



THE BUILDING  
*of a*  
WORTHY POST

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ A HISTORY OF FORT McPHERSON ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



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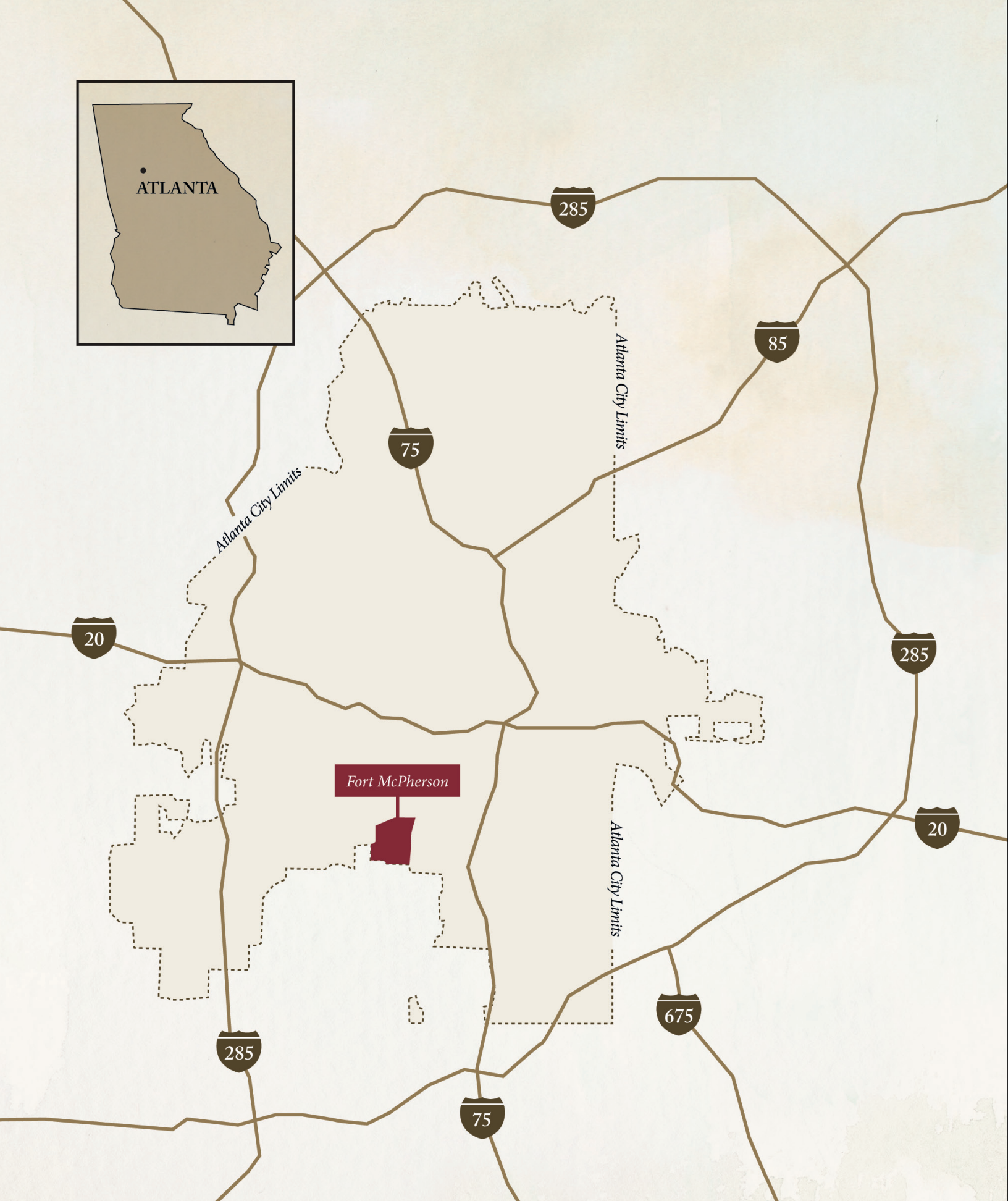
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Above: Modern map of the Atlanta area with Fort McPherson highlighted.  
Inset: Location map of the state of Georgia with Atlanta highlighted.



FOREWORD

# THE STORY OF A WORTHY POST

***THE BUILDING OF A WORTHY POST: A HISTORY OF FORT McPHERSON*** tells the story of the Army post near Atlanta, Georgia, that was established in 1885 and closed in 2011. In 2005, the Department of Defense Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) Commission concluded that Fort McPherson was no longer critical to its mission. As the Army made plans for its departure from Fort McPherson, it undertook measures to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Section 106 requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on resources that are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The closure of the post was deemed an adverse effect on Fort McPherson’s NRHP-eligible historic resources, and the Army subsequently signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office under which the Army agreed to take steps to document and preserve Fort McPherson’s historic resources. Prepared as part of that documentation effort, *The Building of a Worthy Post: A History of Fort McPherson* seeks to tell the story of Fort McPherson through the lens of the built environment while providing enough historic context to make clear the significance of the post in America’s military history.

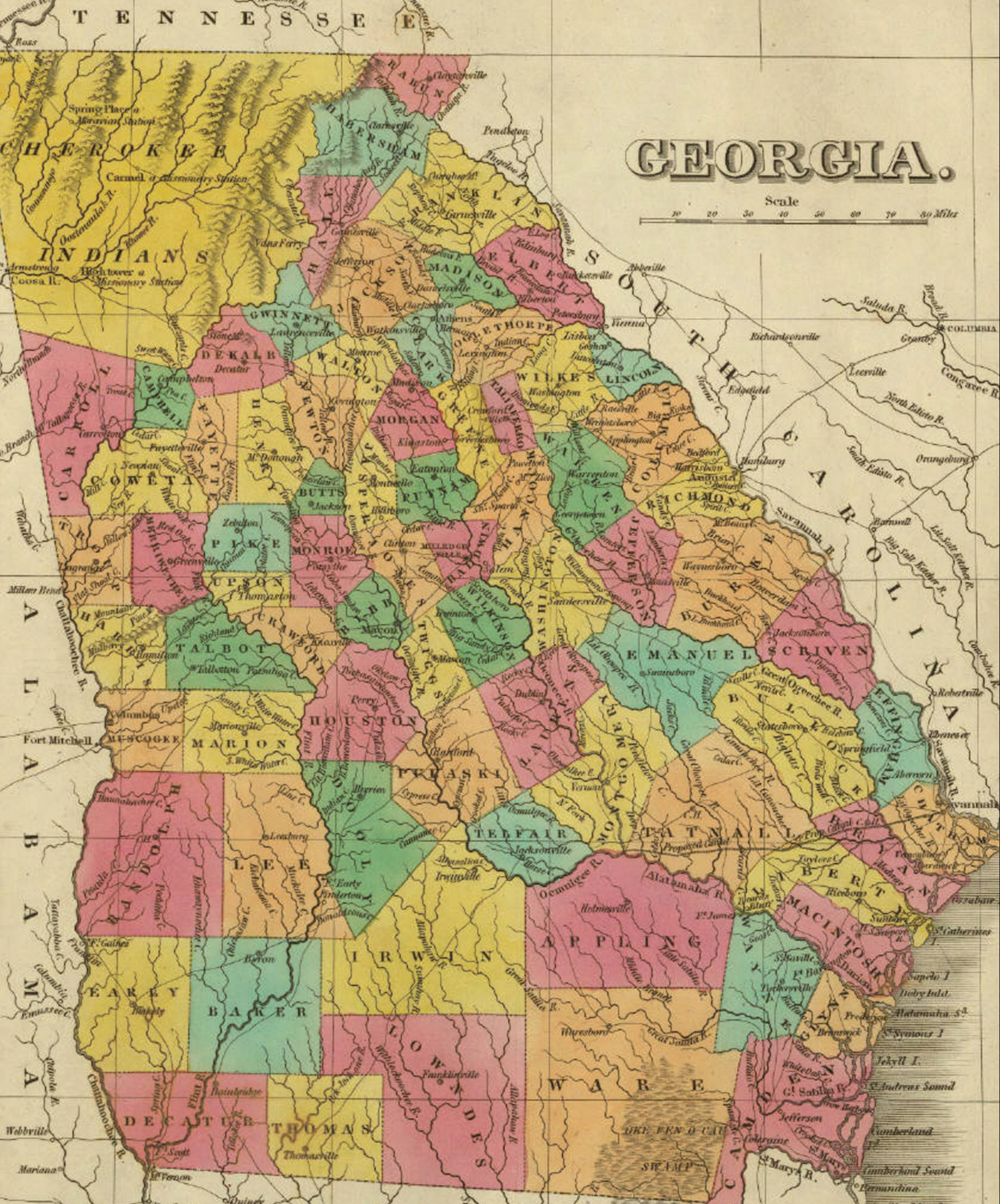
Archival research for *The Building of a Worthy Post: A History of Fort McPherson* was conducted at the following facilities: the Fort McPherson Public Affairs Office and the Office of the Directorate of Public Works; the National Archives Southeast Region facility in Morrow, Georgia; the Georgia Archives; the Atlanta History Center; the Georgia State University Library; the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) Library; the University of Georgia Library; the Brockington and Associates, Inc., research library; and

the Atlanta-Fulton County Public Library. Collection of additional primary source documentation such as period newspaper articles was conducted using online data repositories. Secondary sources of information used in the development of the history include:

- Fort McPherson histories developed by the post’s historian and Public Affairs Office
- General historical texts on Atlanta history, American history, American military history, European history, and international affairs
- National and state historic contexts on military resources
- Online historical resources developed by museums and libraries
- Historical society journal articles
- Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) / Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) documentation

*The Building of a Worthy Post: A History of Fort McPherson* was produced under contract with the US Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District. The Corps intends to distribute the document to libraries and other data repositories throughout the region.





# GEORGIA.

Scale  
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 Miles

1831 Map of Georgia. Courtesy of the David Rumsey Map Collection ([www.davidrumsey.com](http://www.davidrumsey.com)).

CHAPTER

**I**

**THE ARMY COMES  
TO ATLANTA**

**THE LAND SOUTHEAST** of the Chattahoochee River that would eventually become Atlanta was inhabited by members of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation until they ceded it to the State of Georgia in 1821. Almost immediately, white settlers began to move onto the newly available lands. One of these settlers was Charner Humphries of South Carolina. He arrived in what was then southwest DeKalb County in the early 1830s and made his living as a farmer before purchasing land at the junction of Sandtown and Newnan Roads (the present day intersection of Lee Street and Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard in Atlanta’s West End). In 1835, Charner Humphries built a tavern called White Hall to serve the stagecoach passengers who would pass through his crossroads on their journeys to and from Lawrenceville, Decatur, Newnan, and settlements in Alabama. In addition to providing accommodations for weary travelers, White Hall featured a general store, a post office, a polling place, and a mustering ground for the 530<sup>th</sup> Militia District.<sup>1</sup>

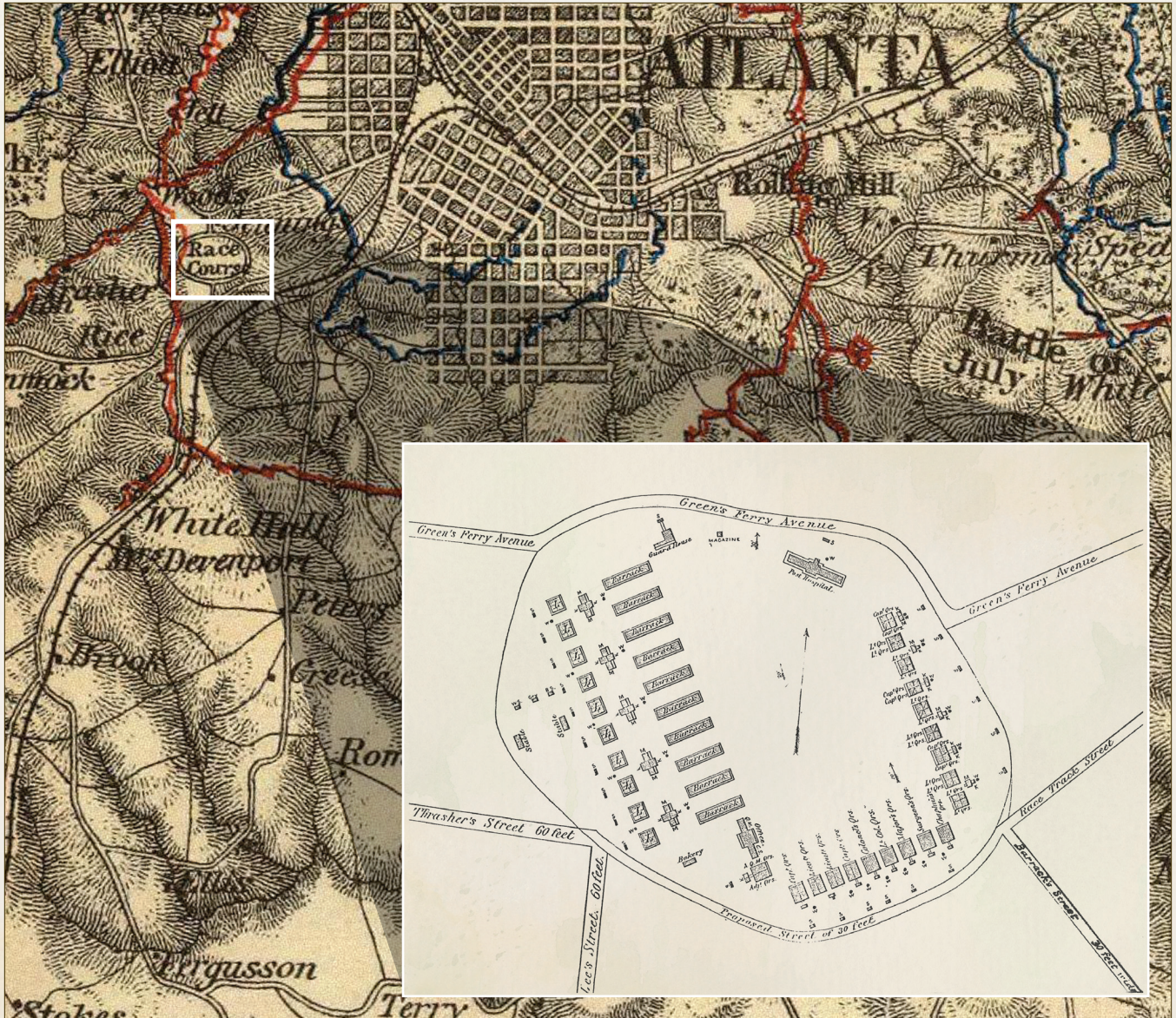
The annual muster day events in Charner Humphries’ pasture involved about two hours of military drill followed by a marksmanship competition. With the building of a racetrack around his pasture, Charner Humphries added horseracing to the slate of muster day attractions, which also included feasting on the yearling calf presented to the best marksman. It was a rare festive occasion for the often far-flung residents of the 530<sup>th</sup> Militia District, and the general revelry often descended into fistfights and disorder with the addition of whiskey.<sup>2</sup>

In 1837, engineers of the Western and Atlantic Railroad drove a stake into the ground to mark the terminal location of a rail line that was being built southward through north Georgia from Chattanooga, Tennessee. Their actions set events in motion that would have an enormous impact on the residents of the 530<sup>th</sup> Militia District. A settlement called Terminus soon

sprang up around the terminal point of the rail line. Terminus became Marthasville in 1843, and Marthasville became Atlanta in 1845. Additional rail lines connected Atlanta with other southeastern cities, and by 1847, the thriving rail hub was incorporated as a city. The polling place once housed at White Hall was moved to Atlanta, but muster day continued to take place in Charner Humphries’ pasture.<sup>3</sup>

A festive atmosphere prevailed at the annual muster day events until ominous clouds of war began to gather on the horizon. The militia’s drills took on a serious tone as they prepared to face any threat that might arise: a slave revolt, federal soldiers, or their own neighbors who were supporters of the Union cause. Activity at the muster grounds increased with Georgia’s secession from the Union in 1861. The Confederate government promptly added troop barracks and a cartridge factory to the muster grounds to house and supply the soldiers fighting for the South. Over the next three years, it became apparent that all of the preparation, drill, and fervent belief in the Southern Cause would be for naught. The railroads that were the key to Atlanta’s prosperity also made her a target of the invading army and led it to her doorstep. As they retreated from the surrendering city, Confederate troops destroyed the cartridge factory and many of the barracks at the old muster grounds to keep them from falling into Federal hands.<sup>4</sup>

During the military reconstruction of Georgia that occurred after the Civil War, the U.S. Army established a ten-company post on the old muster grounds that were once Charner Humphries’ pasture. On December 30, 1867, the new post was designated McPherson Barracks. The name was intended to honor Major General James Birdseye McPherson, the Union general who had been killed near the site of the new post during the Battle of Atlanta on July 22, 1864.<sup>5</sup>



The Approximate Locations of White Hall and Charner Humphries' Horseracing Track Shown on Map V Illustrating the Military Operations of the Atlanta Campaign, Pub. 1877. Courtesy of the David Rumsey Map Collection ([www.davidrumsey.com](http://www.davidrumsey.com)). Inset Map Showing Plan of McPherson Barracks, c. 1870.

McPherson Barracks was built on the 53 acres of land that fell within the ellipse of Charner Humphries' horseracing track. The wooden buildings of the post were constructed from pine lumber and arranged in the form of a quadrangle around a central parade ground. The buildings included ten troop barracks, eighteen officers' quarters, five kitchens, ten laundresses' quarters, a commissary and quartermaster building, a guardhouse, a post bakery, a library, stables, and a 48-bed post hospital. A report produced by the Office of the Surgeon General noted the spartan conditions at the barracks:<sup>6</sup>

*There are neither wash nor bath-rooms; but as each barrack at its rear is elevated several feet from the ground, long troughs*

*on supports are constructed underneath for the purpose of washing. The only bathing facilities are found in the creeks and ponds, near the post. The barracks are warmed by wood stoves, and artificially illuminated by candles and fixed oil... The sinks [privies] are ten in number for company and laundresses' quarters, and placed fifty feet in rear of the latter, occupying the space lying between the laundresses' quarters and the stables. They are arranged with sliding boxes under the seats, into which dry earth is thrown daily, and which are removed and thoroughly cleaned every night. The officers', hospital and guardhouse sinks are similarly arranged. The system works admirably, and scarcely any odor is perceptible in or about the privies.<sup>7</sup>*

Artillery, infantry, and cavalry regiments, as well as smaller detachments, came and went from McPherson Barracks, none staying to garrison the post for an extended period of time. By 1875, conditions at McPherson Barracks had deteriorated. The unpainted wooden buildings had fallen into disrepair, and the roofs of many buildings leaked during heavy rain. In October 1881, the Secretary of War directed that the lease on the barracks site be surrendered. McPherson Barracks, which many Atlantans called “that Yankee garrison,” was abandoned by the Army on December 8, 1881. A number of buildings were sold at public auction to the American Baptist Home Mission Society. The society opened the Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary, the precursor to Spelman College, in the former post hospital building.<sup>8</sup>



Entrance to McPherson Barracks, c. 1870.

## THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW POST IN ATLANTA



In the early 1880s, Atlanta was a popular location for the U.S. Army’s summer encampments. Devastating yellow fever epidemics were routine in Florida’s port cities during the mid-nineteenth century, and the Army considered Atlanta’s more temperate climate to be healthier and more hospitable during the summer months. On March 3, 1885, the U.S. Congress approved \$15,000 under the Sundry Civil Bill to establish a ten-company post near the burgeoning city with the attractive climate.<sup>9</sup>

Major General Winfield Scott Hancock, the Commanding General of the Division of the Atlantic, was tasked with selecting a location for the post. From May 7<sup>th</sup> through the 23<sup>rd</sup>, Major General Hancock inspected several potential sites near Atlanta with Colonel A. J. Perry, his Chief Quartermaster. He ultimately selected an area of vacant woodland and farmland south of the city that was attractive for its favorable terrain, proximity to the Macon and Western Railroad, and purchase price. The location for the new post was approximately two-and-a-half miles south of the abandoned McPherson Barracks site. After receiving approval from the Commanding General of the Army and the Secretary of War, the Army purchased 140.09 acres of land for \$15,000 on August 11, 1885. The original 140.09-acre tract of land was only large enough to house a barracks site, so Major



Graduation Day at the Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary, the Precursor to Spelman College, c. 1883.



Location of Fort McPherson on Rand, McNally & Co.'s New Shippers' Railroad Map of the United States, 1891. Courtesy of the David Rumsey Map Collection ([www.davidrumsey.com](http://www.davidrumsey.com)).

