potomac west of Washington. It is to that camp that the Navajo Indian rugs were given. Mr. Hoskins, at considerable expense, had duplicates made of some of those rugs to place in the Hoover Cabin when the restoration is complete. Mrs. Bowman is anxious for me to go out to the Girl Scout Camp sometime and see it, but informs me that what was taken from the Hoover Camp and placed in the Girl Scout Camp was a presentation and cannot be removed.[433]

According to an extant list of items shipped to California, it appears that at least some of the Navajo rugs, eight "very good" and seven "commercial" rugs, were sent to the Hoovers in Palo Alto.[434] It is unclear whether Hoskins based his reproductions on rugs in the collection of the Girl Scouts or on photographs. The exclusively black, white, and gray colors in the reproduction rugs suggest they were based on black and white photographs.

Boone and Hoskins were able to obtain a few objects for the reinstallation of the camp. Gertrude Bowman gave a Hoover-era pitcher for use in the camp restoration. Three framed wall items Lou Henry Hoover had given to staff members were also returned to the cabins. Butler donated two seventeen-by-twenty-one-inch maps of the grounds that originally hung in camp buildings.[435] Christine Vest Witcofski, the former

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[432] Taylor Hoskins to Frederic Bates Butler, 4 September 1963, "Camp Rapidan Restoration,1962-1963," Box 77, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[433] Joel T. Boone to Philippi Harding Butler, 13 February 1963. The Girl Scouts sold Rockwood in 1982. According to the Girl Scouts' National Historic Preservation Center, Hoover-related furnishings were transferred from Rockwood to Rippin's Great Hall at the Edith Macy Conference Center in Briarcliff Manor, New York. In the Great Hall's former kitchen is the "Hoover Room" which contains a portrait of Lou Henry Hoover and several furnishings purportedly from Rapidan Camp. There are no Navajo rugs, but according to a walking tour a sofa, two tables, and chairs are from the Rapidan Camp collection. None of the furnishings in the room resemble those in extant Hoover-era photographs. Instead of camp-style furniture, most of the furnishings are Colonial Revival in style including ladder back chairs, a drop-leaf table, and a wooden sofa with twisted stiles and caned insets. There are two low, casual chairs composed of thick wooden elements with rush backs and seats which are more in keeping with known Rapidan Camp furniture. One Colonial Revival style chair-table is marked with a plate indicating it came from Rapidan Camp. It is possible that these furnishings were used at the camp, perhaps predating the Hoover-era photographs or in outbuildings. It is also possible that these furnishings came from the Hoovers' S Street house. A third possibility is that the provenance of the Rockwood furnishings have been lost over time and all items transferred from that camp to Edith Macy Conference Center were given Hoover attributions.

[434] "Stanford Shipment," ca. 1937, "Hoover Household Shipments, 1920-1933," Philippi Harding Butler, Personal Papers, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[435] Lambert, *Hideaway*, p. 143. Philippi Harding Butler to Taylor Hoskins, 28 August 1963, "Camp Rapidan Restoration,1962-1963," Box 77, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

Hoover school teacher, donated "a framed picture of two enlarged snaps of Camp scenes framed together in a natural wood frame."[436]

The repaired and refurnished Rapidan Camp was to serve two purposes. First, the buildings were to be VIP lodging for the president, Cabinet members, and congressmen. For this purpose, changes were made in the floor plans of the cabins. Lou Henry Hoover's bathroom was removed from "The Brown House" so that a kitchen could be built off the sitting room. Second, the grounds of the camp were to be interpreted for visitors arriving on foot or by horse. Butler, considering the removal of most of the camp buildings including "Town Hall" and the "Mess Hall," was particularly concerned with the method of interpreting the whole site for visitors. She wrote:

> how would it be to select a representative group of photographs of the cabins and have them framed - say in one panel - and hung in each cabin. That would give a visitor more of an idea of how the original set-up looked, in conjunction with the maps and if they didn't want to - or couldnt because of the weather - walk around all the trails and look at the pictures 'on location.' Such a set-up, too, would solve the desire to provide a visual concept of the original camp if it should prove impossible to use the pictures at each marker; it may not be feasible to sufficiently weather-proof them or something. Then just a carved wooden marker with the name of the cabin would 'mark the spot' and the maps and pictures available in the cabins would give the overall picture.[437]