General Hancock recommended purchase of an adjacent 96.31-acre tract of land. Congress approved another Sundry Civil Bill and the additional land was purchased in August and September 1886 for \$14,740.<sup>10</sup>

## CAPTAIN JACOBS AND THE BUILDING OF THE POST

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On November 23, 1885, Captain Joshua West Jacobs of the Army's Quartermaster Department was charged with the design and development of the new post. Before making his way to Atlanta to begin his assignment, Captain Jacobs met with Colonel A. J. Perry in Washington, D.C., to receive instructions for his work. No written orders regarding the development of the post were provided; instead, Colonel Perry used a map he had drawn during his travels with Major General Hancock to show Captain Jacobs the concept for the layout of the post. The General had selected a pair of parallel ridges that ran almost due east and west for a line of south-facing officers' quarters to be located across an open area from a line of north-facing barracks. Armed with this limited information, Captain Jacobs set out for Atlanta to design and build the new

post. Upon his arrival in Atlanta, Captain Jacobs leased an office near the intersection of Lee Street and Oak Street. From this office, which he leased for \$280 per year, Captain Jacobs directed the efforts that would bring forth a model Army post from previously undeveloped land.<sup>11</sup>

## Preparation of the Land

Upon arriving at the site of the new post in the fall of 1885, Captain Jacobs observed that the majority of the area was covered in timber and thick underbrush, making it difficult to discern the topography of land. He promptly had the underbrush cleared away in order to develop an understanding of the site. After surveying the newly cleared site, Captain Jacobs determined that the parallel ridges selected by Major General Hancock were indeed the best location for the rows of officers' quarters and barracks.<sup>13</sup>

The design for the post envisioned by Major General Hancock involved the building of a row of officers' quarters along the northernmost of the two ridges. These quarters would face south across an open parade field towards a row of north-facing barracks situated on the opposite ridge. Before building could begin, a major grading operation was undertaken by local civil-

ians using mule-drawn equipment. The laborers worked to ensure that the parallel ridges for the buildings were the same height, and the area of lower elevation between the two ridges was filled in to create a level parade field. In the span of two years, from 1886 to 1888, the area was transformed into an artificial plateau suitable for the quadrangle of buildings that would become the heart of the new post.<sup>14</sup>

As the grading operation proceeded, Captain Jacobs created the master plan for the new post. Like many nineteenth-century Army installations, the quadrangle of buildings surrounding the rectangular central parade ground was the centerpiece of the installation. Captain Jacobs designed a parade field that was approximately 1500 feet long east-to-west and 550 feet wide north-to-south. His quadrangle was made up of officers' quarters that ran along the northern length of the field, troop barracks that ran along the southern length, and the post headquarters and guardhouse that were built at the eastern end. The master plan also called for a hospital, quarters for a hospital steward, a chapel, a schoolhouse, and a dead house (morgue) to be constructed southeast of the central quadrangle just behind the easternmost troop barracks.<sup>16</sup>

The location for the post was selected in part for its proximity to the Macon and Western Railroad, so Captain Jacobs built a semi-circular sidetrack over the East Point to Atlanta Highway (Lee Street) to facilitate the movement of men and materiel to and from the new post. The master plan called for the construction of a commissary, a quartermaster storehouse, a bakery, a magazine, a coal shed, a scale house, and an oil house southeast of the post's central quadrangle along the arc of the sidetrack. South of the central quadrangle, behind the westernmost troop barracks, Captain Jacobs' master plan called for the construction of individual houses for non-commissioned officers, a stable and corral for the post horses, a workshop, and a water tower to distribute water throughout the post.<sup>17</sup>

Captain Jacobs was conscientious and thoughtful about his plan for the development of the post. His goal was to create an environment that was conducive to both the military training and the comfort of the men assigned to the post. To that end, the officers' quarters and barracks were built in proximity to the parade field where they would conduct their drill exercises. Captain Jacobs also left the western end of the central parade ground open and unobstructed by buildings to take advantage of the prevailing northwesterly winds in order to cool the living quarters.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to the extensive grading effort at the new post, Captain Jacobs made other improvements to the post grounds. Two artesian wells were dug to a depth of 250 feet to provide

## CAPTAIN JACOBS' LETTER to the QUARTERMASTER GENERAL



*Dated February 27, 1890*

*Replying to your letter of the 21<sup>st</sup> inst. (G2835-1890) relative to designated or approved sites for the buildings at Fort McPherson, Ga., I have the honor to submit the following.*

*No written approval of the sites selected by me has ever been received at this office except as contained in the closing paragraph of a letter dated May 6<sup>th</sup> 1886 (536-86=217-84 Div. G) as follows: "The locations of the buildings as shown on your plan are generally approved."*

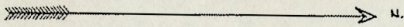
*When I was in Washington during the fall of 1885, receiving my instructions for this work, Genl. A.J. Perry, then C.Q.M. Div. of the Atlantic, and who accompanied the late Genl. Hancock when he made the selection of the present Fort McPherson reservation, came into Col. J.G. Chandler's office and during a conversation ensuing between us regarding the proposed work, pointing to a small map lying before us, which he himself had made, designated a ridge covered with timber and said that Genl. Hancock had selected this ridge as the proper place for the line of officers [sic] Qrs., facing south with the barracks on a nearly parallel ridge facing north, at the same time designating the position of the store houses in the vicinity of the Ga. Cent. Ry.*

*The officers [sic] quarters, barracks and store houses practically occupy, today, the positions designated by Genl. Perry as Genl. Hancock's selections. This has since been confirmed by Mr. Lyle of the firm of Leak and Lyle, Agents for the sale of the land, who has repeatedly informed this office that the present location of the officers [sic] quarters and barracks is the same that Genl. Hancock, in his presence designated as the proper one.*

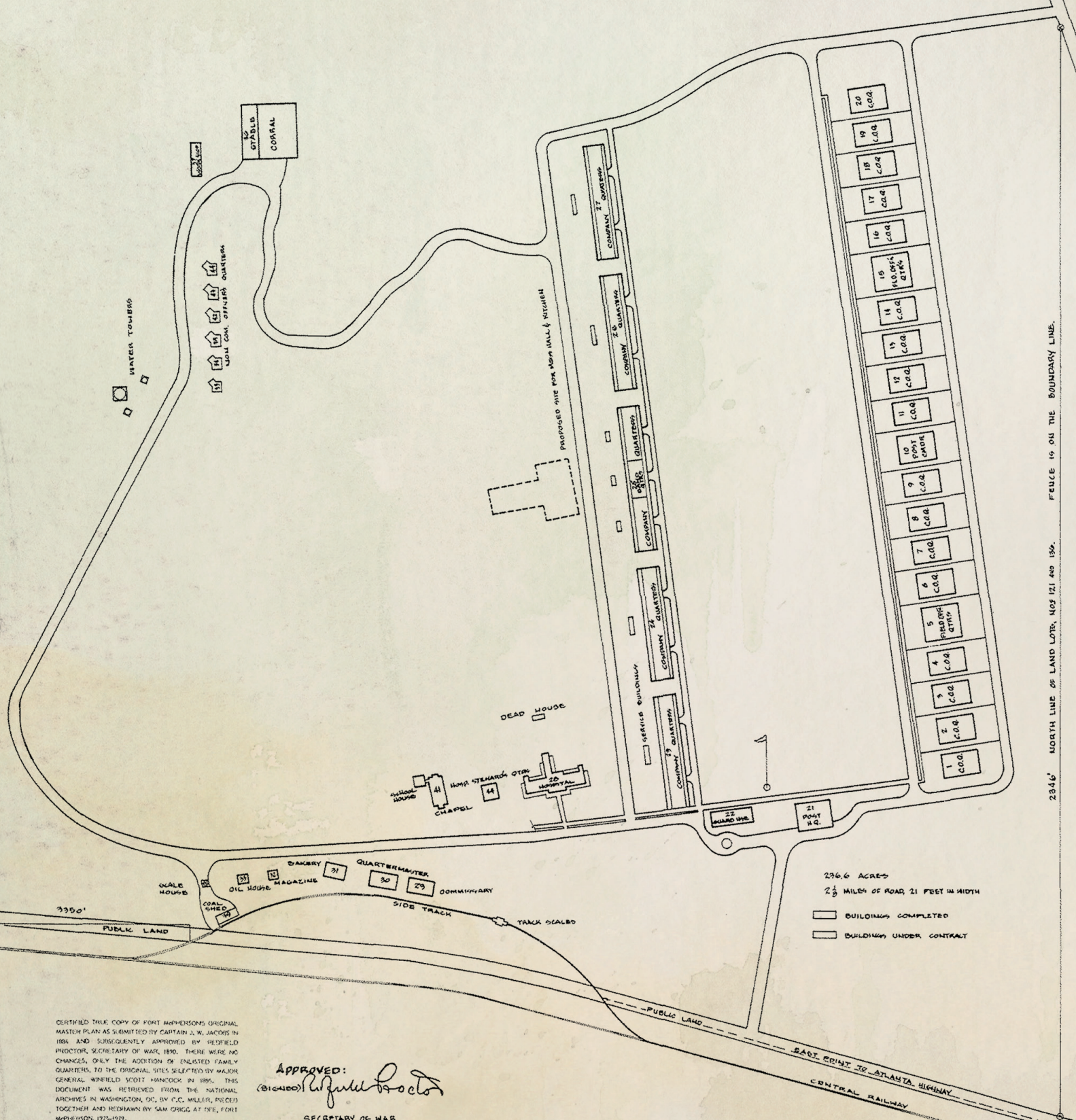
*During the early spring of 1886 the late General Sherridan [sic] accompanied by Genl. C. H. Tompkins, C.Q.M. Div of Mo. And Col. G.C. Kellogg, A.D.C. inspected the site, and on the grounds I exhibited a map showing the location of the several buildings very clearly, he did not disapprove of the location of any of them.*

*The foregoing is all the information I can furnish from either the records of my office, or recollection relative to the subject matter of your letter.<sup>12</sup>*

water for the post. A steam-powered pump house was constructed to pump water into elevated storage tanks before it was distributed throughout the post by water mains. Captain Jacobs also designed a sanitary sewer system for the post that served each of the major buildings. Fencing was installed around the perimeter of the post, and over two miles of 21-foot-wide



12.741 ACRES  
CAMP BOUNDARY LINE

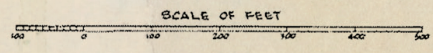


CERTIFIED TRUE COPY OF FORT MCPHERSONS ORIGINAL MASTER PLAN AS SUBMITTED BY CAPTAIN J. W. JACOBS IN 1890 AND SUBSEQUENTLY APPROVED BY FIELD PROCTOR, SECRETARY OF WAR, 1890. THERE WERE NO CHANGES, ONLY THE ADDITION OF ENLISTED FAMILY QUARTERS, TO THE ORIGINAL SITE SELECTED BY MAJOR GENERAL WINFIELD SCOTT HANCOCK IN 1895. THIS DOCUMENT WAS RETRIEVED FROM THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES IN WASHINGTON, DC, BY C.C. MILLER, PCEED TOGETHER AND REDRAWN BY SAM OREGG AT DFE, FORT MCPHERSON, 1975-1979.

CERTIFIED BY:  
*Sam Oregg*  
C.C. MILLER, P.E.

APPROVED:  
*Sam Oregg*  
SECRETARY OF WAR

APRIL 3<sup>rd</sup> 1890



Captain Jacobs' Master Plan for Fort McPherson, 1890.



CAPTAIN JACOBS' LETTER  
to the  
QUARTERMASTER GENERAL

★  
Dated May 22, 1890

*My instructions of Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> 1885 from the Quartermaster General and the Hon. the Secy. Of War, as promulgated by S.O. 11264. Headquarters of the Army, November 16<sup>th</sup> 1885, embraced a careful study of the site selected, and report thereon.*

*For this duty I associated with me a most capable civil engineer, a resident of Georgia, I found the topography of the land much broken, and cut by ravines, about 2/3 covered with timber and dense under brush, the latter I had cleared out that I might gain a clear and correct idea of its characteristics. But after careful and deliberate survey of the whole tract nothing was found more suitable for building sites than two ridges near the north east corner, about 1500 feet long and nearly parallel and running almost due east and west. ...*

*When the ridges selected for building sites were cut down to equalize the grading and to reduce expenses in accordance with my instructions, the cutting was so regulated from time to time as to leave the plateau to be formed [the quadrangle today] thereby high and dry above the surrounding ground, with an average fall of 11/5 feet to the hundred from east to west the entire length of the plateau., or in other words, during the heaviest rains there is no stagnant water in the roadways or around the respective quarters or barracks or hospital, all of it being on the move by reason of the established grade, or carried off through road drains or catch basins located at appropriate points, unless hindered from obstructions incident to building operations or obstructions placed in the roadways by the post authorities. So complete and perfect is the drainage of the plateau on which the post is built that within a few hours after a hard rain the ground is dry enough to walk over dry shod [sic].<sup>15</sup>*

macadam roads were constructed. In addition to the Bermuda grass that was planted on the parade field, Captain Jacobs made an effort to beautify the post with the planting of 570 shade and fruit trees.<sup>19</sup>

### Building a Worthy Post

By the late nineteenth century, the United States Army had become a mature, professionalized organization with a need for facilities that both reflected this new stature and supported its mission. The end of the Indian Wars and the settling of the frontier allowed the Army to move beyond the small,

temporary frontier posts it had been using towards permanent, larger regional installations. This consolidation was facilitated by railroads that enabled efficient movement of men and materiel throughout the country.<sup>20</sup>

Many of the newly established regional posts were built near cities. Urban posts were designed with special care, with a new focus on improved living standards. "At headquarters, training, and consolidated regional installations, building designs became more sophisticated, and efforts were made to construct buildings of greater architectural stature to reflect increased Army prestige."<sup>21</sup> The Quartermaster Department often hired civilian architects and engineers to prepare building plans that reflected simplified versions of the era's popular architectural styles, including Italianate, Romanesque Revival, and Queen Anne. The practice of using civilian architects to design individualized, high-style buildings eventually became too expensive. In an effort to control costs and promote efficiency, the Quartermaster Department resumed the use of standardized plans in the 1890s. When they were not considered too costly, the department adopted a number of the designs prepared by civilian architects for use as standardized plans. In other cases, designs submitted by skilled constructing quartermasters were adopted as standardized plans. The Quartermaster Department in Washington, D.C., therefore used standardized plans to centralize and streamline the construction process, while trusting its constructing quartermasters to adapt the standard designs to reflect the environment and the mission of their post when necessary.<sup>22</sup>

The advances in building design and construction on Army posts were not purely aesthetic. "The Quartermaster Department incorporated concerns about hygiene into designs for barracks and hospitals. Integrated water, sewage, and heating systems were instituted for Army posts for the first time. In addition, the Army began to provide family housing for hospital stewards and non-commissioned officers; previously, detached houses or duplexes were built only for officers."<sup>23</sup>

The role of the constructing quartermaster for an Army post had changed a great deal by the late nineteenth century when Captain Jacobs began his work in Atlanta. In years past, Army troops constructed post buildings under the supervision of the constructing quartermaster. Captain Jacobs' role as quartermaster had evolved into that of a contracting officer, in that he was responsible for hiring builders to complete the work within the appropriated budget, and subsequently supervising those that he hired to ensure that their work met the standards set forth in the contract.<sup>24</sup>

## CAPTAIN JOSHUA WEST JACOBS



Captain Joshua West Jacobs

Joshua West Jacobs was born on June 24, 1843 in Danville, Kentucky. As an adult, he was described “as a noble looking man who stood six feet two inches in height and loved the outdoors.”<sup>25</sup> During Jacobs’ sophomore year at Centre College, the Civil War broke out and changed the trajectory of his life. He enlisted as a private in the Union Army’s 4<sup>th</sup>

Kentucky Volunteer Infantry on November 10, 1861. He was quickly promoted to Sergeant Major and then commissioned as a First Lieutenant on September 25, 1862. While serving in the Atlanta Campaign in July 1864, First Lieutenant Jacobs was captured and held as a prisoner of war for seven months. After his release, he was honorably discharged from the volunteer service on August 17, 1865.<sup>26</sup>

Less than a year after leaving the volunteer service, Jacobs exited civilian life when he accepted an appointment on June 28, 1866 as a Second Lieutenant in the Regular Army. He was quickly promoted to the rank of First Lieutenant and served with the 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry in a number of Indian campaigns, including the Battle of the Little Bighorn. First Lieutenant Jacobs served as the Regimental Quartermaster of the 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry for 14 years before he was promoted to the rank of Captain in the Quartermaster Department in 1882. During the next 12 years, Captain Jacobs had multiple assignments, including serving as a constructing quartermaster at both Fort McPherson and Fort Riley, Kansas. He received a promotion to the rank of Major in 1894. In 1898, during the Spanish-American War, Major Jacobs served as the Chief Quartermaster of the V Army Corps in Cuba. Five years later, Major Jacobs was promoted to the rank of Colonel, and he began service as the Army’s Assistant Quartermaster General. Colonel Jacobs was soon promoted to the rank of Brigadier General. Despite wanting to continue his Army service, persistent health problems forced General Jacobs to retire in 1904. He died on October 13, 1905 in Los Gatos, California.<sup>27</sup>

Widely known as a man of great integrity, Captain Jacobs took his role as quartermaster very seriously. His character was reflected in the way he managed the construction of the new post. The procurement contracts Captain Jacobs prepared were a testament to his consistently high standards. Builders were required to submit comprehensive bids that included not only initial building construction, but utilities and fixtures as well. Captain Jacobs reserved the right to strike any portion of a bid. He also required the winning builder to post a bond that would pay the difference in price



Parade Field, c. 1891.

between his contract and the higher bid of another builder if he was unable to meet the terms of the contract. In addition to the strict controls he placed on the progress and timing of the projects, Captain Jacobs closely managed his construction budgets by paying the builders the amount he thought was appropriate at the time of his choosing.<sup>28</sup>

Captain Jacobs also closely monitored the work practices of his builders. He determined the approved location for the storage of building materials and for the disposal of waste from the construction effort. He also retained the power to dismiss any laborer from the worksite that he deemed careless or incompetent. If a builder or his workers damaged public property during the construction process, charges could be brought against them. Captain Jacobs’ high standards also extended to the building materials used at the post. He set forth requirements in terms of the quality, size, and uniformity of products such as bricks, as well as the preparation method for materials such as concrete and mortar. If these products failed to meet his exacting standards, the contractor was required to replace them at his own expense. When the construction effort was finished, Captain Jacobs required that both the building and the building site be clean before he would take possession of the building on behalf of the government.<sup>29</sup>

Captain Jacobs’ “conscientious performance of duty and sharp attention to detail were the cause of much friction with the local contractors, as he frequently pointed out deficiencies in materials and workmanship.”<sup>30</sup> The Atlanta Constitution reported that a builder named Henry A. Howard was accusing Captain Jacobs of “illegal interference” during Howard’s construction of six buildings at the post. He was suing the U.S. Government for \$9,940 in damages.<sup>31</sup> Another



Residence of the Civilian Post Engineer (Building 532), c. 1915.

Atlanta Constitution article detailed the decision of the case that came to be known to the newspaper's readers as "The Bowe Case." Captain Jacobs hired William F. Bowe to build the barracks at the new post. Mr. Bowe charged that Captain Jacobs "had demanded better material and a finer building than the contract provided for," and that he "began to change and vary the construction of the buildings from the terms of the plans and specifications and added considerable [sic] thereto, and had frivolously and without reason or just cause condemned much material and workmanship, on account of which Bowe lost material and labor to the amount of about \$10,000." In his opinion, the presiding judge stated that

*during the progress of the work Captain Jacobs exercised a constant and careful supervision over it. He seems to have examined, with great care, all material before it went into the building, and all the work and each part of it as it progressed. He also offered to go anywhere in Georgia with Bowe, at the expense of the government, to examine material and decide whether it would be satisfactory or not, so that Bowe need not be put to the delay and expense of bringing unsatisfactory material on the ground. The orders given and decision made by Captain Jacobs were all positive, sometimes peremptory, and yet in every instance, so far as they have been drawn in question here, they seem to have been made in good faith and with the sole purpose of having these buildings constructed in accordance with the contract, and to discharge his duty as a superintendent to the government. Mr. Bowe was frequently informed by Captain Jacobs that if any decision made by him was not satisfactory he could appeal from the same, through him, to the war department, but in no instance did Bowe avail himself of this right.<sup>32</sup>*

### Captain Jacobs' Master Plan Realized

Captain Jacobs directed the extensive grading and site preparation effort at the new post throughout 1886, and by 1887, he was ready to undertake construction of the buildings that he envisioned in his master plan. The Army initially retained Washington D.C. architect Gustav Friebus, the draftsman of the Washington Monument, to design the residential buildings for the post. Only one of his designs, which was used for Quarters 6, 7, 8, and 9, was constructed. The Quartermaster Department decided that using standardized plans would be less costly than using customized plans developed by private architects. Captain Jacobs ultimately used several building contractors to execute the standardized plans at the new post.<sup>33</sup>

### Construction of Support Buildings for the New Post

#### Civilian Post Engineer Residence, Building 532

In 1887, local day laborers hired by Captain Jacobs constructed the first building at the new post. The modest two-story brick building was a residence for the civilian post engineer, the plumber who would operate the water pump station. Having a plumber on post at this early stage of development was intended to ensure that there would be a consistent supply of water for the construction effort. The house was built on the northwestern side of the post and was based on a standardized plan developed by the office of the Quartermaster General. It provided the civilian post engineer and his family with 1,843 square feet of living space and cost \$2,407 to build.<sup>34</sup>



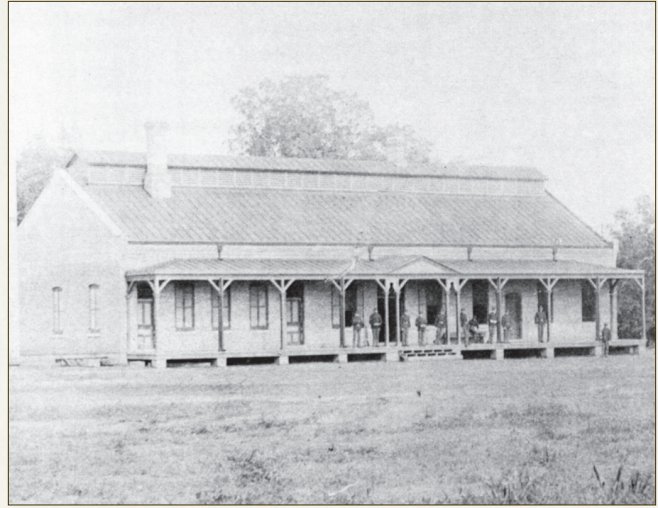
Commissary and Quartermaster Storehouse (Building 101), c. 1915.

**Commissary and Quartermaster Storehouse, Building 101**

The builder named W. F. Bowe was awarded the contract on June 30, 1886, to build a commissary storehouse adjacent to the railroad sidetrack that ran up the eastern boundary of the post. The cost of construction for the two-story brick storehouse was \$4,730. The following year, on August 16, 1887, the Harris Company was awarded the contract to build a quartermaster storehouse just south of the commissary storehouse. The cost of construction for the two-story brick quartermaster storehouse was \$4,896.90. The storehouses were completed in 1889, and an addition was built in 1893. The two buildings were ultimately consolidated in 1899. The combined building provided space for quartermaster offices, issue rooms, clothing rooms, and general storerooms.<sup>35</sup>

**Original Post Guardhouse/Chapel, Building 42**

The contract for the construction of the original post guardhouse was awarded to Henry A. Howard on November 15, 1886. It was built along the eastern edge of the parade ground, just south of the post headquarters. The one-story rectangular brick building provided three cells for prisoners, offices for the guards, a washroom, and additional general-purpose rooms. Construction costs for the guardhouse were \$4,498.69, and it was completed in the fall of 1889. Around the same time, the Army rejected the portion of Captain Jacobs' master plan that called for the construction of a chapel with an attached schoolroom south of the post's central quadrangle. The reason for this decision is unclear, but by 1893, the Army had concluded



Original Post Guardhouse/ Chapel (Building 42), c. 1895.

that providing these facilities was indeed necessary. A new, larger guardhouse building was constructed in 1893 near the entrance to the post. The interior layout of the original guardhouse was altered that same year at a cost of \$1,621 to include one large and four smaller rooms. The simplified floor plan made the building more versatile, and while it was used in subsequent years primarily as a chapel, it also served as a schoolroom and post recreation hall. The chapel was again used for its original purpose when it was a place of confinement for Spanish prisoners during the Spanish-American War.<sup>36</sup>

**Post Bakery, Building 102**

To provide bread for the new post, Captain Jacobs ordered the construction of a bakery near the railroad sidetrack that supplied the post. If the flour and other dry ingredients were supplied by rail, the proximity to the track would have made transferring them to the bakery more efficient. The one-story brick bakery building was constructed in 1889 for \$2,730. The building was divided into three rooms, and the large-scale bread production necessary to supply the post took place in two ovens.<sup>37</sup>

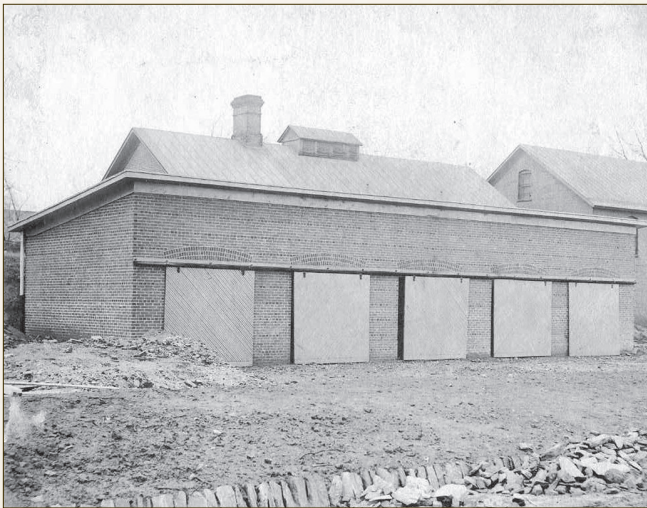
In a story documenting construction efforts at the post, the Atlanta Constitution reported that "the government takes care, however, that they shall have the best, and a first-class bakery, in which the best flour is used under careful inspection, without alum or other injurious substances, gives the soldier better bread than most people have at home."<sup>38</sup> The article went on to note, "The army has not yet risen to the full dignity of the bakery business. It omits corn bread from its bill of fare. Until this truly American



Post Bakery (Building 102), c. 1915.



Post Hospital (Building 171), c. 1892.



Coal Shed (Building 103), c. 1915.



Oil House (Building 105), c. 1915.

product is adopted, the cuisine cannot be in the highest sense a success. From his pictures it is easy to see that the uncle of our country is a lover of corn bread and butter-milk, and every patriotic soldier ought to be allowed to partake of the national diet.”<sup>39</sup>

**Coal Shed, Building 103** In the early years of the post, coal-fired boilers or stoves were used to heat many of the buildings. Coal stoves were also used in many kitchens throughout the post. The coal arrived at the post by rail and was transferred from the railcar to the nearby coal shed. It was stored in the coal shed before being transferred to coal storage bins in the cellars of individual buildings. The coal shed was built in 1889.<sup>40</sup>

**Oil House, Building 105** In 1889, members of the Quartermaster Department constructed a small building for oil storage. The construction cost for the oil house was \$492, and it was built adjacent to the railroad sidetrack that supplied the new post.<sup>41</sup>

**Post Hospital, Building 171** Army post hospitals were constructed to provide medical care for troops at specific installations. They were typically smaller and less well equipped than the Army’s general hospitals, which served larger populations and were not limited to providing care for an individual Army unit. In times of war, the Army often built new general hospitals or converted smaller post hospitals into general hospitals in order to provide care for large numbers of casualties.<sup>43</sup>

Medical care at Army post hospitals before the Civil War often consisted of post doctors caring for sick or injured soldiers in cramped, ill-ventilated facilities that were not conducive to a patient's recovery. On the eve of the Civil War, the Army Quartermaster Department started developing standardized plans for hospitals and other buildings in an effort to improve living conditions at Army installations. A set of standardized plans published in 1861 depicted a post hospital that resembled a troop barrack with a hospital ward located in a rear wing. In an effort to improve efficiency, the hospital kitchen, mess hall, dispensary, and the quarters of the hospital steward were all housed in the same building. The 1861 plans for post hospitals were never officially adopted, perhaps because the Civil War changed the Army's focus to constructing large general hospitals that could treat thousands of soldiers.<sup>44</sup>

After the Civil War ended, the Army Quartermaster Department and the Office of the Surgeon General sought to apply the lessons learned during the conflict to new standardized plans for post hospitals. In 1867, the Surgeon General issued a document entitled Circular #4 that provided a new standardized plan for post hospitals. It called for the construction of a central two-story block for administrative offices flanked by two one-story ward wings that provided space for 24 hospital beds. The hospital kitchen was housed in a rear wing. The size of a garrison determined the size of the post hospital, and the plan could be expanded to provide space for 48 hospital beds or modified to feature only one ward wing for 12 hospital beds.<sup>45</sup>

A few years later, the Surgeon General issued Circular #10 with updated standardized plans for post hospitals. The post hospital described in Circular #10 was very similar in form to the hospital building described in Circular #4, but the design for the Circular #10 hospital addressed a major deficiency in the Circular #4 design. Other than the ventilation provided by the doors and windows, the design for the Circular #4 post hospital did not provide any other method for ventilating the building. Surgeons and hospital stewards were consulted during the development of the Circular #10 design, and they made a number of recommendations regarding building ventilation. The Circular #10 design recommended that wraparound verandas be used to provide a cool place in the shade for patients and hospital staff to relax. Circular #10 also featured a system for ventilating the interior of the hospital wards. The floors of the wards were built with special vents that could be opened during hot weather in order to create vertical movement of air through the building. When warm air in the ward rose out of the ridge vent in the roof, it would pull cooler air from under the building through the openings in the floor, thereby cool-

## ATLANTA CONSTITUTION EDITORIAL



*Dated April 20, 1889*

With the expenditure of this \$158,000 on the post we will soon have near Atlanta one of the best equipped and most complete military reservations in the country. The work already done, under the skillful direction of Captain J. W. Jacobs, is a revelation to those who see it, and to those who have not a more pleasant evening cannot be spent than in driving out and looking through the grounds. All work done has been of the most substantial character, and the extent of the improvements is such as to be surprising to those who have not kept up with the work. The post was established with the idea of spending a half million dollars in completing it. Thus about as much more as has already been appropriated will be necessary to finish the work according to the original design. There should not, and probably will not, be any trouble in obtaining the remaining annual appropriations to the extent contemplated, which will make this post probably the most complete in the country.<sup>42</sup>

ing the ward itself. The ward stoves were designed to provide both heat and ventilation in the winter. Air ducts under the floors featured openings on each side of the building into which fresh air flowed. This air was subsequently pulled into the wards through an aperture under the stove when the warm air between the stove and its surrounding metal sleeve rose into the ward. A metal sleeve around the stovepipe near the ceiling worked by the same method to draw air from the ward through a vent in the roof. With these ventilation measures, the Circular #10 hospital provided a more comfortable and arguably healthier environment for hospital patients and staff.<sup>46</sup>

The Surgeon General's office published a report in 1870 that examined the conditions at military barracks and hospitals throughout the country. The report noted that many older hospitals were still in use, despite the advances in hospital design that had been incorporated into the standardized hospital plans. In many cases, constructing quartermasters did not adopt the 1867 Circular #4 plan for their new post hospitals. Their reluctance may have been the result of the Circular #4 plan's poor ventilation measures that made it difficult to adapt to local conditions. These deficiencies were soon addressed with the Circular #10 hospital design. To ensure that constructing quartermasters adopted the new standardized plans at installations throughout the country, the Secretary of War issued regulations that directed the Quartermaster Department to seek special appropriations for hospital construction rather than funding them from their general construction budget.<sup>47</sup>

## INSPECTION OF HOSPITAL (BUILDING 171) UNDER CONSTRUCTION

"War Department,  
"Surgeon General's Office,  
"Record and Pension Division,  
"Washington, D.C., August 24, 1888.

To the Surgeon General,  
U.S. Army,  
General:

I have the honor to inform you that in compliance with S.O. 192 C.S., A.G.O. I inspected the new post hospital at Atlanta, Ga., on the 23 inst. The following report is respectfully submitted.

The hospital is built of brick on the general plan of the regulation 24 bed hospital, and consists of a two story central administration building and two wings, or wards, of one story each.

The regulation plan of construction has been deviated from in a few particulars, but, with two exceptions I do not think these deviations are of sufficient importance to require further notice.

The wards are, each, in the clear, 44 feet 10 inches x 23 feet 10" x 14 feet. The windows in the wards are entirely below the roof of the veranda. The closets shown on plate A of circular No. 10 as adjoining the bath and water closet rooms have been omitted and the space which they would have occupied has been added to the bath room in which are located two bath tubs and two water closets.

In the place of the closets two cupboards have been built, one on either side of the chimney in mess room. The attendant's room shown on plate B is fitted up with shelves and closets for use as a store room, and is made larger by including in it the space given up to a hall way between the isolation ward and the attendants' room on plate B.

No ventilator duct has been provided to connect the opening in the ceiling of the ward with the ridge ventilator in the roof, but the opening in the ceiling communicates directly with the attic above the ward. None of the walls have been hard finished but have been left with the rough light brown coat of the sand and lime.

The is not at all displeasing to the eye, and will afford an excellent base for future kalsomining, but in the wards it is objectionable for the reason that its rough surface is much more likely than a smooth one to afford a resting place for dust, and with it the germs of disease. Concerning the foregoing I have only to suggest the advisability of providing a lath and plaster ventilating duct, as required by the specifications of circular No. 10, to extend from the opening in the ceiling of each ward to the opening in the roof, and of hard finishing the walls of the two wards and the isolation ward.

It is intended to use stoves for heating the wards, and open grates for other rooms.

The bath tubs, and the sinks in the dispensary, kitchen and pantry are fitted with hot and cold water fixtures. The kitchen range is a hot water reservoir of sufficient capacity attached.

The plumbing is all exposed to view and easily accessible. All waste pipes are separately trapped and ventilated. The ventilating pipes are taken into the soil pipes above the highest fixtures, and the soil pipes are carried, of full size, through the rooms.

The house drain is provided with running trap and fresh air inlet outside the building. All water pipes are provided with cut off valves, and the necessary drain pipes to prevent freezing.

The water supply of the hospital is taken from the general supply of the post, which is furnished by an artesian well of about 50,000 gallons estimated capacity per diem, pumped by a steam pump into an elevated tank, and thence distributed by pipes throughout the post. This supply is probably sufficient for a small command, but will certainly be found inadequate should the post be garrisoned by a whole regiment. The material used in the construction of this hospital seems to have been carefully selected and of excellent quality, the workmanship is good, as is the taste displayed in the general finish of the building, and altogether it can safely be said that the work done is exceedingly creditable to the officer in charge of it, and with the exception of the few minor details above, entirely satisfactory to the Medical Department.

In conclusion attention is respectfully invited to the accompanying statement [unavailable] of the cost of this hospital made for me by Capt. J.W. Jacobs, Asst. Quartermaster U.S.A., in charge of its construction. From this statement it appears that an unexpended balance of \$17.17 remains. I believe that this balance ceased to be available at the expiration of the last fiscal year.

"Very respectfully,

"Your obedient servant, "F.C. Ainsworth,

"Capt. and Asst. Surg. U.S. Army. "Official copy respectfully furnished Captain J.W. Jacobs, Assistant Quartermaster, U.S. Army, Atlanta, Ga., for his information. "By order of the Surgeon General, "J.H. Baxter,

"S.G.O, Sept. 4," 1888. "Colonel & Chief Medical Purveyor,  
U.S. Army. <sup>49</sup>

Captain Jacobs received a special appropriation to build a hospital for the new post on July 15, 1886. He decided to build the hospital just south of the eastern end of the post's central quadrangle. The hospital's proximity to the railroad sidetrack that supplied the post was intended to facilitate the transfer of sick and injured soldiers from railcars to the hospital. On November 15, 1886, Captain Jacobs awarded the building contract to Henry A. Howard. The original plan for the hospital called for the construction of an administration building with one hospital ward, but an additional ward was added during the construction process. The second ward brought the building into compliance with the standardized plan for the regulation 24-bed Army hospital described in Circular #10. The red brick hospital building was completed in 1889 for a total cost of \$11,973.87.<sup>48</sup>

**Quartermaster Stables, Building 400** On August 16, 1887, Captain Jacobs hired the Harris Company to build the quartermaster stables for the new post. The stables and adjacent post corral were located southwest of the main quadrangle and parade ground. In addition to the 28 stalls for the post's horses and mules, the eastern end of the stables featured two large oat bins, and the western end featured two large tack and storage areas. Construction of the stables was completed in 1889 for a total cost of \$7,639.17. The post blacksmith shop that provided shoes for the horses and mules was located just south of the quartermaster stables.<sup>50</sup>

**Post Hospital Steward Residence, Building 136** Unlike the majority of the buildings on the new post, Captain Jacobs used Quartermaster Department personnel to build the residence for the post's hospital steward rather than hiring a civilian building contractor. He received a special appropriation of \$1,199.50 to construct the building on December 17, 1889. The one-story brick residence was built south of the main post quadrangle and featured a parlor, a dining room, a bedroom, a bathroom, a kitchen and a pantry. It was completed on April 15, 1891.<sup>51</sup>

**Post Headquarters, Building 41** Captain Jacobs reserved a place of prominence for the headquarters of the new post. From its location along the eastern side of the post's central quadrangle, senior officers could observe the activities taking place on the parade field. Construction of the headquarters was slated to begin promptly after the building contract was



Quartermaster Stables (Building 400), c. 1892.



Post Hospital Steward Residence (Building 136), c. 1915.

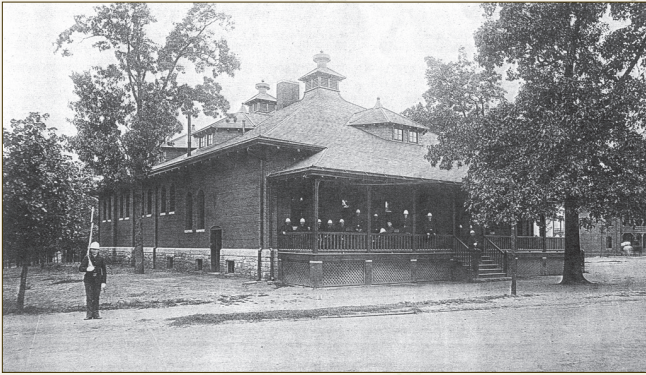


West Elevation of Post Headquarters (Building 41), c. 1892.





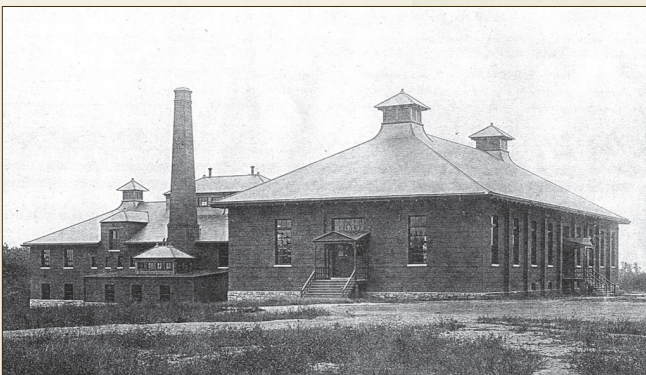
Northwest Oblique of Post Headquarters (Building 41) and Post Entrance, early 1890s.



Northeast Oblique of Post Guardhouse (Building 51), c. 1894.



North Elevation of Post Guardhouse (Building 51), c. 1915.



Consolidated Mess Hall (Building 181), c. 1893.

awarded to Charles Sundburg and Company of Chicago, Illinois on June 10, 1889. After a series of construction delays and other problems, Captain Jacobs found Charles Sundburg and Company to be in default. He proceeded to re-issue the advertisement for bids to construct the building and subsequently awarded the contract to Nicholas Ittner on March 10, 1890. Nicholas Ittner also experienced challenges during the construction process, including delays in receiving building materials and poor weather, but his excellent reputation as a contractor persuaded Captain Jacobs to grant him three extensions on the contract time limits. The two-story brick building flanked by small one-story wings was completed on June 11, 1891 for \$10,737. It provided office space for the post commander, the adjutant, the sergeant major, and several clerks, as well as a library, mailroom, and court-martial room. In July 1893, the expenditure of \$17 on an electric bell system for the headquarters building was approved. The bell system was intended to facilitate communications among the offices and in the courtroom.<sup>52</sup>

**Post Guardhouse, Building 51** After the original post guardhouse was converted into a chapel, a new guardhouse was constructed east of the original near the main entrance of the post. The one-story brick building provided rooms for the Officer of the Guard, the Sergeant of the Guard, non-commissioned officers of the guard force and members of the guard, prison cells of varying sizes, and bathrooms for both guards and prisoners. Three tool rooms were located in the cellar. Construction of the guardhouse was completed in 1893 for a total cost of \$13,100.<sup>53</sup>

**Consolidated Mess Hall, Building 181** In an effort to make both food preparation and the feeding of soldiers as efficient as possible, Captain Jacobs planned for the building of a Consolidated Mess Hall that would be centered behind the row of troop barracks located on the southern side of the parade field. The one-story brick building featured a rectangular mess room with a seating capacity of 768 men. It was served by a large rear wing that provided dining space for sergeants, a bread pantry, a kitchen, a cold storage area, storerooms for dishes and perishable food items, and accommodations for those preparing the meals. The construction cost for the Consolidated Mess Hall was \$24,100, and it was completed in 1893.<sup>54</sup>

## Staff Row

Staff Row, the line of officers' quarters built along the northern edge of the post's central parade ground, was originally intended to house the officers of an artillery regiment. An artillery regiment would typically have included a Colonel, a Lieutenant Colonel, three Majors, ten Captains, twenty First Lieutenants, and ten Second Lieutenants. Artillery regiments of the era were rarely manned at full strength, so fewer quarters were ultimately needed. Captain Jacob's master plan therefore called for the construction of 17 double quarters or duplexes for company-grade officers and three individual quarters for higher-ranked field-grade officers. The quarters of Staff Row could therefore house 37 officers and their families, instead of the 45 typically associated with an artillery regiment. Under Captain Jacobs' master plan, Quarters 5, 10, and 15 for the field-grade officers were evenly distributed down the length of the parade field.<sup>56</sup>

### AN INVITING SUBURBAN DRIVE

Many citizens of Atlanta were curious about Fort McPherson and wanted an opportunity to visit the post. Newspaper accounts of the beautiful buildings piqued their interest, as did the idea of watching the soldiers drill in their uniforms. In 1890, the Atlanta Constitution reported on local efforts to have a road built that would facilitate visits to the post:

*Fort McPherson is about three miles from the city. It is accessible only by driving over half the distance along the line of two railroad tracks over which trains are constantly passing. The fort would be a popular resort for the people of Atlanta, especially for those who enjoy the pleasure of suburban drives, to rest themselves for a while from the rush and excitement of the city, but as it is, comparatively few vehicles find their way there on account of the dangerous drive along the railroad.*

At the direction of the Secretary of War, Captain Jacobs undertook a survey of the potential road corridor, which reportedly went "through beautiful country" and avoided the railroad entirely until it bridged the tracks when it reached the post. In his survey report, Captain Jacobs reported that an appropriation of \$50,000 would be necessary to build the road. Atlanta's citizens were eager to obtain the congressional appropriation, as it would provide "Atlanta with something she has long needed – and inviting suburban drive."<sup>55</sup>

**Quarters 1-4** On August 4, 1886, Captain Jacobs received a Congressional appropriation for construction of the first four double quarters to be built on Staff Row. He subsequently awarded the construction contract for the quarters to an Atlanta-based builder named Henry A. Howard on November 15, 1886. The four double quarters were identical two-story brick buildings that were divided into two separate living spaces in order to provide housing for eight company-grade officers and their families. The design for the four buildings was based on standardized plans developed by the Quartermaster Department. Each individual dwelling provided 3,164 square feet of living space and included a parlor, dining room, and kitchen on the first floor, and four bedrooms and a bathroom on the second floor. Captain Jacobs' master plan for the new post called for the four quarters to be built at the eastern end of Staff Row. Quarters 1 was built at the easternmost end of the parade field, closest to the post headquarters. Quarters 2, 3, and 4 were built in a westward progression down Staff Row with a uniform separation of 20 feet between each building. The construction costs reported by Captain Jacobs were \$12,845 for Quarters 1, \$12,365 for Quarters 2, and \$12,045 each for Quarters 3 and 4. Henry A. Howard completed the four double quarters in 1889.<sup>57</sup>

**Quarters 6-9** Unlike many of the buildings at Fort McPherson that were built according to standardized plans, Washington, D.C., architect Gustav Friebus created the design for Quarters 6-9. In keeping with Captain Jacobs' master plan, a space was left for the construction of Quarters 5, and Quarters 6, 7, 8, and 9 were built in a



Staff Row Looking East (Buildings 5-1), c. 1893.



Staff Row Looking East (Buildings 1-4), c. 1893.



Staff Row Quarters 1, c. 1915.

westward progression with a 20-foot interval between each building. The two-story brick buildings were divided into two separate living spaces to provide housing for two company-grade officers and their families. Each individual 4,181 square-foot living space provided a parlor, dining room, and kitchen on the first floor, and three bedrooms and two bathrooms on the second floor. The cellar for each unit featured space for a laundry, storage, and the furnace.<sup>58</sup>

Captain Jacobs awarded the contract for the construction of Quarters 6-8 to the Harris Company on August 16, 1887. The Harris Company constructed Quarters 6 for \$14,297.33, Quarters 7 for \$14,321.83, and Quarters 8 for \$14,321.84. All three buildings were completed in 1889.<sup>59</sup>

On June 10, 1889, Captain Jacobs awarded the contract for the construction of Quarters 9 to Charles Sundberg and Company of Chicago, Illinois. Like the Post Headquarters, construction delays led Captain Jacobs to find Charles Sundberg and Company to be in default of its contract. Nicholas Ittner was subsequently hired to construct Quarters 9 on March 10, 1890. He finished the building in 1889 for a total cost of \$17,208.00.<sup>60</sup>

**Quarters 5** Quarters 5 was the first field-grade officers' quarters to be completed at the new post. The two-and-a-half-story brick quarters provided 6,383 square feet of living space for a field-grade officer and his family. A reception hall, dining room, parlor, library, kitchen, and pantry were present on the first floor. Four bedrooms, three bathrooms, and a study made up the second floor, and two bedrooms and a wardrobe room were located in the attic. Areas for a laundry, storage, and a furnace were provided in the basement. The original design for the house was produced by



Staff Row Quarters 6, c. 1915.



Staff Row Quarters 9, c. 1915.



Staff Row Quarters 5, c. 1915.

Captain George E. Pond, and it was first built at Fort Riley, Kansas in 1887. The Army adopted Captain Pond's design for use as a standardized quarters plan, and Captain Jacobs subsequently used the design for Quarters 5. Charles Sundberg and Company was originally selected as the contractor for Quarters 5 in the summer of 1889, but, as in other cases, Nicholas Ittner ultimately built the quarters when Captain Jacobs found Charles Sundberg and Company to be in default. The total construction cost for Quarters 5 was \$12,864, which included an additional expenditure of \$235 to finish the rooms of the attic. Captain Jacobs accepted the completed quarters from Nicholas Ittner on August 19, 1891.<sup>61</sup>

**Quarters 10** Captain Jacobs placed Quarters 10, the residence of the Commanding Officer, in a prominent position at the center of Staff Row. The two-story brick quarters provided 9,385 square feet of living space for a field-grade officer and his family. On the first floor of the house, an entry vestibule, stair hall, parlor, den, library, dining room, powder room, and kitchen provided ample space for both quiet contemplation and the entertainment of guests. A deep porch that extended from the front entrance down the eastern side of the quarters provided space for outdoor relaxation. The second floor originally featured six bedrooms, a sizeable central stair hall, and one bathroom, but this arrangement was later altered to feature five bedrooms, four bathrooms, a central stair hall, and a sleeping porch. An additional bedroom was located in both the attic and the cellar. Areas for a laundry, storage, and a furnace were also located in the cellar. Like Quarters 5 and 9, Nicholas Ittner built Quarters 10 when



Staff Row Quarters 10, c. 1893.

Captain Jacobs found Charles Sundberg and Company to be in default. Construction of Quarters 10 under Nicholas Ittner was completed between March 10, 1890 and October 24, 1891 for a total cost of \$15,365.<sup>62</sup>

The large size and general grandeur of Quarters 10 was a function of the era in which it was built. In the late nineteenth century, it was customary for Commanding Officers to entertain and provide accommodations for visiting dignitaries and guests. The visits of one guest, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, actually prompted a change to the second floor of Quarters 10. In 1935, a sleeping porch was added to the rear of Quarters 10 so that the President would have a comfortable place to sleep during his travels to and from The Little White House in Warm Springs, Georgia. Military practice and protocol gradually changed, and the formal entertainment and accommodation of guests by a Commanding Officer and his family became less common. As a result, by the end of the twentieth century, General Officers were afforded less than a quarter of the space they were provided at the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>63</sup>

**Quarters 11-14** Captain Jacobs hired Nicholas Ittner to build Quarters 11-14 on July 15, 1889. Each quarters was a double unit or duplex that was divided into two 3,446 square foot living spaces. Quarters 11-14 therefore provided accommodations for eight company-grade officers and their families. Each living space originally featured a large parlor, dining room, and kitchen on the first floor, while the second floor featured three bedrooms and a bathroom. In later years, the rear portion of first floor in each living space was reconfigured to provide additional



Staff Row Quarters 10, c. 1915.