Hoskins wrote back a few months later describing the wayside exhibits he had installed: "We have located the buildings at Camp Hoover, and, in addition to a large routed map showing these locations, we have placed a picture and descriptions of the buildings. The pictures are mounted in laminated plastic on steel markers, which are about three feet high."[438] The early 1960s renovations and refurnishing was considered complete around 1 June 1963.[439]

The most notable visitors of the 1960s visited the camp in October 1963. On the weekend of 12 to 13 October Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy and a family party of seventeen spent time at the much-reduced Rapidan Camp. Park staff members and caretakers were kept busy transporting food, aiding in cooking, rescuing an injured horsewoman, and transporting a priest. While at the camp the Kennedys played ball, went on a horseback ride, participated in Sunday Mass before an altar placed on the outdoor fireplace, and ate several meals. Apparently they were unaware of the cooler temperatures pertaining at the camp because they complained of being cold at night. The

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[436] Christine Vest Witcofski to friend, ca. 1965.

[437] Philippi Harding Butler to Joel T. Boone, 12 June 1963, "Camp Rapidan Restoration, 1962-1963," Box 77, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

[438] Taylor Hoskins to Philippi Harding Butler, 4 September 1963.

[439] Joel T. Boone to Philippi Harding Butler, 18 April 1963, "Camp Rapidan Restoration,1962-1963," Box 77, Lou Henry Hoover Papers, Subject File, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, IA.

acting superintendent said of their distress, "I expected that when they arrived in shorts."[440]

Besides the Kennedy visit, federal government VIPs made regular use of Rapidan Camp. In fact, it was at the VIPs' request that the cabins were refurnished a second time in the early 1970s. During this revamping of the interiors, the original Hoover-era furnishings were retained, many of the early 1960s furnishings were reused, and new furnishings were added. The interpretation of the grounds and public access to the camp remained the same. At that time, visitors were able to travel up the road from Criglersville and park within a ten to fifteen minute walk of the camp.[441]

The structure of "The Brown House" was slightly reworked during the early 1970s renovations. According to the circa 1972 completion report, the cabin's lights and electrical outlets were moved. Also a small six-foot-by-six-foot addition was constructed between Lou Henry Hoover's bedroom and Herbert Hoover's bathroom allowing access to the cabin's single bathroom without passing through Herbert Hoover's former bedroom. After the cabins were reworked, the number of guests the camp could accommodate rose from seventeen to twenty-four, near the number the entire Hoover-era camp had accommodated.[442]

Many lists and purchase orders from this refurnishing survive detailing the changes made to existing objects and new purchases. Purchases included upholstery fabric, a sofa, a bed, tables, chairs, baskets, and bedspreads. The sources for these purchases included national companies such as Sears; local handcraftsmen such as Isaac Hoak, Neal Hilliard, and E.A. Clore Sons; and specialty stores such as the Indian Craft Shop, Jai-Pur West, and General Services Administration (GSA). Less information is available about other purchases including window shades, rugs, lamps, mirrors, television sets, and porch furniture. Known changes to extant objects include adjusting the height of tables and benches and refinishing other objects. Among the items refinished were Hoover-era mission chairs, dining chairs, wicker chairs, wooden rockers, and a wardrobe. All objects were kept in the cabins during the camp season. In winter, the more weather- and pest-sensitive objects such as textiles, electronics, and baskets were stored in a warehouse.[443]

The 1971 publication of Darwin Lambert's *Herbert Hoover's Hideaway* coincided with the renewed interest in the Rapidan Camp furnishings. Lambert was an early employee of Shenandoah National Park. He conducted documentary research and oral interviews to produce the first and only book on Rapidan Camp.[444]

In the late 1970s, Rapidan Camp received its first presidential party since the ill-fated 9 April 1933 Roosevelt picnic. At the suggestion of Vice President Walter Mondale who made frequent trips to Rapidan, Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter made a short

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[440] Shenandoah acting superintendent to southeast regional director, 16 October 1963, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[441] "Completion Report, Rehabilitation of Camp Hoover, Shenandoah National Park," ca. 1972, Shenandoah National Park, VA, p. [1]. Lewis Perdue, "Camp Hoover: Retreat in the Shenandoah Brought Solace to Hoover," *Washington Post*, 3 July 1975.