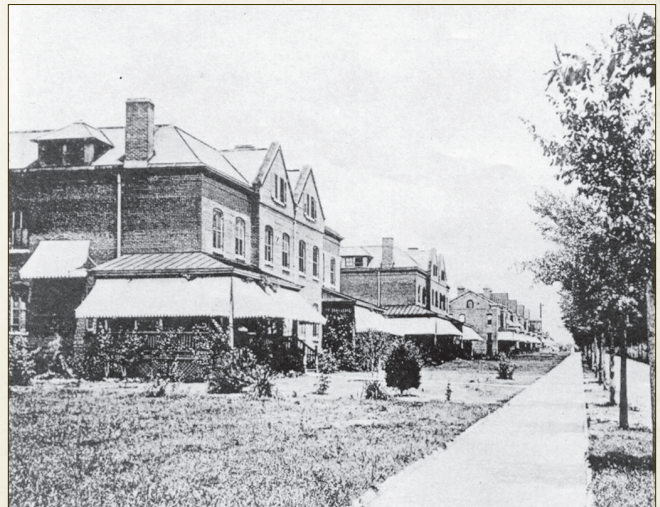


Staff Row Quarters 11, c. 1915.

utility or support rooms, and the second floor of each living space was altered to provide an additional bedroom and bathroom. Nicholas Ittner built each quarters for \$15,860 and delivered the buildings to the government on April 18, 1891.<sup>64</sup>

**Quarters 17-19** After the completion of Quarters 11-14, Captain Jacob's master plan called for the construction of six additional buildings. Quarters 15 was intended to accommodate a field-grade officer and his family, and Quarters 16-20 were double units that were intended to accommodate 10 company-grade officers and their families. Funding was not immediately available to construct all six buildings, so it was necessary for Captain Jacobs to prioritize his construction projects. In August 1890, \$48,000 was set aside to fund the construction of a Consolidated Mess Hall and three double units for company-grade officers. By October 1890, the Quartermaster Department had determined that the Consolidated Mess Hall was a lower priority, and that it would rather spend \$43,600 to build a field-grade officers' quarters, two double quarters for company-grade officers, and two quarters for non-commissioned officers. Captain Jacobs soon became aware that the Army intended to forego the construction of all of the remaining buildings on Staff Row. In an effort to make Staff Row appear more visually balanced and complete, Captain Jacobs proposed the construction of Quarters 15, 17, and 19 rather than 15, 16, and 17, which would have left a large open space at the end of the parade field.<sup>65</sup>

In June 1891, during a second round of construction bidding, Captain Jacobs accepted the bid of George H. Mor-



Staff Row Looking East Showing Quarters 19 and 17, c. 1893.



Staff Row Quarters 19, c. 1915.

row of Baltimore, Maryland, to build Quarters 17 and 19 for \$16,250 each. The second round of bidding for Quarters 15 had produced a bid amount that was still more than twice the construction budget, so Captain Jacobs decided not to go forward with the construction of the final field-grade officers' quarters. Quarters 17 and 19 were double units or duplexes that provided residences for four company-grade officers and their families. Each 4,865-square-foot living space featured a kitchen and three other large rooms on the first floor and five bedrooms and a bathroom on the second floor. Areas for a laundry, coal storage, and a furnace were provided in the cellar. George H. Morrow completed the construction of Quarters 17 and 19 in 1892. After the construction of these two quarters, no additional construction took place on Staff Row for over a decade.<sup>66</sup>

### Troop Row

Captain Jacobs' master plan called for the construction of a line of troop barracks along the southern edge of the central parade ground. The five barracks that came to be known as Troop Row were intended to provide housing for ten dismounted batteries of an artillery regiment. Captain Jacobs envisioned a centrally placed triple barracks that would house two companies of men and the regimental band. The triple barracks would be flanked on each side by two double barracks that would each provide housing for two companies of men. With an interval of thirty feet between each building, the row of troop barracks extended down the entire length of the parade field.<sup>67</sup>

Construction on Troop Row began after Captain Jacobs awarded the contract for Buildings 56 and 60 to W. F. Bowe on June 30, 1886. By 1889, Building 56 was standing at the eastern end of Troop Row, and Building 60 was standing at its center. The construction cost for

Building 56, a double barrack, was \$22,740, and the cost for Building 60, a triple barrack, was \$29,420.<sup>68</sup>

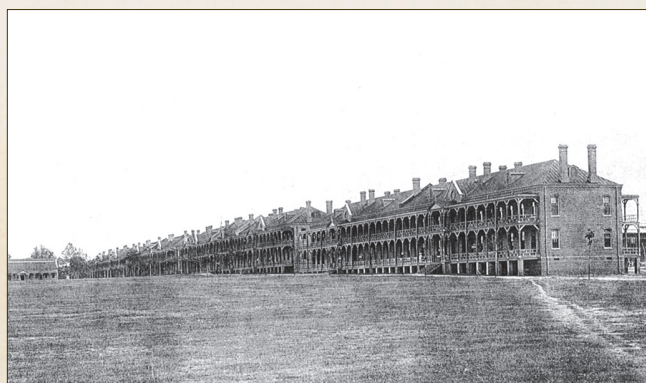
On July 15, 1889, Captain Jacobs hired contractor Nicholas Ittner to build a double barrack on Troop Row between Buildings 56 and 60. Nicholas Ittner completed Building 58 on April 18, 1891, for a total cost of \$28,335. The construction of Building 58 was initially delayed by the default of Charles Sundberg and Company. Captain Jacobs subsequently awarded the construction contract to Nicholas Ittner on March 10, 1890. After experiencing a series of his own delays, Nicholas Ittner delivered the building to the government on August 4, 1891 for a total cost of \$27,634.<sup>69</sup>

Both the double and triple barracks were two-story, rectangular brick buildings. Each of the double barracks was approximately 244 feet long, while the triple barrack was approximately 314 feet long. Two-story, full-width verandas were present on both the northern and southern elevations of each barrack. The basement and first floor of the barracks featured accommodations for non-commissioned officers and the cook, a dayroom, a tailor shop, office space, various storerooms, a kitchen, and a mess room. The second floor of each barrack provided accommodations for the garrison's enlisted troops. Open fireplaces and stoves were used to heat the barracks, and water closets were provided behind the barracks in small service buildings.<sup>70</sup>

In the early 1890s, the Army decided to reduce the number of artillery companies assigned to the new post from ten to eight. The four existing barracks provided enough housing for eight artillery companies, so the construction effort was halted before the double barrack intended for the western end of Troop Row could be built. No additional construction would take place on Troop Row for more than a decade.<sup>71</sup>



Troop Row Building 56, c. 1915.



Troop Row Looking East, c. 1892.

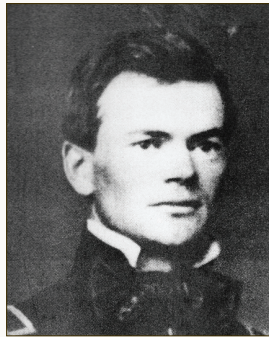
## Non-Commissioned Officers' Quarters, Buildings 137-142

The six key non-commissioned officers of the garrison, including the Regimental Sergeant Major, the Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant, the Post Quartermaster Sergeant, the Commissary Sergeant, the Ordnance Sergeant, and the Chief Musician or Drum Major of the regimental band, were housed in identical non-commissioned officers' quarters located approximately 850 feet south of Troop Row. The



Building 139, c. 1915.

### AN ADVERSARY NO SOUTHERNER EVER SCORNED OR HATED



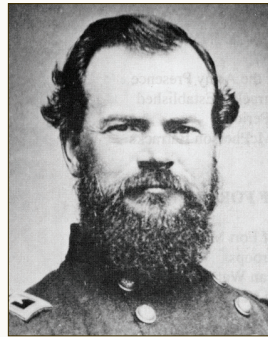
James Birdseye McPherson as a Young Man.

James Birdseye McPherson was born on November 14, 1828, in Sandusky, Ohio. His distinguished military career began when he entered the United States Military Academy at West Point. After graduating first in his class, the former cadet was asked to stay on at West Point as an instructor in practical engineering. This was considered a great honor, as no graduate had been asked to stay as an instructor without

first developing additional experience beyond his academic training. After a year of teaching at West Point, then Second Lieutenant McPherson was sent to New York City to improve the fortifications and defenses of New York Harbor. After directing the construction efforts at Fort Delaware for a short time, Lieutenant McPherson was transferred to San Francisco in 1857. He became the superintending engineer responsible for the construction of the fortifications on Alcatraz Island.<sup>72</sup>

At the start of Civil War, General McPherson held the rank of First Lieutenant. By the fall of 1862, General McPherson had so distinguished himself during the Shiloh Campaign and the operations against Corinth, Mississippi, that he was made a Major General of Volunteers. He commanded the XVII Corps during the second advance on Vicksburg, Mississippi, in 1863, and afterward he was recommended for promotion to Brigadier General in the Regular Army by General Ulysses S. Grant. When Vicksburg was finally captured, General McPherson was placed in command of the city. His just and civil treatment of the citizens of Vicksburg won him gratitude in the South and criticism in the North.<sup>73</sup>

In the spring of 1864, General McPherson was planning to take a leave of absence to be married in Baltimore, Maryland. Before the wedding took place, General William T. Sherman nominated him to command the Army of the Tennessee. General Grant accepted the nomination,

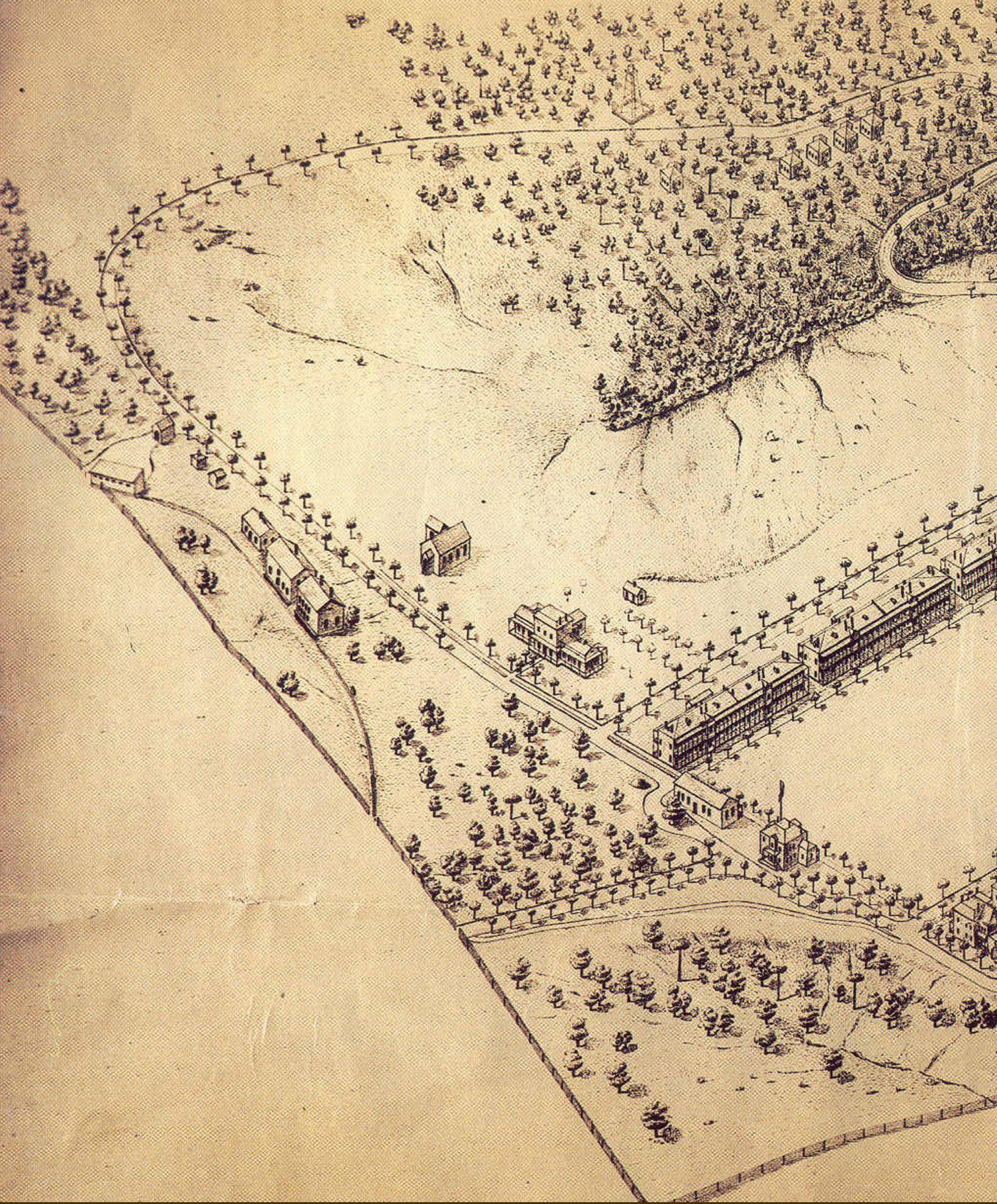


General James Birdseye McPherson.

and General McPherson subsequently joined General Sherman in his advance toward Atlanta. He commanded the Army of the Tennessee at Resaca, Dallas, Kennesaw Mountain, and during the preliminary actions on the eastern side of Atlanta. During the fierce fighting of the Battle of Atlanta on July 22, 1864, General McPherson was riding through the woods to investigate the progression of the

battle. He was shot as he tried to evade capture after coming upon a Confederate skirmish line.<sup>74</sup>

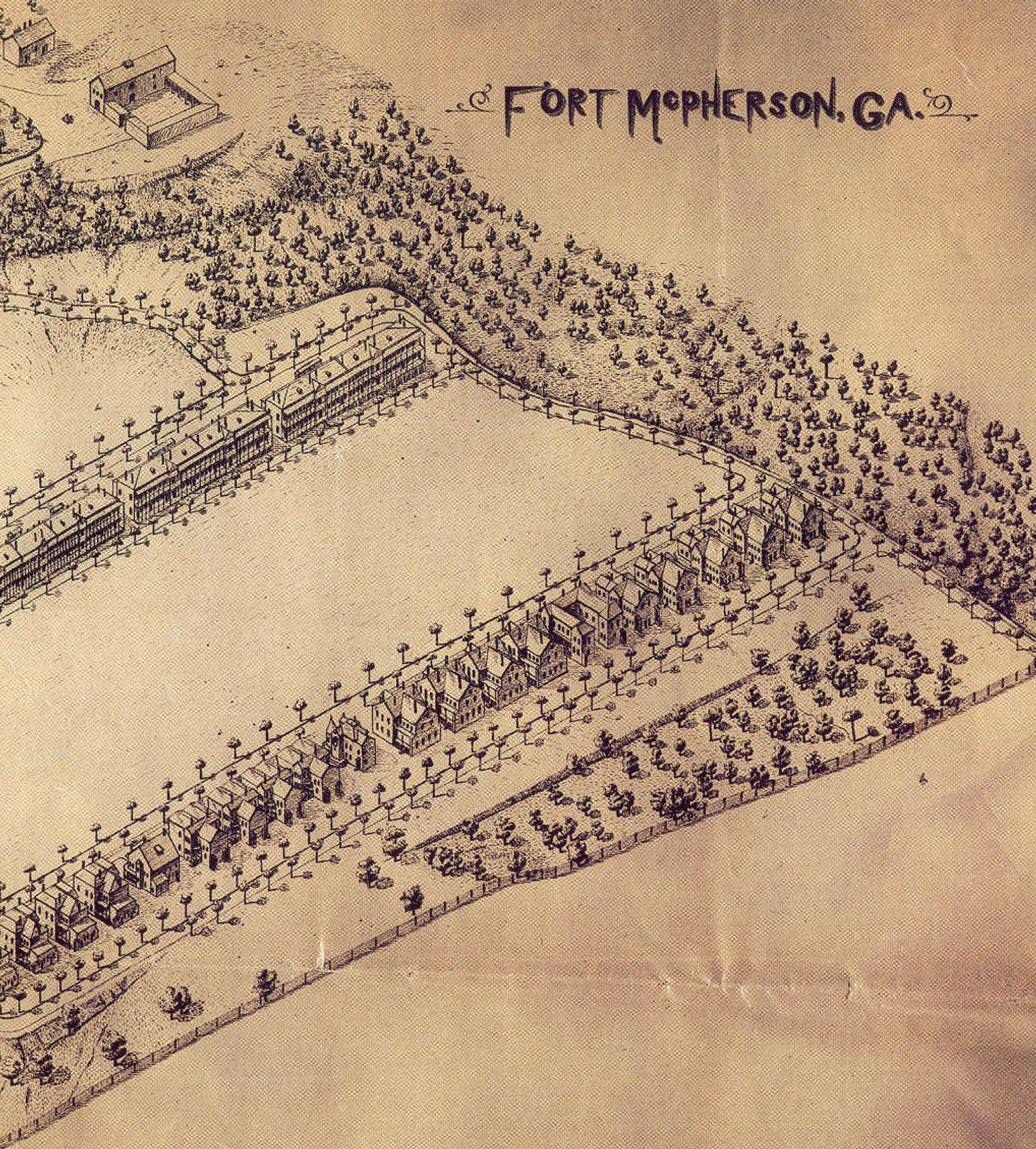
At the time of his death, General McPherson was "in his prime (about thirty-four years old), over six feet high, and a very handsome man in every way, was universally liked, and had many noble qualities."<sup>75</sup> When he was told the news of General McPherson's death, General Grant remarked, "The country has lost one of its best soldiers, and I have lost my best friend."<sup>76</sup> The Confederate Commander responsible for the defense of Atlanta, General Hood, also recorded his thoughts upon hearing the news of General McPherson's death: "I will record the death of my classmate and boyhood friend, General James B. McPherson, the announcement of which caused me sincere sorrow. ...Neither the lapse of years nor the difference of sentiment, which had led us to range ourselves on opposite sides in the war, had lessened my friendship; indeed, the attachment formed in early youth was strengthened by my admiration and gratitude for his conduct toward our people in the vicinity of Vicksburg. His considerate and kind treatment of them stood in bright contrast to the course pursued by many Federal officers."<sup>77</sup> One of the most telling tributes to General McPherson came one hundred years after his death. The Atlanta Journal and Constitution, the newspaper of the city that he once helped to vanquish, remembered General James Birdseye McPherson as "an adversary no Southerner ever scorned or hated."<sup>78</sup>



Birdseye View of Fort McPherson, c. 1890.



# FORT MOPHERSON, GA.



modest dwellings provided two rooms and a kitchen in 1,104 feet of living space. On March 15, 1889, Captain Jacobs hired a contractor named H. M. Beutell to build the first four of the non-commissioned officers' quarters. He completed Buildings 138-141 within the year for a total cost of \$2,010 each. Buildings 137 and 142 were built by George H. Morrow between August 8, 1891 and early 1892. The construction cost for each building was \$1,750.<sup>79</sup>

### AN OFFICIAL NAME FOR THE NEW POST AT ATLANTA

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
Major General John M. Schofield, Commanding General of the Army, wrote a letter to the Secretary of War on April 18, 1889, in which he put forth the name "Fort McPherson" for the new Army post at Atlanta. He intended for the name to honor his colleague and friend, Major General James Birdseye McPherson, who had been a cadet with him at West Point and served alongside him during the Atlanta Campaign. Secretary of War Redfield Proctor approved the name on April 24. On May 4, 1889, War Department General Orders No. 44 made the designation official: "By direction of the President, the new military post near Atlanta, Georgia, will be known and designated as 'Fort McPherson,' in honor to the memory of James Birdseye McPherson, Brigadier General, U.S. Army, and Major General of Volunteers, who was killed near the site July 22, 1864."<sup>80</sup>

### THE FIRST GARRISON TROOPS ARRIVE AT FORT McPHERSON

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
When the new post near Atlanta became Fort McPherson on May 4, 1889, the name did more than honor a Civil War General. The "fort" designation meant that the new post near Atlanta was a permanent installation. The Army's timing for selecting an official name was ideal, because the first two batteries of the regiment arrived on May 26, 1889, followed by the regimental headquarters, band, and seven additional batteries three days later. The batteries made up the 4<sup>th</sup> Artillery Regiment, which had previously been divided and stationed at four different posts in New England. A series of construction delays prevented the barracks from being completed before the arrival of the 4<sup>th</sup> Artillery, so the regiment set up camp across the railroad tracks from Fort McPherson. "The camp was reported to be a pretty sight with long rows of white tents in the green woods, a tall flagpole with the Stars and Stripes fluttering from the top, and the blue-

uniformed soldiers doing sentry duty or moving about the encampment."<sup>81</sup> The barracks were soon completed, and the regiment was able to break camp and moved into their new, more comfortable accommodations.<sup>82</sup>

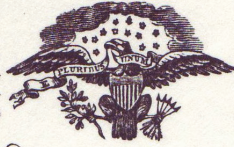
### THE LEGACY OF CAPTAIN JOSHUA WEST JACOBS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
Captain Jacobs served as the constructing quartermaster for what became Fort McPherson from November 23, 1885 until July 7, 1891. His efforts at Fort McPherson were well respected by his Army colleagues. In an 1888 report to the Surgeon General, Captain F. C. Ainsworth reported that "the material used in the construction of this hospital seems to have been carefully selected and of excellent quality, the workmanship is good, as is the taste displayed in the general finish of the buildings, and altogether it can safely be said that the work done is exceedingly creditable to the officer in charge of it..."<sup>83</sup> When he departed for Fort Riley, Kansas, most of the buildings in his master plan were completed or well underway, and the 4<sup>th</sup> Artillery Regiment had settled into their quarters. Captain Jacobs' legacy at Fort McPherson is that of an "exceptionally competent engineer with high professional standards,"<sup>84</sup> whose insistence on excellence helped him to build a post worthy of the United States Army.<sup>85</sup>



OATH OF OFFICE

One to accompany the accept-  
officer appointed or commis-  
the oath itself to be admin-  
tered into the service



ance of every commissioned  
sioned by the President, and  
istered to every officer mus-  
of the United States.

*J. Joshua W. Jacobs*, having been appointed  
a *Capt. Art. Quartermaster* in the **MILITARY**  
**SERVICE** of the United States, do solemnly swear that I have  
never voluntarily **BORNE ARMS** against the United States since I  
have been a citizen thereof; that I have voluntarily given no AID,  
COURTENANCE, COUNSEL, or ENCOURAGEMENT to persons engaged in ARMED HOSTILITY  
thereto; that I have neither sought, nor accepted, nor attempted  
to exercise the functions of **ANY OFFICE WHATSOEVER**, under any  
authority, or pretended authority, **IN HOSTILITY** to the United States;  
that I have not yielded a voluntary **SUPPORT** to any **PRETENDED**  
**GOVERNMENT, AUTHORITY, POWER, or CONSTITUTION** WITHIN the United States,  
**HOSTILE or INIMICAL** thereto. And I do further swear that, to  
the best of my knowledge and ability, I will **SUPPORT and DEFEND**  
the **CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES** against all enemies, **FOREIGN and**  
**DOMESTIC**; that I will bear true **FAITH and ALLEGIANCE** to the same;  
that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or  
purpose of evasion; and that I will **WELL and FAITHFULLY** discharge the  
**DUTIES** of the OFFICE on which I am about to enter. So help me God.

*J. Jacobs*  
*Capt. Art. Q. M.*

Sworn to and subscribed before me, at *Fort Snelling Minn.*  
this *25* day of *March*, 18*82*.

*James Smith*  
Notary Public

[ A. G. O. No. 55. ]

Captain Jacobs' Oath of Office, Taken March 25, 1882.



Interior of a Troop Row Barrack, 1893.

CHAPTER  
**II**

# EARLY FORT McPHERSON

**THE YEARS PRECEDING** the Spanish–American War were relatively quiet at Fort McPherson. Most of the buildings that were part of Captain Jacobs’ master plan had been completed, and only limited construction activity took place. Two of the most important developments occurred outside the boundaries of the post.<sup>1</sup>

The first development helped to integrate Fort McPherson into the economic and social life of Atlanta. In April 1891, a streetcar line began service between downtown Atlanta and Fort McPherson via the Pittsburgh neighborhood. The line terminated at the railroad depot that served Fort McPherson and provided easy transit for both soldiers and city residents.<sup>2</sup>

The second off-post development helped to prepare the garrison troops for combat. Fort McPherson’s original 236.4-acre area was considered too small to accommodate a proper rifle range. An 1889 proposal to purchase land adjoining the post that would have doubled or tripled its size was not accepted, so the Army sought alternative locations for a rifle range. On June 13, 1890, Congress approved the purchase of 1,271 acres of land near Bremen, Georgia, but the land pur-

chase was not finalized until January 13, 1896. By this time, troops belonging to the 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment were garrisoned at Fort McPherson. In order to determine the best route for the troops to take to and from the rifle range, the Army conducted a survey of the roads between Fort McPherson and the new United States Target Range in the spring of 1896. The new target range in Bremen was approximately 50 miles west of Fort McPherson, which provided the commanders of the 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry an opportunity to condition their troops to march long distances in addition to the marksmanship practice afforded by the new range.<sup>3</sup>

### Construction of Additional Support Buildings

Two additional storage facilities were constructed near the railroad sidetrack on the eastern side of Fort McPherson. The Subsistence Storehouse (Building 100) featured a large storage area, an issue room, and administrative offices. The storehouse was completed in 1898 for a total cost of \$7,300.27. The Ordnance Storehouse (Building 104) was completed in 1897 for a total cost of \$1,250. It was divided



Building 100, c. 1915.



Building 104, c. 1915.

into two rooms for the storage of weapons, ammunition, and signaling equipment.<sup>4</sup>

### Life at the Garrison

By the 1890s, life at Fort McPherson had settled into the rhythm of a peacetime military post. In addition to their conditioning and drill exercises, soldiers at Fort McPherson participated in a variety of leisure activities, such as bicycling and playing baseball. The Fort McPherson baseball team competed against a number of teams from the Atlanta area, including the Y.M.C.A. team, the city's home team (then known as the Atlantas), and the Techs from the Georgia School for Technology, which was the precursor to the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech). Atlanta's citizens were invited to the post for military parades, band performances, and dances. The *Atlanta Constitution* reported on an elegant reception to be held at Fort McPherson in April 1895, saying, "The affair will be elaborate and altogether 'swell,' as army dances usually are."<sup>5</sup>

Several different Army regiments were stationed at Fort McPherson in the last decade of the nineteenth century. The 4<sup>th</sup> Artillery Regiment garrisoned the post from late May 1889 until they were replaced by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Artillery Regiment

on May 2, 1893. On October 19, 1893, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Artillery departed for St. Francis Barracks in St. Augustine, Florida, and the 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment arrived to garrison the post. The 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry was stationed at the post until the spring of 1898 when multiple companies departed the post to take part in the Spanish-American War.<sup>6</sup>

### THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR



Fort McPherson's relatively quiet early years ended with the coming of the Spanish-American War in 1898. Americans



A Festive Outing on Staff Row, c. 1895.



Birdseye View of Fort McPherson, c. 1895. Courtesy of Marianne and Barbara Trombley.

had grown tired of the Spanish intervention in Cuba, which they believed threatened American economic interests on the island. Reports of the injustices forced upon the Cuban population at the hands of the Spanish military stirred American public opinion and changed the prevailing sentiment from one of isolationism to one of interventionism with a moral basis. The movement toward armed conflict grew for months and reached a fever pitch after the sinking of the *U.S.S. Maine* in Havana Harbor on February 15, 1898. After an investigation determined that the *Maine* was destroyed by a mine, President McKinley instituted a naval blockade of



The U.S.S. Maine, c. 1897.

Cuba on April 21, 1898. The United States followed the naval blockade with a full declaration of war against Spain on April 25, 1898.<sup>15</sup>

### Preparations for War

Fort McPherson began preparing for war months before it was officially declared. In late February, after the sinking of the *Maine*, the troops at Fort McPherson were put on notice that they could be departing for Florida in preparation for sailing to Cuba at any time. On February 25, the *Omaha World Herald* reported, “Activity has never been so great at Fort McPherson as at the present time...Everything is in readiness to move the regiment to any point that may be designated in a few hours.”<sup>16</sup> Despite the immediacy of that reporting, two months would pass before the 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment would be called into action. The regimental field staff, band, and four companies of infantry departed for Tampa, Florida on April 19, 1898. For the field staff and the band, time in Florida was limited, as they were given new orders to return to Atlanta from Tampa. Their train arrived in Atlanta on May 9, 1898, just in time for Fort McPherson to become a hotbed of activity in support of the war effort.<sup>17</sup>



## THE BICYCLE SCANDAL OF 1897

In early 1897, Fort McPherson was rocked by a scandal that made national headlines. The *Boston Daily Advertiser* reported on the altercation between two officers that eventually embroiled the entire post and caught the attention of the nation:

*Atlanta, Ga., May 3-* Gen Wesley Merritt, commanding the department of the East of the regular army, will have to pass soon upon the findings of the Romeyn court-martial, which finished its work at Fort McPherson here today. After he disposes of the findings of this court-martial he will probably have to pass upon the decisions of several more court-martials at the same place.

Capt. Henry Romeyn, 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry, has been on trial, charged with conduct unbecoming an officer.

Capt. Romeyn knocked Lieut. M. J. O'Brien down on the parade ground of the post after dress parade of the garrison on last Feb. 17.

That is one of the charges against him. There are two other charges, both accusing him of circulating unjust and scandalous charges against Lieut. O'Brien's wife.

The court-martials [sic] began its sessions on April 20. It speedily became apparent that it was Mrs. O'Brien who was on trial as to her moral character.

The trial involved the question whether an army officer's wife may take bicycle rides and long walks and dance repeatedly with an officer of the post not her husband, but with her husband's approval, the other officer having broken off an engagement of marriage with the daughter of a third officer.

The officer of the post who played the gallant to Mrs. O'Brien is Lieut. Bamford of the Fifth Infantry, and the young woman whose marriage engagement was broken is Miss Nina Romeyn, whose father knocked Lieut O'Brien down. The court-martial thus found itself confronted with a typical army-post row, in which women and their jealousies played a conspicuous part. The result of the inquiry will practically determine whether Mrs. O'Brien will be run out of Fort McPherson and possibly out of the army circle itself.

Some of the friends of Lieut. O'Brien say that certain women of the post are determined to blast Mrs. O'Brien forever, and that Capt. Romeyn and his daughter are simply bent upon securing revenge upon Lieut. Bamford for breaking his marriage engagement.

Capt. Romeyn's friends say that Mrs. O'Brien should be banished from good society, and hence it is around this woman that this army row, with its many-sided complications, rages.

So much for the row and its causes. The persons involved are of more than ordinary importance. Capt. Romeyn has a reputation for bravery as a fighter. He has served continuously in the army since 1862, entering it as an enlisted man, and is within a few months of retirement for age.

He has been brevetted five times, and has a medal for bravery won in fighting Indians in Montana in 1877.

He is a high officer in the Loyal Legion and has been pointed out as a type of efficiency in an army officer. His daughter has been known as the "belle of the post" at Fort McPherson.

Lieut. O'Brien has also had distinction. He was selected by the war department to witness the war between China and Japan, and to report as to its conduct to the department.

There is said to have been some friction over his stay in the Orient. Mrs. O'Brien is army born and bred. Her father is Capt. Kendall of the Sixth Cavalry, one of the best known and most influential men in the army.

Mrs. O'Brien is vivacious, comely, and, until this scandal arose, was one of the most popular women in army circles. Lieut. Bamford is one of the younger officers in the army. He is good looking and has been popular.



Bicycle Outing at Fort McPherson, c. 1890.

Affairs were peaceful at Fort McPherson when the O'Briens joined the regiment at the close of the China-Japan war. Lieut. Bamford had paid attention to Miss Romeyn for some time, and had permitted himself to be congratulated on his engagement to her. He has since declared that he was not engaged to her, and soon after he had received the congratulations it is known that he went to her and asked her to deny publicly that there was any engagement between them.

This was despite the fact that he had asked her father to be allowed to wed her.

She declined to make any such announcement, and a question has arisen between Capt. Romeyn and his daughter on one side and Lieut. Bamford on the other as to whether the marriage engagement really existed. The weight of evidence on this point is in favor of the Romeyns.

Soon after Mrs. O'Brien arrived at the post, she began to attract attention by her graceful bicycle riding.

Several of the women of the post counted it a pleasure to be seen with her on spins about the fort and the surrounding country. Lieut. O'Brien did not ride a bicycle, but Lieut. Bamford did.

Lieut. Bamford frequently joined Mrs. O'Brien and other women in bicycle trips, but soon it was noticed that the other women dropped out of these parties, and Lieut. Bamford and Mrs. O'Brien began to take frequent and long jaunts together. Lieut. O'Brien approved of these excursions. It was he who suggested that Bamford get a tandem. He put up lunches for the lieutenant and Mrs. O'Brien, and frequently started them off together.

Bamford began to grow less attentive to Miss Romeyn. Then Miss Romeyn grew ill, and soon the entire post, notably the women, began to take sides as to Lieut. Bamford's conduct.

Exciting episodes now came fast. Miss Romeyn sent a note to Lieut. Bamford asking him to call at her house one afternoon.

She reproached him for his attention to Mrs. O'Brien and called in her father, who denounced Bamford to his face, declared the engagement broken, and ordered Bamford out of his house forever. Bamford went, and that afternoon after dress parade declared, in the presence of the other officers, that Romeyn had acted "like a cur." Romeyn responded- "You have acted like a cur, sir."

There the incident ended. On Feb. 11 last, Mrs. O'Brien gave an elaborate dinner at the post. The Romeyn-Bamford quarrel interfered somewhat with its success.

Four persons sent regrets- two men and two women. The men gave plausible excuses for not accepting the invitation. The women made no secret as to why they refused. Bamford had broken off his engagement with Miss Romeyn, and Mrs. O'Brien had accepted his attentions openly.

That was sufficient for them. The fight was carried on in earnest between Miss Romeyn and Mrs. O'Brien.



*On Feb 13, there was a hop at the post. Lieut. O'Brien and his wife marched around the room and were cut twice by Miss Romeyn.*

*Other women of the post found it convenient not to see the O'Briens, and still others, as they testified at the court martial, made it their business to watch Mrs. O'Brien and Lieut. Bamford. It was noticed that they danced together almost exclusively.*

*The chief dance of the night was a german [sic] and Mrs. O'Brien scandalized her critics by selecting Lieut. Bamford as her partner in one of the figures. Then, too, it was noticed that when not dancing together they sat together a good deal in semi-seclusion.*

*Just then a young man named Bennett, a railway official in Atlanta who had gone there a year or two since from Baltimore, and had become engaged to a daughter of Capt. Randall of the post, was drawn into the storm.*

*Mrs. O'Brien had expressed a desire to go to Washington to witness the inauguration of McKinley on March 4.*

*Bennett had decided to attend the inauguration, and also to make a visit to his old home in Baltimore. He offered to escort Mrs. O'Brien to Washington, and was in the railroad ticket office in Atlanta looking after transportation when Capt. Romeyn came in and declared that Mrs. O'Brien was not a fit person for him to associate with, and furthermore advised him not to escort Mrs. O'Brien.*

*Bennett took Romeyn's advice, told Miss Randall and others about it, and the story spread quickly and reached Lieut. O'Brien's ears. He also had heard that Mrs. O'Brien's dinner had not been a complete success, because of the gossip about her and Lieut. Bamford.*

*Forthwith Lieut. O'Brien sent a note to Capt. Romeyn demanding an apology for his statements regarding Mrs. O'Brien to Mr. Bennett. Romeyn replied refusing to apologise [sic], by that act casting further reflections on Mrs. O'Brien.*

*The crisis came on Feb. 17. Dress parade had finished at the fort. The companies had been sent to the barracks, and the officers, as is the custom, had gathered about the commanding officer, who on that day was Major Porter. Suddenly Lieut. O'Brien's voice rang out.*

*"Gentleman, your attention, please. Your attention, gentleman, I say I denounce Capt. Romeyn publicly. He has grievously injured me and declines to make reparation.*

*That was as far as O'Brien got. Romeyn, who had been standing apart from the others, rushed into the group of officers, raised his left hand and struck O'Brien a violent blow on the right side of the face, felling him to the ground. Some of the witnesses of the encounter say Romeyn's hand was closed.*

*Others say it was open. At any rate, O'Brien was sent to the ground.*

*He sprang up, but the officers rushed in and separated the two men. Major Porter ordered Romeyn under arrest at once, but released him after 30 minutes of confinement, in order as Major Porter testified at the court-martial, to "place the two men on an equal footing." His reply was vague when questioned as to what he meant by that.*

*The storm had broken. The commanding general of the department was notified of the knock-down blow, and when Gen. Merritt assumed charge of the department early in April, he found at his headquarters on Governor's Island charges against Capt. Romeyn. He sent Col T. W. Barr of his staff to investigate the case. Col. Barr soon made his report, and at once a court-martial was ordered, ostensibly to try Capt. Romeyn, practically to try Mrs. O'Brien, and really to determine whether Lieut. Bamford had acted properly in breaking his engagement with Miss Romeyn and in paying attention to a brother officer's wife.<sup>7</sup>*

The principle witness during the trial was Nina Romeyn, the daughter of Captain Romeyn. She testified on Monday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, that she and Lieutenant Bamford had been secretly engaged for more than a year, but that she started to have concerns about his association with Mrs. O'Brien due to her "loose ideas on marriage."<sup>8</sup> Miss Romeyn went on to testify that Mrs. O'Brien had told her the previous summer "that she deemed it perfectly proper for a married woman to be in love with a man not her husband and for a single man to pay attention to a married woman."<sup>9</sup>

On April 27<sup>th</sup>, Captain Romeyn made his closing arguments to the court. His statements created a sensation, and prompted the commanding officer at Fort McPherson to detail a special guard to provide for his protection.

*This was done through the fear that Romeyn's life is in danger as a result of the terrible epithet which he applied to Lieutenant O'Brien during the course of his summing-up speech on Tuesday. This epithet is one which has never failed to bring out the shotgun in Georgia and which has caused more killings than any other word. The fact that the court forced Captain Romeyn to apologize for using it in its presence is regarded as of no moment, so far as Lieutenant O'Brien is concerned, and there is not the slightest doubt he will have to resent it or suffer ostracism.<sup>10</sup>*

It is not clear what Captain Romeyn called Lieutenant during his closing statement, but it seems to have further polarized the post. On April 29<sup>th</sup>, Captain Romeyn received an expression of support from the men of his company. He was presented with a solid silver loving cup with the inscription: "Presented to Captain Henry Romeyn by the members of Company "G," Fifth Infantry, in recognition of his worth as a soldier and a gentlemen."<sup>11</sup>

Captain Romeyn was ultimately found guilty of ungentlemanly conduct in speaking harshly of Lieutenant O'Brien and his family, and for knocking him down during the dress parade. In recognition of his years of distinguished Army service and the difficulty of the situation he faced, President McKinley set aside Captain Romeyn's sentence. As he was near retirement age, Captain Romeyn subsequently received an honorable discharge from the Army.<sup>12</sup>

At the time of his sentencing, Captain Romeyn predicted that Lieutenant O'Brien would follow him out of the regiment within six months. By early November 1897, Lieutenant O'Brien was under arrest and charged with conduct unbecoming an officer. The incident occurred on a training march to Chattanooga. Lieutenant O'Brien was apparently drunk for seven days while in Chattanooga and "brought scandal on his regiment" before disappearing when the regiment proceeded on to Nashville. Captain Romeyn's prediction ultimately came true, as Lieutenant O'Brien submitted his resignation from the regiment on November 23, 1897.<sup>13</sup>

After the scandal that caught the attention of both national newspapers and the President, the War Department took action in an effort to repair its reputation and prevent future embarrassing incidents.

*For the first time in a number of years, a post chaplain has been assigned to duty at Fort McPherson, Atlanta, Ga., by the War Department. Fort McPherson has been without the guidance of a spiritual shepherd for a long period, and it is intimated that the object of the War Department in supplying the deficiency is to inaugurate certain moral reforms among the officers and men stationed at this post, which was the scene of the recent famous army scandal.<sup>14</sup>*

The legacy of the scandal at Fort McPherson is unclear, but the newspaper accounts of the incident provide interesting insight into the prevailing culture at Fort McPherson in the late nineteenth century.

## Fort McPherson Becomes a War Prison

Fort McPherson was a place of confinement for general military prisoners for almost three years before it became a war prison. Twenty Spanish prisoners of war arrived at Fort McPherson on May 8, 1898. The 10 officers and 10 enlisted men were taken from the Spanish mail steamer *Argonauta*. They were to be held at Fort McPherson until they could be exchanged for any American officers or sailors that were captured by the Spanish.<sup>18</sup>

Almost immediately upon their arrival at Fort McPherson, newspapers were reporting that the prisoners had made a formal complaint about their treatment to the post commander, writing,

*We are officers and gentlemen, prisoners of war, not convicts. We are being treated like criminals, locked up and deprived of air and sunshine, instead of being paroled and allowed to go about the grounds as we please. Were the conditions reversed, we would not be guilty of treating officers as we have been treated in this respect. We are taken along paths to our meals where we must be stared at and commented on like dime-museum freaks. We are three times daily exposed to the sneers and curious gaze of idlers, who, forgetting that we are gentleman, confound us with those of our countrymen who have not conducted themselves in such a way as to merit the application of this title.*<sup>19</sup>

The alleged author of the formal complaint, Colonel Cortijo, then stated that if necessary he and his fellow prisoners were soldiers that could endure indignity like men. He would not have to suffer long, as he was one of two officers and two enlisted men that were transferred from the post on May 22, 1898. They were released in exchange for two American newspaper correspondents being held by the Spanish in Havana.<sup>20</sup>

Lieutenant Colonel William Hall of Fort McPherson responded to the reports from Madrid, saying, "The prisoners at the post are well treated. The ten officers now there are confined in two large rooms and have every convenience. They have a separate mess, but are given regular rations. The ordinary prisoners are well cared for and get their rations three times a day. All letters they write are read by the officials before being mailed and if any one had complained it would hardly get to Spain." The implication of his reporting that complaints would not make it to Spain was that the Spanish government was manufacturing reports of mistreatment of Spanish prisoners to sway public opinion in its favor.<sup>21</sup>

Atlantans had been reading newspaper reports for months that there were Spanish spies in their midst observing the city's preparations for war and the departure of the troops bound for Cuba. Six spies, including five civilians and one member of the military, were captured and delivered to Fort McPherson in June. Atlanta's citizens had also read conflicting accounts about the treatment the prisoners were receiving at Fort McPherson. Their curiosity piqued, Atlantans began visiting the post to see the prisoners.<sup>22</sup> In July, the Atlanta Journal reported on the condition of the prisoners observed during a visit to the post:

*At the head of the avenue [Gordon Plaza westbound] leading from the [main] gate opposite the station and past the guardhouse [Building 51] on the left, stands [sic] two brick buildings. In one of these, toward the left [Building 42], are kept the Spanish prisoners. Back and forth and forth and back, four sentinels, with their guns, pace a beat on every side. The invisible but deathly line of fate lies around this, at present, very interesting building. Several of the prisoners were sitting on the porch, dressed in cool-looking uniforms of blue. There are eight officers and eight privates in the party and the marked difference of refinement among the faces suggested which was which. These men were not overwhelmed with agony; they were not weeping, such as it might delight the tenderhearted to suppose; but they looked bored. It is conceivable that life doesn't at present show her prettiest face to those incarcerated heroes. For their sakes, along with various other reasons, sympathy calls for an early adjustment of the Spanish-American difficulties.*<sup>23</sup>

Although they may have preferred their freedom, the prisoners of war at Fort McPherson were not suffering in harsh captivity. They were not kept in the post guardhouse in which they would have been confined to cells. The post chapel (Building 42) where they were held was originally a guardhouse but had been converted to a chapel four years after its construction. It was divided into two large rooms, which gave the prisoners the ability to move around enough to engage in mock bullfights, with some prisoners acting the part of bulls and others playing matadors. The tedium of their confinement was also relieved when they were given the privilege of sitting on the guardhouse porch, resting in hammocks under the trees, taking daily escorted walks around the reservation, and making afternoon visits to the parade grounds to hear the performance of the regimental band.<sup>24</sup>

Fort McPherson's tenure as a war prison ended on August 20, 1898. The sixteen Spanish prisoners of war were transferred in an effort to consolidate prisoners, as the crews of multiple Spanish ships were being detained in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The Army released four of the five civilian spies on August 20<sup>th</sup>. The remaining civilian spy was ill and died in the hospital on August 21<sup>st</sup>. The sixth spy, a member of the U.S. military, was court-martialed and discharged without honor in September 1898.<sup>25</sup>

### Fort McPherson's General Hospital

Fort McPherson's post hospital was designated a General Hospital on May 12, 1898, in order to provide aid to the hundreds of sick and wounded soldiers that were the inevitable result of war. Major Blair D. Taylor, M.D., Fort McPherson's Post Surgeon, was put in command. The General Hospital became operational when the first trainload of patients arrived from Tampa, Florida, on May 14<sup>th</sup>. The influx of troops continued, as hundreds of additional patients arrived from both Cuba and the training camps within the United States. A number of Fort McPherson's troop barracks were converted to hospital wards and offices, but these were soon overwhelmed by the number of patients arriving at the post. Major Taylor responded in June by erecting 135 hospital tents on the parade ground, each of which held four to eight cots. Between the hospital building, the barracks, and the hospital tents, the Fort McPherson General Hospital provided 922 beds for ailing soldiers. The Consolidated Mess Hall (Building 181) provided meals for the convalescents and the hospital staff, while four special diet kitchens provided meals for soldiers whose illnesses prevented them from eating normal rations. The General Hospital was staffed by "14 medical officers, 3 stewards, 5 acting stewards, 112 privates of the hospital corps, 2 hospital matrons, 71 female nurses, and 92 other civilian employees."<sup>26</sup>

Typhoid turned out to be almost as formidable an enemy to the American soldiers as the Spanish. In addition to the wounded arriving from the battlefield, the General Hospital began receiving hundreds of typhoid patients. The disease was spreading like wildfire in the overcrowded and unsanitary conditions that prevailed at the training camps and ports where the troops were held before sailing for Cuba. By the middle of August, there were between 500 and 600 typhoid patients at Fort McPherson. Between the overflowing hospital and the overcrowded conditions in the barracks, tents, and shanties being used by the newly re-

cruited troops, conditions were ripe for a mass outbreak of typhoid at Fort McPherson. Fearing an epidemic, the Army began transferring the thousands of recruits away from Fort McPherson to other training camps.<sup>27</sup>

In late August, newspaper reports about the number of patients with typhoid at Fort McPherson were joined by reports of undue suffering and substandard medical care at the General Hospital.<sup>28</sup> Major Taylor, the commander of the General Hospital, refuted the charges in a report to the Surgeon General:

*Have spent this month for milk at the rate of \$800 a month; have as much ice as can possibly be used, not only for drinking purposes, but for cracked ice and ice caps. Have special diet kitchens in each building, run by competent cooks, and a special baker for the bread. Have now seventy-one trained female nurses, but need more on account of the sickness of some of them. Have over 100 hospital corps and have hired numerous laborers in mess hall and in tents, with scrub women for the wards.*

*My trained female nurses are very indignant at this misrepresentation. Every one is working to his or her fullest capacity to care for the sick. The only thing this man said approaching the truth was that some weeks ago some of the cases in tents did not have sheets or pillow cases, as we were short then and used what we had for the very sick. I have had numerous mothers, fathers and sisters thank me personally for the care and attention bestowed on their sick.*

*I do not propose to say a word in the newspapers, but thought it best to report this matter to you. Have nearly \$2000 ahead now and can provide for the present very well.*

*This man may have heard some convalescent typhoid patient complain of not getting enough to eat when his diet was being restricted by the surgeon for fear of perforation and hemorrhages [sic]. Don't see how I could possibly spend more money for the comfort of the sick without absolutely throwing it away.<sup>29</sup>*

When the General Hospital at Fort McPherson was closed on May 31, 1899, Major Taylor's assessment of the care provided by the hospital was proven accurate. In just over one year, the General Hospital treated 1,342 cases, and only 63 patients died.<sup>30</sup>



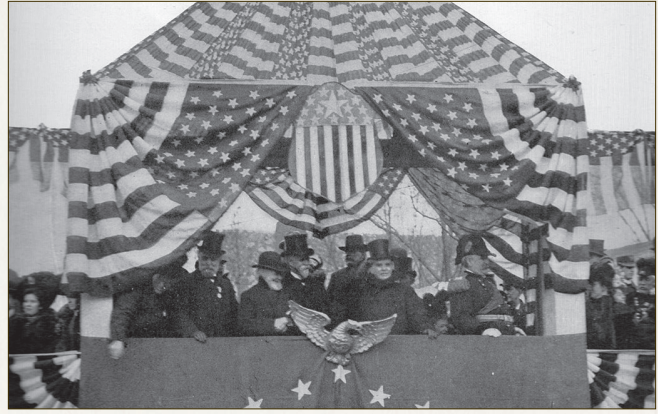
Fort McPherson's Post Surgeon, Major Blair D. Taylor, Addresses Medical Corpsmen Bound for Service in the Philippines, 1898.