[442] "Completion Report," ca. 1972, pp. [1,3].

[443] Miscellaneous purchase orders, invoices, and lists, 1970-1972, "D34 - Camp Hoover," Administrative Files, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

[444] Press Release for *Herbert Hoover's Hideaway*, 10 May 1971, "Hoover," Darwin Lambert Papers, Shenandoah National Park, VA.

reconnaissance trip to the camp on 5 November 1978. The couple arrived at Big Meadows by helicopter, rode to camp in a limousine, surveyed the buildings for less than an hour, and returned to the helicopter. Despite the brevity of their visit, the Carters were pleased and returned for a weekend the following May. Carter was probably interested in Rapidan's fishing facilities because there are none at Camp David.[445]

The Carters returned to Rapidan Camp the weekend of 18 to 21 May 1979. Jimmy, Rosalyn, and Amy Carter arrived in a helicopter at Big Meadows. As Hoover had years before, Carter emerged from his vehicle looking exhausted. Also, like Hoover, his exhaustion did not keep him from enjoying his leisure time. Jimmy and Amy Carter surprised the Secret Service by changing into exercise clothes and running to the camp.

The Carters did not travel light. For their short stay, the presidential family brought along two vans full of food and equipment (including White House china and silver) as well as a White House cook named Eddie. Eddie quickly learned that the kitchen facilities in "The Brown House" were lacking in size and electrical capacity. Also lacking in size were the single beds at the camp. At the Carters' request park staff members loaned a double bed and bedding for their weekend use. Carter and his daughter spent time pursuing typical Rapidan Camp activities such as hiking and fishing, however as per park regulations, the fish were thrown back into the river. In typical Hoover fashion, the Carters left the camp at 6:30 AM on Monday morning.[446]

In 1988, the Rapidan Camp buildings and grounds were designated as a National Historic Landmark under the presidential sites theme.[447]

Rapidan Camp continued to be used as VIP lodging until 1996, but the lack of presidential visitation led to a negative public image. The *Roanoke Times and World-News* termed it "primitive" and "tacky." It also cited the lack of activities besides fishing as a problem.[448] These complaints stemmed mainly from recent changes to the camp. The camp was conceived as a "primitive" site, but was rendered even more so by the removal of the "Town Hall" and "Mess Hall." The small, under-electrified kitchenettes were problematic in lieu of the "Mess Hall." Also, the lack of a central space stocked with games, books, and other recreational equipment removed a whole dimension from the Rapidan Camp experience. The missing guest quarters removed the possibility of having a large party of interesting people (although the Kennedys crammed eighteen people into the three cabins) with which to socialize. Also missing were true camp custodians and "social directors" providing such diversions as horseback riding, guided hiking, and horseshoe pitching. The "tacky" nature of the camp likely related to the mixture of furniture, including National Park Service "Mission 66" chairs, installed in the buildings in the early 1970s.

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[445] Memorandum Superintendent Robert R. Jacobsen to regional director, mid-Atlantic region, 26 October 1978, Folder 1, Catalogue # 13004, Resource Management Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA. "Carter Visits Retreat in Va.," *Harrisonburg Daily News-Record*, 26 October 1978.

[446] Pat Momich, "Pat Momich's Notes from May 18 Weekend Visit of President Carter," ca. 18 May 1979, Folder 1, Catalogue # 13004, Resource Management Records, Shenandoah National Park, VA. "Carter Visits Retreat in Va.," *Harrisonburg Daily News-Record*, 26 October 1978.

[447] Acting Director, National Park Service to Secretary of the Interior Donald Paul Hodel, 20 May 1988, approved 7 June 1988.

[448] Douglas Pardue, "Camp Hoover: Rustic Mountain Retreat Too Primitive for Most Presidential Tastes," *Roanoke Times & World-News*, 14 September 1980.