### The Recruit Training Center at Fort McPherson

Fort McPherson was selected to play a major role in the Army's mobilization for the war when the War Department issued orders that made it a Recruit Training Center on May 14, 1898. Twenty thousand recruits were to be assembled into twenty regiments of infantry and five regiments of cavalry. The personnel of the Recruit Training Center were tasked with equipping the soldiers to perform their duties and training them to fight before they were shipped to the front. The process of preparing the soldiers to fight proceeded rapidly. Less than a week after the creation of the Recruit Training Center, on May 20, 1898, there were already 1,200 recruits at the post. By July 30, only 47 days after the opening of the Recruit Training Center, the Atlanta Journal was reporting that 14,000 men had already been prepared to fight and transferred on to their respective regiments.<sup>31</sup>

### The End of the Spanish-American War

Depending on the territories involved, the American military experienced either little to no resistance or decisive victories during the Spanish-American War. The fighting would last less than four months, with war being declared on April 25, 1898, and a peace protocol being adopted on August 12, 1898. The war was officially over on December 10, 1898, when the United States and Spain signed the Treaty of Paris. In addition to helping to establish Cuban independence, the United States gained Puerto Rico and Guam and purchased the Philippines from Spain for \$20 million. "The war had cost the United States \$250 million and 3,000 lives, of whom 90% had perished from infectious diseases."<sup>32</sup> U.S. President William McKinley visited Atlanta in December 1898 to celebrate the American victory over Spain. On December 15, troops from Fort McPherson participated in the



President McKinley Attends Atlanta Peace Jubilee Parade, 1898.

Atlanta Peace Jubilee Parade, which included a pass in review before President McKinley.<sup>33</sup>

## CHANGE AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY



The 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment garrisoned Fort McPherson for almost four years before departing in 1898 for action in the Spanish-American War. Between 1898 and 1902, the garrison of Fort McPherson was in a state of almost constant change, often consisting of a few company-sized units that were only stationed at Fort McPherson for a handful of months. In addition to the established units that came and went from the post, the transitory nature of the garrison was compounded by the arrival and departure of three regiments that were founded and organized at Fort McPherson: "the 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry in July 1899, the 26<sup>th</sup> Infantry in February 1901, and the 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry in May 1901."<sup>34</sup> Stability returned to the post garrison on July 21, 1902, when the 16<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment arrived at Fort McPherson after completing its service in Cuba.<sup>35</sup>

### Renewed Construction at Fort McPherson

After the Spanish-American War, the Army began a process of evaluating its resources to determine how it would move forward in the twentieth century. With the issuing of Special Orders No. 261 on November 11, 1901, the Headquarters of the Army Board of Officers convened to determine which military posts would be needed to support the Army's future missions. The board submitted their report on February 4, 1902. They recommended that the Army retain Fort McPherson as a permanent military post but enlarge it to accommodate a regimental headquarters and 12 companies of infantry. This recommendation necessitated the provision of quarters



Staff Row Quarters 15, c. 1915.



Bachelor Officers' Quarters (Building 40), c. 1915.

for 24 company-grade officers and four additional company-sized barracks, as well as the remodeling of the four existing barracks buildings. Construction of the new buildings for the expanded post began in the summer of 1903.<sup>36</sup>

**Quarters 15** The completion of Staff Row had been put on hold for over a decade, but the Army's decision in 1902 to expand the post's facilities to accommodate a full 12-company regiment was the catalyst for renewed construction. By this time, plans for the types of buildings that would complete Staff Row had changed. According to Captain Jacobs' original master plan for Fort McPherson, Quarters 15 was to be a large individual unit for a field-grade officer and his family, and Quarters 16 was to be a double housing unit for two company-grade officers and their families. Instead, the Army decided to make Quarters 15 a double housing unit and not to construct a house in the space intended for Quarters 16. Quarters 15 was positioned evenly between the existing Quarters 14 and 17. Standardized plans developed by the Quartermaster General's Office were used to construct Quarters 15. The plan provided 5,046 square feet of living space in each individual unit. The main rooms on the first floor of each living space were a reception hall, a parlor, a dining room, an office, and a kitchen, while the second floor featured five bedrooms and two bathrooms. The building was completed in 1904 at a cost of \$21,606.70.<sup>37</sup>

**Quarters 20** Under Captain Jacobs' original master plan from 1890, Quarters 15 was to be a field grade officers' quarters and Quarters 20 was to be a double housing unit for two company-grade officers. By the early twentieth century, the Army's plans for construction on Staff Row had changed. The functions of the two buildings were



Staff Row Quarters 20, c. 1915.

switched, with Quarters 15 built as a double housing unit, and Quarters 20 built as a field grade officers' quarters. Standardized plans developed by the Quartermaster General's Office were also used to build Quarters 20. The main rooms on the first floor were a large entry hall, a parlor, a dining room, a study, and a kitchen, while the second floor featured four bedrooms and two bathrooms. The 5,902 square-foot building was completed in 1904 at a cost of \$13,184.<sup>38</sup>

**Building 40** In order to accommodate the officers associated with a regimental headquarters and twelve companies of infantry, the Army awarded a contract for the construction of a bachelor officers' quarters at Fort McPherson on July 27, 1903. Building 40 was constructed on the eastern side of the parade field, just north of the original Post Headquarters (Building 41). The two-story building provided living space for 10 officers. Each officer's private accommodations included a bedroom, a parlor, and a bathroom.



Troop Row Building 65, c. 1915.

Four of these officers' quarters were located on the first floor of the building, and six were located on the second floor. In addition to the private living quarters, the first floor featured an entry hall, an assembly room, a sitting room, a parlor, a dining room, a bathroom, a storeroom, and a kitchen with a sizeable pantry. The second floor featured six bedrooms and a bathroom in addition to the officers' quarters. The bedrooms were quite small and all shared a single bathroom, so they were probably reserved for the servants and support staff that attended to the needs of the officers. The building was completed in 1904 at a cost of \$43,373.

Building 40 was originally designated Building 16, since that number was not used for a building on Staff Row. The building number changed on December 15, 1957, when the majority of the buildings at Fort McPherson were given a new numerical designation.<sup>39</sup>

**Building 65** Construction on Troop Row had stopped for more than a decade before the publication of the 1902 Headquarters of the Army Board of Officers report that recommended the expansion of Fort McPherson's garrison. As of 1891, construction of three double barracks and one triple barrack at equal intervals down the length of the row took place, with a space left toward the western end of the line for the fifth and final double barrack. As with Staff Row, the Army decided to deviate slightly from Captain Jacobs' 1890 master plan. Building 65 was constructed in a "U" shape and placed at the end of the end of the line versus being a linear building and being spaced 30 feet from the preceding building. The building was constructed to accommodate two companies of infantry at their fully authorized strength of 65 men each. Building 65 was completed in 1904 at a cost of \$55,682.<sup>40</sup>



Building 184, c. 1915.

**Building 184** To accommodate two additional companies of infantry, another double barrack was constructed behind Building 62, which was the westernmost linear barrack on Troop Row. Like Building 65, Building 184 was constructed in the shape of a "U" for a total of \$55,682.22. It was completed in 1904 in time for four additional companies of the 16<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment to arrive at the post. For the first time in its history, Fort McPherson could accommodate a normal garrison complement of 12 companies.<sup>41</sup>

**Mess Halls (Buildings 57, 59, 61, and 63)** Until 1906, the four linear barracks built in 1889 and 1891 (Buildings 56, 58, 60, and 62) were served by the Consolidated Mess Hall (Building 181) constructed in 1893. The growth of the garrison to its full strength of 12 companies necessitated the building of additional kitchen and mess hall facilities. The four small service buildings that originally stood behind each barrack to provide water closets for the men billeted there were removed and replaced with the enlarged kitchen and mess hall facilities. The three double barracks (Buildings 56, 58, and 62) each received identical mess facilities, but the triple barrack (Building 60) received a slightly larger version. The mess facilities for the double barracks were constructed at a cost of \$25,332 each, and the enlarged mess for the triple barrack was completed for \$32,519.46.<sup>42</sup>

**Building 401** In 1908, the Army constructed a new quartermaster stables (Building 401) to alleviate the severe overcrowding of the 28-stall quartermaster stables built in 1889. Building 401 was constructed based on a standardized plan developed by the Office of



Troop Row Mess Hall (Building 61), c. 1915.



Quartermaster Stables (Building 401), c. 1915.

the Quartermaster General (QMGO Plan No. 139-H) and issued for general use in 1906. Building 401 was a rectangular, one-story brick building with a slate roof. A roof monitor extended the length of the roof to provide light and ventilation for the interior of the building. Hay and grain were stored in a lofted area at the southern end of the building. Building 401 featured two general tack rooms, an officers' tack room, a general storeroom, and 76 stalls.<sup>43</sup>

**Building 54** The turn of the century brought a new form of illumination to Fort McPherson. In the nineteenth century, gas street lamps lit the post. A new street lighting station (Building 54) was completed in 1909. The small brick building housed a 5 kW transformer that provided electric light for the post.<sup>44</sup>



Street Lighting Station (Building 54), c. 1930.

**Quarters 18** The final building to be constructed along Staff Row was Quarters 18. Under Captain Jacobs' 1890 master plan, Quarters 18 was to be a double housing unit for two company grade officers, but the limited space between Quarters 17 and 19 would only accommodate a single housing unit. The design for Quarters 18 was based on Quartermaster General's Plan #236. Living space was provided in the basement and the attic, as well as on the two main floors. The basement featured a cellar with a separate storage area, a laundry room, and a bathroom. The first floor featured a large entry vestibule, a parlor, a dining room, a kitchen, a pantry, a bathroom, and a sunroom. Three bedrooms and two bathrooms were present on the second floor, and two additional bedrooms shared a bathroom in the attic. The 3,896 square-foot quarters was completed in 1910 at a cost of \$12,344.<sup>45</sup>



Staff Row Quarters 18, c. 1915.



Quarters 20

Quarters 15

Building 65

Building 63

Building 184

Fort McPherson Site Plan, c. 1905.





Building 40

Building 57

Building 61

Building 59

Building 100

Building 104

OFFICERS STABLES

STABLES

QUARTERS ROAD

BAND STAND

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

CHURCH

SCHOOL

GUARD HOUSE

24 CREST ROAD

HOSPITAL

HOSPITAL STORE ROOM

OPERATING ROOM

STABLES

DR. BURTON BUILDING

STABLES

STABLES

## Change in the Built Environment

Most of the change that occurred at the turn of the century involved new construction associated with the growth of Fort McPherson's garrison. In one case, an existing building was renovated to perform a new function for the post. Four new kitchen and mess hall facilities were completed in 1906, and the original Consolidated Mess Hall (Building 181) was no longer necessary. It was therefore converted into the Post Exchange in 1908.<sup>46</sup>

## THE QUIET YEARS BEFORE WORLD WAR I



In April 1905, a small detachment of the 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry arrived at Fort McPherson to prepare for the departure of the 16<sup>th</sup> Infantry to the Philippines on May 20, 1905. The remainder of the 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry arrived on post August 25, 1905, after completing a tour of duty in Cuba.<sup>47</sup>

The quiet routine of Fort McPherson's peacetime garrison still included a great deal of training and drill. In order to retain their ability to march long distances, the infantry troops would complete frequent practice marches that would total from twenty to sixty miles per month. They also marched the fifty miles to the post target range near Bremen, Georgia, for their annual firing practice. From 1906 until 1912, the troops attended biennial summer camps of instruction. The camps were held at Chickamauga National Military Park and typically lasted between one and two months. In addition to their own training, Fort McPherson's troops attended one-week encampments with state troops throughout the southeast. From 1910 to 1913, state militia officers from the southeastern United States attended weeklong camps of instruction at Fort McPherson to benefit from the training and experience of the professional Army officers.<sup>48</sup>

Between October 1906 and March 1917, the 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry or a subset of its battalions left Fort McPherson for three tours of duty. The first of these departures occurred on October 6, 1906, when the field staff, regimental band, and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> battalions of the 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry left for duty in Cuba. The 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry stayed behind to garrison the post until the remainder of the regiment returned on January 19, 1909. The 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry garrisoned Fort McPherson for slightly more than two years before departing on March 7, 1911, for Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas. Only a small detachment was left behind at Fort McPherson during this period, and at one point the total post population dropped to only 35 person-



Post Exchange (Building 181), c. 1915.



Fort McPherson Lee Street Gate, c. 1900.

nel. The regiment returned from duty at Fort Sam Houston on November 8, 1911. After being on post for more than two years, the 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry departed on March 19, 1914, for Eagle Pass, Texas. The Mexican revolutionary Pancho Villa had made several incursions into American territory, and the Army was sent to capture him and provide protection for American interests along the border. Only a small detachment of quartermaster and hospital corps personnel was left behind to garrison Fort McPherson. In April 1914, the population of the post dwindled to only 17 personnel. As a result, the office of Post Commander was passed around a great deal based on the arrival and departure of more or less senior officers. On March 17, 1917, the field staff and six companies of the 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry returned to the post to assume a new set of duties, partially restoring Fort McPherson's garrison. America's entrance into World War I was imminent, and the quiet years at Fort McPherson had come to an end.<sup>49</sup>



Fort McPherson Infantry Troops, c. 1910.



Infantry Troops Wearing Gas Masks at Ypres, France, 1917.

CHAPTER

# III

# THE PATH TO GLOBAL CONFLICT

**EUROPE WAS AT ITS ZENITH IN 1914.** The years of general peace among the Great Powers during the late nineteenth century afforded Europeans the opportunity to spread their influence around the globe through cultural exportation and imperialism. The continent enjoyed a “dense, highly skilled population; massive industrial productivity; a culture that rewarded creative novelty; and a near monopoly of modern military force.”<sup>1</sup> Europeans considered themselves the center of civilization, and very few people ever expected that the entire continent would veer off the highway of industrial and cultural progress into a barbaric and bloody conflict that would decimate a generation and sow the seeds for another world war within 25 years.<sup>2</sup>

By the dawn of the twentieth century, European states achieved varying degrees of industrialization. The resulting disparity in economic and military power that was a product of this uneven industrialization created a tension in the balance-of-power system that had helped European states avoid widespread conflict for many years. Other sources of tension between the Great Powers included the competition for empire around the globe and the competition for influence in areas of Europe where a power vacuum was created by the slow decline of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires. A less obvious, and therefore more insidious, contributing factor to the Great War was the cultivation of hatred between nations perpetrated by political leaders and the press.<sup>3</sup>

These sources of tension created a sense of insecurity that led the Great Powers to look beyond their own borders to ensure their security. They entered into a system of alliances designed to act as a deterrent to conflict, but which actually emboldened them to engage in more bellicose behavior. The Great Powers undertook an arms race on both land

and sea, and they adopted military mobilization plans that were almost impossible to stop once they had been put into motion. European diplomacy in 1914 was practiced much like it had been in the nineteenth century, and was therefore ill-equipped to manage the increase in the pace of events brought about by twentieth-century telecommunications and transportation technologies. In this environment, it took only an assassin’s bullet, a series of ultimatums and miscalculations, and ill-will between European leaders to plunge the continent into war.<sup>4</sup>



American Soldier at a Listening Post, 1918.

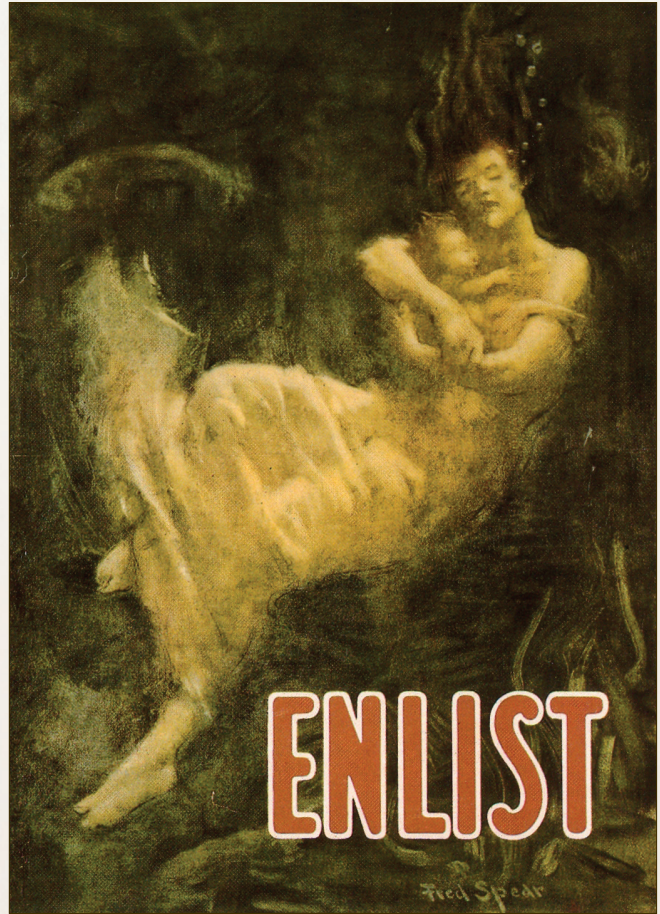
## AMERICA AND THE GREAT WAR



The United States declared its neutrality on August 4, 1914, three days after the Great Powers went to war. The isolationist sentiment in the country was strong, and it increased as Americans learned of the horrors taking place in Europe. Despite this feeling, America's cultural and ideological ties with Great Britain and France made staying neutral a challenge. America's trade and economic policies that were neutral in theory ended up favoring the Allied Powers in practice. The United States extended credit to both sides, but by 1917, the Allies had received 75 times the loans extended to the Central Powers. The United States also had a neutral trade policy, but Great Britain's naval blockade of Germany prevented it from engaging in trade with the United States.<sup>5</sup>

Repeated German provocations on the high seas made it challenging for the United States to remain neutral. The German Navy harassed and sometimes sank ships of the American merchant fleet. On May 7, 1915, a German submarine torpedoed the British liner *Lusitania*, resulting in the loss of 1,201 lives, including 128 Americans. After two more Americans were killed with the sinking of the *Arabic* on August 19, protests from the United States prompted the Germans to give rather vague assurances that they were ending their policy of unrestricted submarine warfare. The two incidents had a significant impact on American public opinion, and the *Lusitania* became a battle cry for those arguing for intervention in Europe. Throughout 1916, the United States attempted to bring the Allied and Central Powers together to negotiate peace, but these efforts were unsuccessful. By this time, most Americans were convinced

that the Allied Powers were in the right but were still unwilling to get involved in a European war. They re-elected Woodrow Wilson on a platform of peace and prosperity in November 1916, but events in January of the following year proved too much for them to ignore.<sup>6</sup>



Enlistment Poster Depicting the Death of a Mother and Child during the Sinking of the *Lusitania*, 1915.



The *Lusitania*, 1907.

Germany intended to reinstitute its policy of unrestricted submarine warfare and attempted to distract the United States, and thereby limit its ability to respond, by creating an enemy on its southern border. In the Zimmerman telegram of January 19, Germany proposed an alliance with Mexico against the United States in exchange for subsidies and a return of the territories in the American Southwest that Mexico had lost to the United States. By the time the news of the Zimmerman telegram was published in the press, Germany had informed the United States on January 31 that it intended to resume unrestricted submarine warfare. The Germans proceeded to sink eight U.S. ships in February and March. Needing no further provocation, the United States entered World War I on April 6, 1917.<sup>7</sup>

An *Atlanta Journal* editorial from April 6 captured the feeling of many Atlantans upon hearing the announcement that the nation was at war:

*The sweeping majority by which the war resolution has passed both branches of Congress bears splendid witness to the unity of American thought in this momentous hour. Of the four hundred and twenty-three members voting in the House, only fifty opposed the resolution; and in the Senate only six opposed it, out of eighty-eight voting. Never before, perhaps, in the nation's entire history has Congress spoken so swiftly and so nearly with one voice on the supremely vital question of war or peace...*

*The war with Germany is on, a war of democracy against despotism, of civilization against savagery, of eternal right against eternal wrong - a war in which, as the President declares, 'America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness, and the peace which she has treasured.'*<sup>8</sup>

## FORT McPHERSON ANSWERS THE CALL

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Fort McPherson played a vital role in the American war effort. It already was a detention camp for interned German soldiers 10 days before the war began. With the announcement that America had entered the conflict, Fort McPherson sprang into action. On April 19, the *Atlanta Journal* reported the activities and changes taking place at the post:

*The buildings of the post are red-topped, and they seem even redder in the glow of the late afternoon sun. The blue sky and the rows of new brownish-yellow tents and the spring blossoms on the trees of the grounds give the post the appearance of a work of art, and the white uniforms of the [interned] German sailors in their barricaded quarters seem, from a distance, like tiny specks of white foam in a rough sea.*

*'This is the life, bo,' said one rookie to another Wednesday afternoon as the flag was being slowly lowered for retreat. 'This beats selling hardware to carpenters who don't need tools, and I don't reckon they'll be a-saying now that we're dodging behind some woman's petticoat to keep from picking up a gun. I'm ready for my gun right now.' The authorities at Fort McPherson have applied for more tents, more uniforms, more guns, and shipments of these articles are coming in every day.*

*Automobiles crowded with mothers arrive at the post every afternoon, and many of the mothers come from far-away towns. The boys who haven't been sleeping in tents and in the quarters of the companies are finding good beds waiting for them in the gymnasium, which is airy and roomy and clean.*



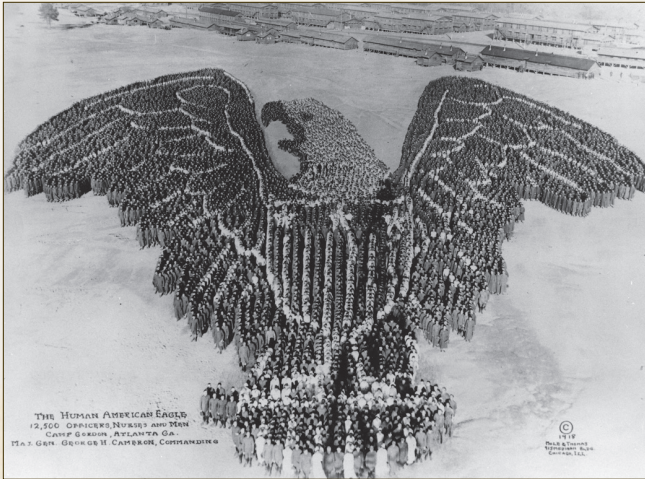
Main Entrance Gate to Fort McPherson on Lee Street, c. 1919.

*There is not a slacker or a shirker in the large number of rookies that have been sent to the post, and only a very small number have been rejected and sent to their homes. Those who are turned down by Captain Robinson [medical officer] are given transportation to the point where they enlisted.*

*The recruits passing through the big front gate at Fort McPherson every morning and afternoon may sometime find their names on the pages of history as heroes of a war. In a few months the crude and unseasoned soldier will be schooled and confident; the wan-faced youth will be ruddy-cheeked, and the frail youngster will be vigorous and strong.<sup>9</sup>*

### Southern Recruits Flock to the Post

By April 12, 1917, Fort McPherson became an advance training camp for recruits from the southern region of the United States. Men that enlisted in the infantry, artillery, cavalry, and the aviation corps were sent to Fort McPherson to be equipped



Human American Eagle Formed by 12,500 Officers, Nurses, and Men at Camp Gordon, Georgia, 1918.



Group Bayonet Training, c. 1917.

and receive preliminary training before being sent on to their permanent assignments. Some infantry soldiers were incorporated into the standing ranks of the 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment that was stationed at Fort McPherson so that they would be able to learn quickly from the professional soldiers. The Army housed some of the new recruits in rows of conical tents placed in an open area just south of the post hospital buildings. Fort McPherson's status as an advance training camp was short-lived, as the government soon decided that the post could not provide an adequate training or housing area for the large number of new recruits that were being drafted into the national army. In July 1917, the Army opened Camp Gordon near Chamblee, Georgia. The construction of 1,635 buildings on the 2,400-acre site provided barracks for 46,612 men and corral space that could accommodate 7,688 horses and mules.<sup>10</sup>

### Wartime Improvements

A few weeks after the war began, the Army realized that it needed to facilitate communications between Army commanders at Fort McPherson, as well as between Fort McPherson and Washington, D.C. Army officials asked



Sheet Music Entitled *America, Here's My Boy*, 1917.



Western Union to establish a military branch telegraph office at the post for the exclusive transmittal of military communications. The Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company installed additional telephone lines at Fort McPherson and a trunk line to its central office in Atlanta in order to expedite communications both on and off the post.<sup>11</sup>

### Atlanta's Support for the Cause

The citizens of Atlanta expressed their support for the American cause and the men they were sending to fight with a military parade on May 19. Soldiers from the 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry and officer candidates from the officers' training camp at Fort McPherson, as well as representatives from other military, civic, and educational organizations, marched down Peachtree Street from Baker Street to Mitchell Street. The marching bands played *Dixie*, *It's a Long Road to Tipperary*, and various patriotic songs as the parade progressed. The parade passed through the center of the city at Five Points, where a new community flag pole had been raised. Major General Leonard Wood, the commander of the Department of the Southeast, observed the parade as it passed his reviewing stand at Five Points before giving a speech in which he admonished listeners to "Never Let Another War Catch Us Unprepared." The *Atlanta Journal* described Atlanta's parade the following day:

*History was made at Five Points Saturday afternoon, when the greatest parade Atlanta ever saw passed in review before Major General Leonard Wood.*

*It was an Atlanta chapter in the greatest volume of history the world has ever known, the pages of which are being written in blood and fire of the battlefields of Europe today.*

*What Atlanta's eventual part and what the nation's part in that terrible book will be before 'finis' is written to it, only God knows.*

*But at least Atlanta can cherish the knowledge today that she has given her sons a 'God speed' which will go down to future generations as the mightiest demonstration the world war has yet brought forth from the South.*

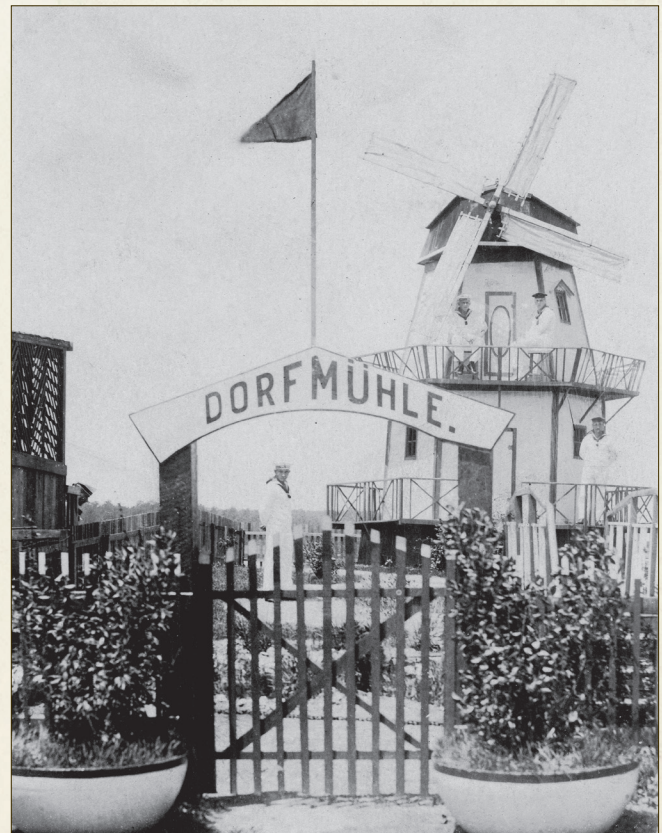
*Some day little children who struggled in the crowd at Five Points yesterday will look back and recall this time with pride, with patriotism and perhaps with sorrow. Even as the grandfather of today recalls the first regiment in gray which marched away for 'Dixie,' so will the grandfather of tomorrow tell of the day when the men of 1917 marched through Five Points before General Leonard Wood...<sup>12</sup>*

## THE FORT McPHERSON WAR PRISON BARRACKS



The German commerce raider *Prinz Eitel Freidrich* entered Chesapeake Bay on March 10, 1915. The cruiser had just completed a long voyage between China and the Atlantic, during which it raided 11 other vessels and sunk the American bark *William P. Frye*. *Prinz Eitel Freidrich* was headed for Newport News to obtain repairs as well as replenish its supply of coal, food, and water. Shortly thereafter, the German commerce raider *Kronprinz Wilhelm* arrived in Hampton Roads seeking repairs and supplies. Unwilling to face the British warships patrolling the waters off the Virginia Capes, the cruisers decided to remain in Hampton Roads after the repairs were complete. The U.S. Navy subsequently interned both vessels.<sup>13</sup>

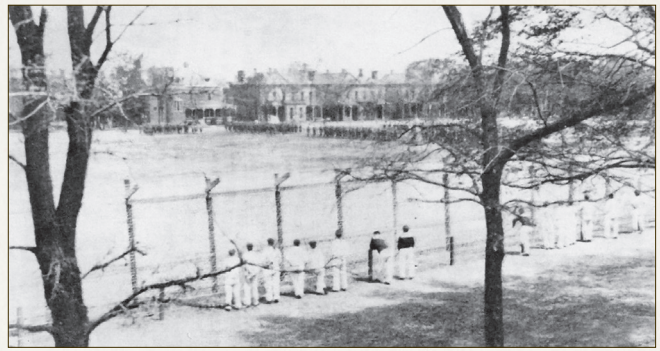
As the United States was not at war with Germany, the officers and crews of the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* and *Kronprinz Wilhelm* were treated as alien detainees. The sailors were given a good deal of freedom and were allowed frequent, if short, shore leave. After living on their ships for several months, Navy officials eventually granted the Germans a plot of land in the Norfolk Navy Yard to erect accommoda-



Windmill Built by German Alien Detainees at Norfolk Navy Yard, c. 1916. The Sign Over the Fence Translates as "Mill Village." Courtesy of the Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Virginia.

tions. They proceeded to build a small town from scrap metal and other materials donated by the Navy yard that they called *Eitel Wilhelm*, but which came to be known by the residents of tidewater Virginia as the “German Village.” It featured brightly painted one-room houses, flower and vegetable gardens enclosed with picket fences, a replica of a Dutch windmill, a village chapel, cafes, a civil marriage bureau with a model stork on the roof, a police station, a courthouse, and a park with a bandstand where concerts were given on Sunday. Other inhabitants of the village included goats, black pigs from the tropics, birds, rabbits, cats, and dogs that had been saved from raided ships and adopted as mascots. The village soon became a tourist attraction, and the ten-cent admission fee and the proceeds from the souvenirs created by the Germans were donated to the German Red Cross.<sup>14</sup>

By the fall of 1916, American relations with Germany had deteriorated to the point that Navy officials decided the internees needed to be moved to a more secure location. They were transferred to a barbed-wire enclosure at the League Island Navy Yard in Philadelphia on October 1, 1916. Navy officials allowed the sailors to transport the building materials they accumulated in order to reconstruct *Eitel Wilhelm* at League Island. Noting the change in their treatment and accommodations as the U.S. moved toward war, 14 Germans attempted to escape from the stockade at League Island on March 19, 1917. Ten of the men were successful. The War Department already decided earlier in the year to transfer the responsibility for custody of all of alien detainees and prisoners of war from the Department of the Navy to the Department of the Army, but the escape from League Island prompted the Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels, to order their immediate transfer to Army custody.<sup>15</sup>



German Prisoners Watching American Troops Drill on the Parade Field, 1917.



German Prisoners Exercising on the Parade Field, 1917.



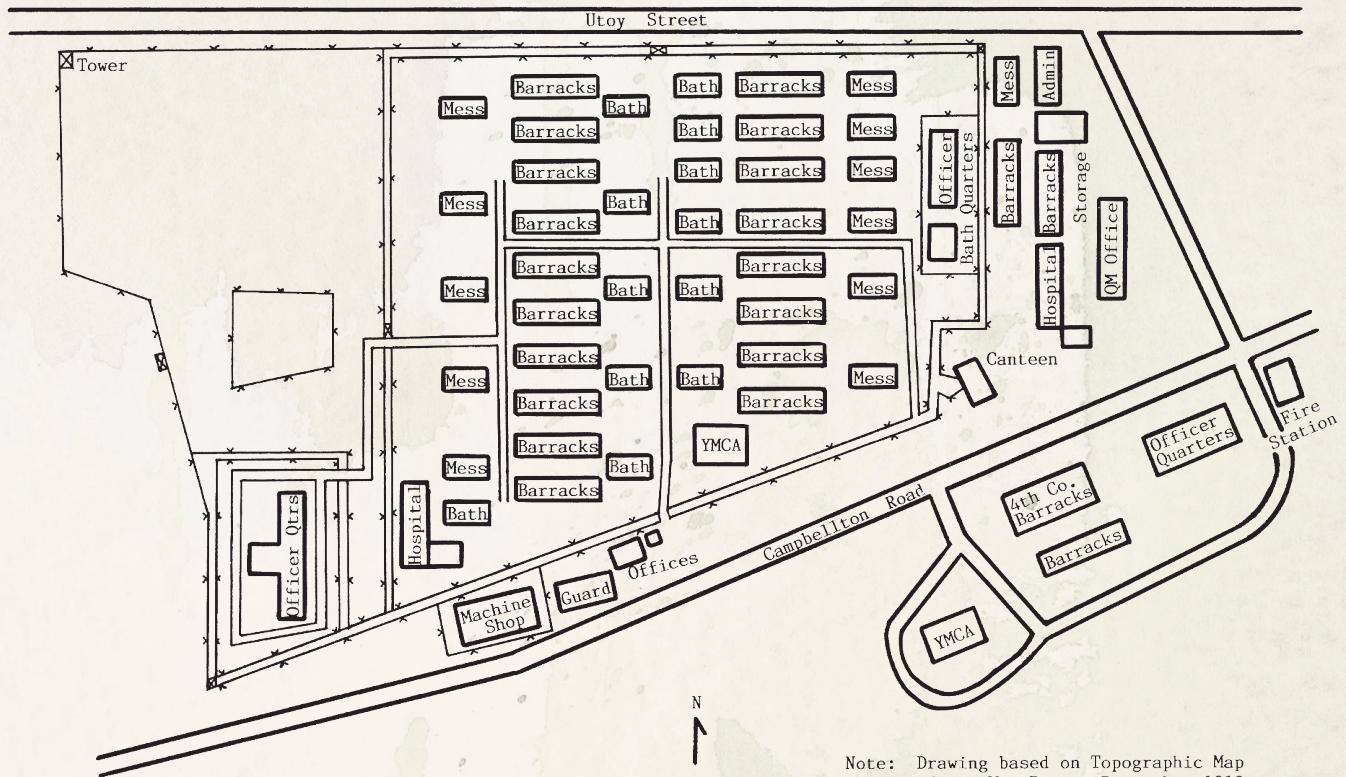
German Prisoners Clearing the Land for Construction of the War Prison Barracks, 1917.



German Prisoners Confined on Troop Row, 1917.



German Prisoners Moving to the War Prison Barracks, 1917.



Note: Drawing based on Topographic Map of the War Prison Barracks, 1919

Plan of War Prison Barracks, 1919.

The Army selected Fort McPherson and Fort Oglethorpe to serve as detention camps for the internees of the *Kronprinz Wilhelm* and *Prinz Eitel Friedrich*. On March 17, the headquarters and six companies of the 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry returned to Fort McPherson from Texas to prepare for the confinement of the prisoners. The 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry's other six companies were sent to northern Georgia to establish the war prison at Fort Oglethorpe. By March 21, the *Columbus Ledger* was reporting, "Hundreds of rolls of barbed wire in and around Atlanta are being collected by the government authorities at Fort McPherson...with the intention of erecting a barricade in which to confine the interned sailors of the German cruisers..."<sup>16</sup> On March 27, the officers and crewman of the *Kronprinz Wilhelm* and *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* were transferred under marine guard from Philadelphia to Georgia.<sup>17</sup> The *New York Times* reported on the arrival of the 411 officers and crewmen of the *Kronprinz Wilhelm* at Fort McPherson:

*When the train bearing the Wilhelm's crew arrived at Fort McPherson, Captain Thierfeldt and eight German officers were met by the officers of the Seventeenth Infantry and taken to Colonel Noyes. After a curt introduction to [sic] himself, the Captain presented each of the other officers, and then was*

*told by Colonel Noyes that "I have sent for you that I might know you and that you might know me." He had proceeded no further when Captain Thierfeldt interrupted to say: "My men are military men just the same as you, and we will give no pledges." "We have arranged to take care of you as well as possible," Colonel Noyes continued, "but future conditions will depend largely upon yourself." While the men were being counted retreat was sounded and the regiment band began to play "The Star-Spangled Banner" as the flag was lowered. Just as it began its descent Captain Thierfeldt called his men to attention, and it was held until the colors were down. The Germans at Fort McPherson will be housed in five barracks, surrounded by a barbed wire stockade, thirteen feet in height. The stockade faces the parade grounds, and as long as the Germans are there no civilians will be allowed on the grounds."*<sup>18</sup>

When the United States entered the war on April 6, 1917, the Army began working to establish official war prison barracks. Less than a month later, the War Department issued General Orders No. 54, which established war prison barracks at Fort McPherson, Fort Oglethorpe, and Fort Douglas, Utah. The permanent guard companies for these barracks would be based on the organization of the guard companies at the United States Disciplinary Barracks at Fort Leaven-



German Prisoners Entering the War Prison Barracks, c. 1918.



Interior of an Enlisted Barrack, c. 1918.

worth, Kansas. Experienced guardsmen from the disciplinary barracks at Fort Leavenworth and Alcatraz, California, would form the nucleus of each guard company, the authorized wartime strength of which was 150 enlisted men. The 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry was relieved from guard duty at Fort McPherson and Fort Oglethorpe when the guard companies for those prison barracks were sufficiently organized.<sup>19</sup>

Fort McPherson's prisoners of war were initially housed in five barracks along Troop Row (Buildings 56, 58, 60, 62, and 65). On June 7, the Army leased a parcel of land just west of Fort McPherson from a W. M. Pool for the construction of war prison barracks. The 34-acre site was bound by Venetian Drive (then Utoy Road) to the north, Campbellton Road to the south, and present-day Alma Street and Willowbrook Drive to the east and west, respectively. Barracks for the war prison guards were located on an adjacent parcel of land south of Campbellton Road that was part of the Atlanta National Guard Target Range. Retired Army officers were asked to serve as commandants for the war prison, and under their direction, the prisoners cleared the land and constructed their own barracks. The completed barracks provided accommodations for 1,800 prisoners. The Army ensured that the conditions in the camp were conducive to the health and comfort of the prisoners. The camp was sanitary, and the prisoners were given plenty of wholesome food. They were provided with a large area for physical activity, and their mail was promptly sent and delivered.<sup>20</sup>

Fort McPherson's war prison barracks had a population of 419 prisoners of war and enemy aliens on June 30, 1917. Four-hundred eleven of the men were the officers and crewmen of the *Kronprinz Wilhelm*. Upon their arrival at Fort McPherson, the German sailors informed the Army officers



Company of Turners (Gymnasts) Formed by German Prisoners of War, 1918.



Fort McPherson War Prison Barracks Post Exchange, 1918.



Prisoners Eating Watermelon on Rear Porch of Prison Canteen, 1918.

that they had an obligation as members of the German military to attempt to escape from American custody. On July 10, the *Augusta Chronicle* reported that the wire fence around the war prison barracks had been cut. No prisoners escaped at that time, and it was unclear whether the wire had been cut by the prisoners or by someone outside the stockade that was attempting to free them.

On October 4, the *Columbus Ledger* reported on the prevailing conditions at the prison:

*The prisoners are quartered in new houses exactly like those occupied by student officers in the first training camp held at Fort McPherson. Their fare is the best that money can buy. A brewery wagon makes a regular daily trip to the post exchange store at the edge of the camp and leaves several barrels of imitation beer, which the Germans probably turn into an approach to the real thing by the addition of the requisite percentage of alcohol. The prisoners are allowed to make little trinkets with their wood carving knives and sell them at the store. Customers flock there to buy them. In addition to these privileges, the Germans have a stringed orchestra concert every Sunday afternoon, which is usually attended by a large and appreciative audience of Atlanta music lovers. Taking it all in all, the Germans are better off than they would be in any other place in the world.<sup>21</sup>*

The Army issued orders on September 18 that made Fort McPherson the default location for prisoners of war and Fort Oglethorpe the default location for enemy aliens. The enemy aliens held at Fort McPherson were transferred to Fort Oglethorpe, and the prisoners of war held at Fort Oglethorpe, the officers and crewmen of *Prinz Eitel Friedrich*, were



German Prisoner of War Celebrating Christmas, 1918.

subsequently transferred to Fort McPherson. On October 23, ten sailors from *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* successfully escaped from the war prison barracks. The escape was made through a tunnel that started under their barracks and extended one hundred feet outside the wire fence of the stockade. The Army used bloodhounds to track the prisoners, but the dogs lost their scent at a stream approximately one mile from the prison. Three of the prisoners were subsequently captured and returned to Fort McPherson by Army officers and the Secret Service. One prisoner was discovered in Atlanta on October 25, and two more were captured in Laredo, Texas on November 8 while attempting to escape across the Mexican border. The disposition of the remaining seven escapees is unclear based on the available documentation.<sup>22</sup>

The War Department issued an order on March 20, 1918 transferring all of the prisoners of war held at Fort Douglas, Utah to Fort McPherson. On July 1918, the population at the Fort McPherson war prison barracks was recorded at 1,411. On June 30, 1919, more than seven months after the end of the war, the population of the barracks was 1,346. The repatriation process for all of the prisoners of war took place in the summer and fall of 1919. On September 26, 1,253 of the prisoners left Hoboken, New Jersey, on the transport *Pocahontas* bound for Rotterdam, Netherlands. Of the remaining 93 prisoners, "Eight others were repatriated on the transport *Frederick VIII* and sailed from Philadelphia about 7 November 1919; five claimed Polish nationality and were released on 20 September 1919 with instructions to report to the Polish Consul General in New York for repatriation; six claimed Danish nationality and were transferred on 31 July and 7 August 1919 to the Danish Consul General for repatriation; one escapee was not recaptured; and 73 were

declared admissible to the United States by the Bureau of Immigration, Department of Labor. Altogether, about 150 made application for naturalization.”<sup>23</sup>

The buildings at the Fort McPherson war prison barracks were sold and removed shortly after its official closure on November 10, 1919.<sup>24</sup>

## THE OFFICERS' TRAINING CAMP AT FORT MCPHERSON



When the United States entered World War I on April 6, 1917, the Army was faced with the task of rapidly developing a large number of qualified officers that could lead men into battle. On April 18, Secretary of War Newton Baker announced the creation of 14 officers' training camps where reserve officers and applicants for commissions would receive intensive instruction over a three-month period. The Army selected Fort McPherson as the location for the camp that would train men from Georgia, Alabama, and Florida. The Army received 3,500 applications for entry into the officers' training camp, but the number accepted was capped at 2,500 because there were not enough regular Army officers to oversee the training of more than 2,500 men. The minimum age of the men accepted for training was 20, and the maximum age was 44.<sup>25</sup>

Army officers at Fort McPherson learned that the post had been selected as a camp site on April 18. The following day, the Army awarded the construction contract for the officers' training camp barracks and support buildings to P. Thornton Marye. His contract specified that 79 buildings had to be completed by May 1. The leading contractors of Atlanta were immediately contacted for assistance with the effort, and in only four days, by April 23, 10 contractors and 1000 workman were working to erect the buildings. The Army selected an open area south of the post's main establishment as the site for the camp. The officer candidates were divided into 15 companies, and each company was assigned to a row of buildings that included barracks, latrine and wash facilities, and a kitchen and mess hall. Additional facilities were constructed to house the regular Army officers who were the instructors for the camp. The buildings were built of wood and designed to last only four to five years.<sup>26</sup>

The officers' training camp at Fort McPherson was active from May 15 to August 11, 1917. The officer candidates that were accepted for training at Fort McPherson arrived in groups of 683 men per day between Friday, May 11 and Sunday, May 13. Three hundred national guardsmen and 150



German Prisoners Leaving the War Prison Barracks, 1918.