Starting in the 1970s, the VIP-only use of facilities on national park lands came under fire. In defense of the practice, Gerald Warren, deputy press secretary to Richard Nixon wrote, "'Other than Sundays, I had less than 10 days off during the six years I was in Washington. I spent 3 of them in Camp Hoover over a lovely, quiet October weekend in 1973. For certain officials it's the only real way you can really get away.'"[449] Whether government officials deserved such preferment or not, bad feelings regarding VIP lodging continued to intensify into the early 1990s. One particularly acidic article appeared in the *Madison County Eagle*. It states,

> The VIP policy at Hoover Camp has stuck in the craw of many Madisonians for years -- not because of the $37,000 a year it costs to operate, which is a mere drop in the bucket -- but because it is a symbol of the arrogance of the government bureaucracy.
>
> It also symbolizes the government's broken promises to the people of Madison County, who surrendered more of their land to form the new park than did any other county, and who remain the only county without an entrance to the park.[450]

This regionalized complaint was echoed in several areas of the country where other such retreats were located. People objected to the nominal fees charged for the lodging (usually less expensive than comparable facilities available to the general public), the shortfall between revenue collected and the cost of running these facilities, and the preferment given high-ranking government officials. Instead of serving the public, these officials were seen as abusing their positions at the expense of the public. VIP lodging practices were officially halted in early 1992 according to local newspapers: "The Interior Department on Friday shut down a longstanding perk for members of Congress and other senior government officials, saying they no longer are welcome for VIP lodging at some of the most scenic national parks." However, VIP privileges continued at Rapidan Camp until they were finally revoked in 1996.[451]

Starting in 1997, Shenandoah National Park embarked on a third renovation of the three surviving cabins. This renovation differs from the past two in that the dual purpose of the cabins as historic buildings and VIP lodging has been cut in half. Now "The Brown House" can be restored to its early-1930s appearance without thought to adaptive reuse. The early 1960s kitchen has been removed, the exterior of Lou Henry Hoover's bathroom has been reconstructed, and the porches will be reconstructed in their early configurations. The exteriors of "The Prime Minister" and "The Creel" will be restored and/or reconstructed as well.

From the early 1990s to 1997 Shenandoah National Park conducted "Hoover Caravan Tours" of the camp for visitors up to seven days per week during the summer months. The same pattern was to pertain in 1998, but the site was closed due to storm damage until August when it opened for Hoover Days. Since 1997, when "The Brown

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[449] Charles C. Keely, Jr., "Hideaways for Government VIPs," *American Way* (June 1979): 113.

[450] "Hoover Camp Decision's a Step in the Right Direction," *Madison County Eagle*, 13 February 1992.

[451] "Government Higher-Ups Lose Low-cost VIP Lodging at Parks," *Orange County Register*, 8 February 1992. Reed Engle, electronic message to author, 17 December 1998.

House" is open for public tours it is interpreted as a "restoration in progress." Only the exteriors of "The Prime Minister" and "The Creel" are accessible to the general public. In the future, with continued restoration, reconstruction, and the aid of this and other reports, the interior of "The Brown House" will be presented as a historic furnished interior on ranger-led tours. "The Prime Minister" will likely be a visitor contact station with self-guided exhibits providing additional information about the Hoovers and Rapidan Camp. "The Creel" may serve as a caretaker's residence, as it had for a time in the past, for the future security and interpretation of Rapidan Camp.

- Hoover Days (1974-1998)

"Hoover Days" was a local special event based on the original 17 August 1929 "Madison County Day" held to welcome the Hoovers to the county. Shenandoah National Park revived the event in 1974, the centennial of Hoover's birth. This "open house" was hailed as "the first time that the camp buildings have been opened to the general public since they were partially rehabilitated in 1961." Hoover Days were scheduled yearly on the weekend closest to Hoover's 10 August birthday. On Saturdays, Madison staged a reenactment of the brief speech Hoover presented at the 1929 event. On Sundays, the Park invited the community to visit Rapidan Camp.[452] Shenandoah National Park discontinued its participation in Hoover Days in 1998 when Rapidan Camp opened to the public on a regular basis.[453]

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[452] Press Release for Camp Hoover Open House, 9 August 1974, "D34 - Camp Hoover," Administrative Files, Shenandoah National Park, VA. Leslie and Choyke, 10 August 1990. Greg Glassner, "Hoover Days August 9-10." *Madison County Eagle*, 8 August 1991. Greg Glassner, "Hoover Camp's Future Remains Cloudy," *Madison County Eagle*, 5 March 1992.

[453] Reed Engle, electronic message to author, 15 November 1999.