Bayonet Training, c. 1917.

engineers rounded out the contingent, bringing the total number of trainees to 2,499. Training commenced on Tuesday, May 15.

*The procedure of the camp was to place candidates in leadership positions as part of the training process. A complete quota of company "officers" was appointed, and each man was instructed in his special duties and responsibilities. Every three days an entirely new set of "officers" was appointed thereby giving every candidate a chance to display his abilities. The work of the company from the kitchen to the parade ground and the field was handed entirely by the candidates under the closest supervision and instruction of a capable commissioned officer. Each candidate took the full route of discipline from policing the company street to actually commanding the company.*<sup>27</sup>

A PORTION OF A LETTER WRITTEN BY AN OFFICER CANDIDATE FROM AUGUSTA  
AND PUBLISHED IN THE AUGUSTA CHRONICLE ON MAY 20, 1917

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Saturday morning, after our arrival, we were given a few instructions by the commanding officer of our company. He seems to be a very clever person and I think I'm going to like him, and also the work. In the afternoon we were fitted up with uniforms. Think of having to stand in line until 300 men ahead of you had been fitted!

Our quarters are exceptionally good. Long wooden buildings (fifteen in number) electrically lighted and well ventilated. A collection was taken up among the fellows in my company to pay for the screening of our building. So far, our building is the only one that has this especial advantage - and an advantage it will be when the mosquitoes start. There are 168 in each company and the entire company sleeps in one of the dormitories. Each company building has a separate kitchen and mess hall, also about twelve showers.

Sunday morning, we were vaccinated, also inoculated with typhoid vaccine and paratyphoid. I was sick as a dog on Sunday afternoon and Monday. Several of the fellows fainted just after the inoculation, and some, several hours later. A few passed out cold just from watching the others being shot. As yet I haven't suffered any great inconvenience from my vaccination, only a slight itching. We are to get four more inoculations during the next two weeks.

The dinner Sunday was darn good - green peas, baked potatoes, tender steak, good bread (cut in slices about an inch thick and larger than half this sheet of paper), gravy and jelly cake. The government allows 50 cents a day per man for meals. In the event that we are paid \$100 a month we are to pay more (will have to pay the 50 cents anyway, if we get paid) and get good eating all the week. The above mentioned is just a Sunday special.

Yesterday we started actual training. No, I should have said work, for work it is, but I am enjoying it, and it will matter little whether or not I'm worked to death, for I was anxious to come, and where one's heart is, there will one enjoy life.

Just to give you an idea of what we have to do, I'll give you a schedule of one day's work, and then you'll appreciate how valuable my time is to me, and won't think hard of me for this delay.

Schedule for May 16<sup>th</sup>.

5:30 a.m. - Reveille, first call.

5:40 a.m. - March.

5:45 a.m. - Assembly.

5:50 a.m. - Mess call, breakfast.

6:50 a.m. - Drill, first call.

7:00 a.m. - Assembly.

7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. - Practice march without arms.

8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. - Physical drill without arms.

8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. - School of soldiers without arms.

10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. - Conference, infantry drill regulations.

11:00 a.m. to 11:50 a.m. - School of soldier and squad.

12:00 M. - Mess call, dinner.

1:30 p.m. - Assembly.

1:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. - Care of equipment.

2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. - Semaphore signaling.

3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. - Conference, manual interior guard duty.

3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. - School of squad, 10 minutes.

4:30 p.m. - Recall.

Retreat:

5:20 p.m. - First call.

5:30 p.m. - Assembly.

5:40 p.m. - Retreat.

6:00 p.m. - Mess call, supper.

7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. - Study.

9:45 p.m. - Call to quarters.

10:00 p.m. - Taps.

This letter is being written under very trying conditions. It is supposed to be study hour, but we were excused in order that we might assemble our equipment. There are a dozen fellows around me laughing and talking, adjusting belts, knapsacks, and blanket rolls to fit themselves, and cleaning rifles.

It is therefore difficult to concentrate one's mind, so you'll have to take the will for the deed.

It is now fifteen minutes to ten and as 'taps' are sounded at that hour, I'll have to close in order that this may get off to you in the morning.<sup>28</sup>

## The Officer Candidates Come to Atlanta's Aid

Just after noon on May 21, 1917, a fire broke out in a warehouse east of downtown Atlanta. A brisk breeze from the south carried the fire northward at a rapid rate. The fire was the fourth of the day, and when it broke out, most of the resources of the Atlanta Fire Department were occupied fighting a fire that had broken out on the southwest side of the city. The fire gained strength in a black residential section of the city where many of the houses were built close together and had wood shingle roofs. It then moved into a white residential area, where it began consuming the larger houses. City officials called Colonel C. R. Noyes, the commander of Fort McPherson, to ask for his help. Colonel Noyes acted quickly and dispatched the entire 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry and the men of the officers' training camp to fight the fire. The Atlanta Fire Department began dynamiting houses in the path of the fire to try to get it under control. The soldiers fought the fire alongside the department, as well as maintained order and prevented looting in areas that were in the path of the blaze. The fire raged until 11pm that night when the wind finally subsided.<sup>29</sup>

The fire had burned an area of 300 acres, which amounted to 75 city blocks. Approximately 10,000 people were made homeless when 1,938 houses were destroyed. The cost of the fire was \$5.5 million, only \$3.5 million of which was covered by insurance. Atlanta's leaders acknowledged the efforts of the soldiers at a meeting held the following morning.<sup>30</sup>

*On a motion of Henry S. Johnson a rising vote of thanks was tendered to Colonel Charles R. Noyes, commander of the Seventeenth Infantry at Fort McPherson, and to the men of his regiment, the men of the officers reserve corps, the men of the Fifth Regiment and the Boy Scouts. Without them, declared Mr. Johnson, looters would have overwhelmed the district threatened by fire. Without them the fire could not have been stopped. To them Atlanta owes an inestimable debt of gratitude. These sentiments were greeted with tremendous applause.<sup>31</sup>*

## GENERAL HOSPITAL NO. 6

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

As the mobilization for World War I began, Army officials made arrangements to care for the large number of casualties that would be transported home from the front. Fort McPherson's location along a railroad line in a city that was a major rail hub reduced the time it took for sick and wounded soldiers to be transferred from hospital ships to hospital wards. The transition of Fort McPherson's post hospital into



The Great Fire of Atlanta, 1917.

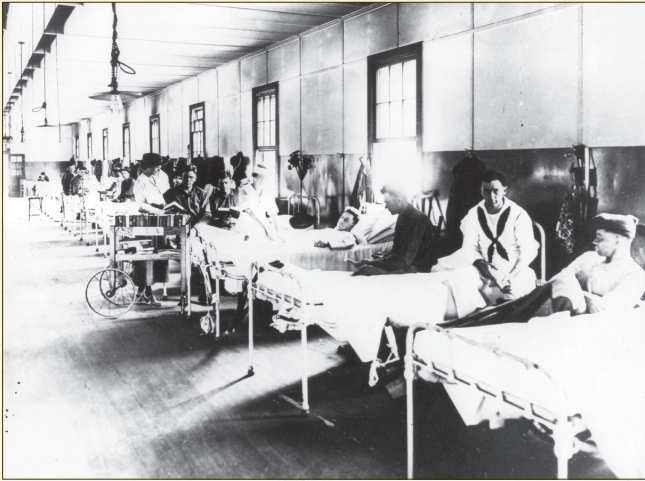


Soldiers Blinded by Poison Gas, 1918.

an official base hospital began on June 27, 1917, when the Secretary of War directed that its permanent troop barracks be made available for base or general hospital use. On July 31, Colonel Noyes received word that he was to begin preparing to transfer command of Fort McPherson to the ranking medical officer who would be commanding the newly established base hospital. As part of this transition process, Colonel Noyes moved the 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry from Fort McPherson to Camp Meade, Maryland. The base hospital at Fort McPherson was officially established on August 20, when Colonel Noyes transferred command of Fort McPherson to Col. Thomas S. Bratton, M.D. On December 2, the Army changed the designation of the base hospital at Fort McPherson to United States Army General Hospital No. 6.<sup>32</sup>

The medical staff did not have to wait for casualties to arrive from Europe, as sick and injured soldiers from training camps throughout the United States began arriving





Hospital Ward at General Hospital No. 6, c. 1918.



Patients of General Hospital No. 6 Standing in Front of Mess Hall, 1920.



Staff Members of General Hospital No. 6, 1920.



Patients and Ward Staff of General Hospital No. 6, 1920.

almost immediately. After converting the Troop Row barracks (Buildings 56, 58, 60, and 62) to hospital wards and the post gymnasium (Building 181, also the Post Exchange) to a mess hall, the Army began a major construction effort. A series of new frame buildings were constructed near the hospital to serve as wards, barracks, and offices for hospital staff, laboratories, and storehouses. The Army also built a fire station (Building 50), a boiler house (Building 160) for the hospital, and a combined receiving ward and administration building (Building 44) for the hospital. After the officer candidates left the officers' training camp in August, the training camp barracks were also converted into wards for hospital patients. The Army built new concrete roads throughout the post to facilitate transportation and undertook a thorough cleaning of the post buildings so that they would meet the rigid sanitary regulations associated with being a general hospital.<sup>33</sup>

General Hospital No. 6 ultimately had a capacity of nearly 2,400 beds, most of which were filled by sick and wounded soldiers transported to Atlanta from the western front. The more than 10,000 patients that were admitted between August 1917 and December 1918 were treated by a team of 17 medical service officers, 40 surgical service officers, 112 graduate nurses, and eight dentists. The medical detachment that directly served the hospital grew to 700 people, many of whom were assigned to the hospital mess. The employees of the hospital mess served both the medical staff and the patients, and at one time, they were feeding more than 2,000 people per day.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to providing thousands of patients with a level of care that was comparable to private hospitals of the day, the medical staff of General Hospital No. 6 offered extensive training for new medical officers and nurses. Medical officer trainees received instruction in

topics such as patient transportation and medical hygiene. They also attended medical and surgical lectures and participated in endurance marches with and without gas masks to prepare them for conditions at the front. The medical staff of General Hospital No. 6 ultimately organized four base hospitals, one evacuation hospital, and fifteen hospital units, while the graduate nurses provided lectures and practical training to 48 student nurses at their "Army School of Nursing."<sup>35</sup>

In June 1919, a ten-car hospital train delivered 194 patients to General Hospital No. 6. This was the largest number of patients to arrive at one time, and it brought the number of sick and wounded being treated at the hospital up to 2,000. By December 1919, the number of patients recovering at General Hospital No. 6 had dropped to 1,500. At this time, the hospital was returned to its pre-war post hospital status and placed under the command of line officers.<sup>36</sup>



Red Cross Recruiting Poster, 1919.

## Providing Comfort and Cheer

A number of aid organizations became active during World War I in an effort to bring comfort and cheer to Fort McPherson's soldiers and convalescents. Both the YMCA and the Knights of Columbus established a presence at the post. The Red Cross operated out of a hospital administration building before erecting the Red Cross Convalescent Building (Building 46) in 1918. The American Library Association established a reading room and circulating library for the soldiers, which were enhanced with contributions of reading materials from Atlanta's citizens.<sup>37</sup>

Many private citizens also worked to serve the troops. Atlanta's 1918 debutants volunteered at Fort McPherson every Monday. A man named Rufus Darby organized automobile rides for Fort McPherson's convalescents on days with fair weather. "The Atlanta Rotary Club sponsored a Rotary Soldier's Club in quarters donated by William T. Healey in his recently completed office building. These rooms became a clearing house [sic] where soldiers received invitations from citizens to visit their homes for Sunday dinner. The auditorium became a center where free entertainments were given to soldiers and citizens alike. They included moving pictures, recitals by the city organist, Charles Sheldon, vocal and instrumental music by individual and group artists, and community singing."<sup>38</sup> Other citizens organized sporting events and dances for the soldiers in an effort to express their appreciation for their service.<sup>39</sup>



American Library Association Reading Room, c. 1918.

## THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CAMP JESUP

On December 8, 1917, the Army selected a 136.65-acre plot of land that adjoined the southern boundary of Fort McPherson for the construction of a new quartermaster depot. The government signed a lease for the land with its owner, John J. Eagan, and began making plans for development of the site. A few months later, John Eagan sold the land to the government for \$88,822.50.<sup>40</sup>

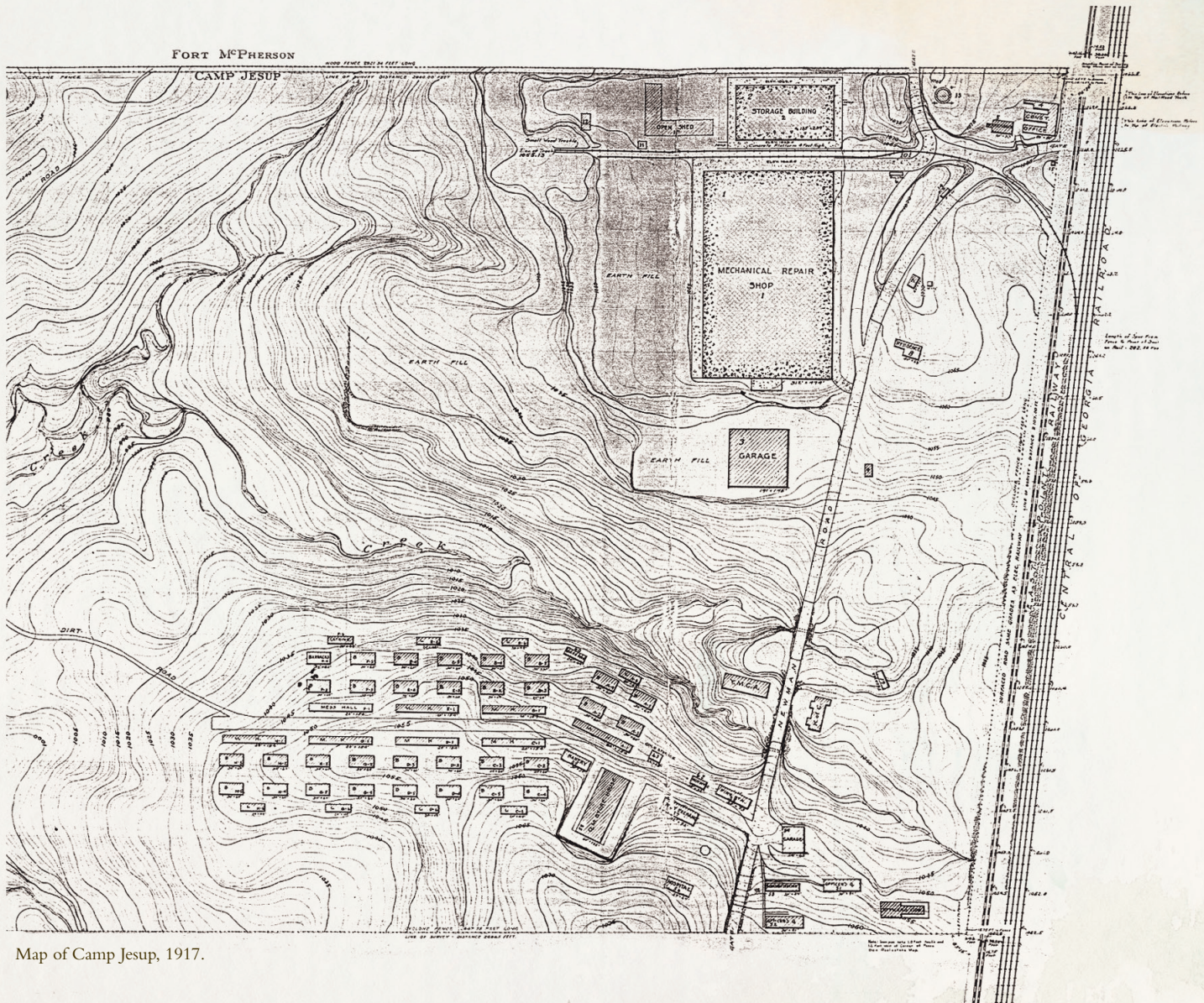
The Adjutant General's Office in the War Department named the new depot Camp Jesup on May 11, 1918. The name was intended to honor Brigadier General Thomas Sidney Jesup, the Quartermaster General of the Army from 1818 to 1860. Camp Jesup was designed to serve as the southeastern "base for the general overhaul, reconstruction, and repair of motor vehicles."<sup>41</sup> The camp was also the



Camp Jesup Motor Repair Battalion Troops, c. 1919.

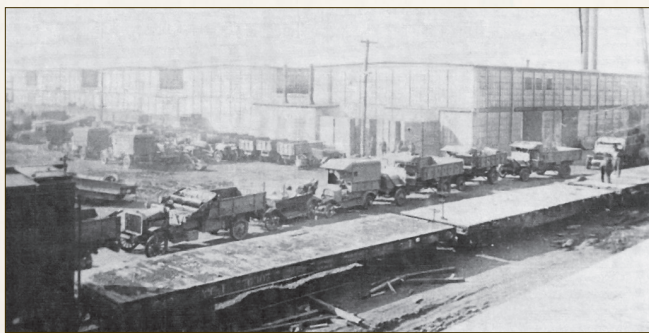
storage and issue facility for all motor vehicles and motor transport supplies for all Army camps south of Richmond, Virginia and east of the Mississippi River.<sup>42</sup>

Construction began shortly after the Army awarded the contract for the depot buildings to the Mackle Construction

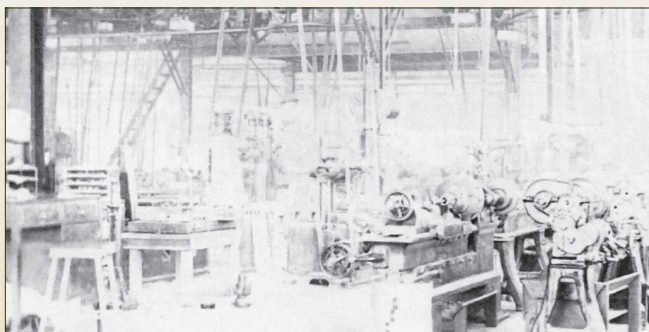


Map of Camp Jesup, 1917.

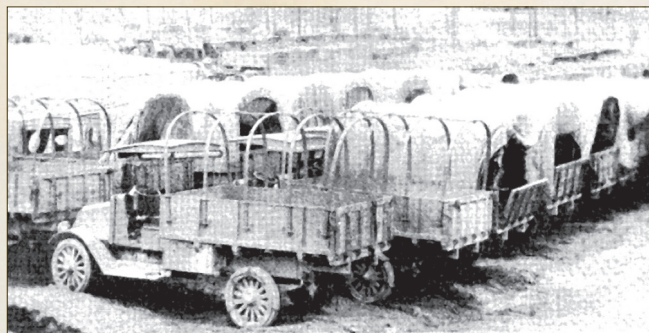
Company of Atlanta on January 19, 1918. As most able-bodied men were otherwise employed in the war effort, the Quartermaster Department used the German prisoners of war being held in the war prison barracks at Fort McPherson to supplement the labor force tasked with the construction of the buildings at Camp Jesup. The buildings constructed at Camp Jesup included the mechanical repair shop, garages, and warehouse facilities associated with the work of the camp, as well as quarters for officers and non-commissioned officers, troop barracks, a headquarters building, mess halls, an infirmary, a guardhouse, a fire station, a laundry, a service club, a post office, a theater, a canteen, and a series of shops. Only the largest of the Camp Jesup buildings, the mechanical repair shop (Building 363), has survived.<sup>43</sup>



Trucks Awaiting Repair at Mechanical Repair Shop No. 305 (Building 363), 1919.



Interior of Mechanical Repair Shop No. 305 (Building 363), 1919.



Camp Jesup's Truck Storage Area, View Southeast Toward YMCA Building, c. 1919.

During the wartime emergency, additional officers and enlisted personnel were transferred from other corps and units to Camp Jesup. Between January and June 1918, 1,435 enlisted men arrived at Camp Jesup. They were initially housed in the officers' training camp barracks at Fort McPherson, but after April 15, 1918, they were able to move into their new accommodations at Camp Jesup.<sup>44</sup>

Lieutenant Colonel Edgar R. Stayer was the commanding officer of Camp Jesup. Under his command, the personnel at Camp Jesup received and processed 50 to 60 train cars full of motor vehicles and equipment per week. Motor transport trains typically made two deliveries of vehicles and equipment to the camp each day, although receiving extra shipments in the course of a day was not uncommon. Camp Jesup's annual payroll eventually grew to \$2,500,000 for a workforce of 4,000 men.<sup>45</sup>

Camp Jesup was originally associated with the 305<sup>th</sup> Motor Repair Unit. In 1918, the War Department issued a general order that created the Motor Transportation Corps under the command of the Quartermaster Department. The motor commands, motor transport companies, and several machine shop truck units that were organized and trained at Camp Jesup were under the control of the Motor Transportation Corps.<sup>46</sup>

The Army noted Camp Jesup's utility during the war and decided in 1919 that it was to be retained as a permanent military installation. Both the status and function of Camp Jesup changed a great deal in the post-war years. In 1920, Camp Jesup was designated a Motor Transport School and a Motor Transport General Depot. In 1921, Camp Jesup became an intermediate depot for the Quartermaster Corps. This change in its status did not mean a great deal until 1922, when millions of dollars of war materiel from Army installations throughout the nation was transferred to the depot for storage. As part of this transition, the 305<sup>th</sup> Motor Repair Unit ceased operations at Camp Jesup in 1922. The Camp Jesup Quartermaster Depot was under the command of the Quartermaster General from 1922-1926, before control was transferred to the commanding general of the IV Corps Area. The Camp Jesup Quartermaster Depot ceased to operate as an independent installation on August 23, 1927, when its facilities came under the command of Fort McPherson.<sup>47</sup>

## WORLD WAR I BUILDING CONSTRUCTION AND CONVERSION



The United States struggled to avoid being provoked into war for almost three years. During that period, there was a national

debate over the nation's preparedness for going to war. Some saw war as inevitable and demanded that the government take steps to grow the military. Their opponents thought that mobilizing for war made it more likely that the nation would become involved in the conflict. The government ultimately took limited steps to prepare, such as obtaining authorization to expand the ranks of both the regular Army and the National Guard. Despite these efforts, the United States was unprepared for war in the spring of 1917. Mobilization proved difficult in many cases, as the planning for fielding an army equipped for modern warfare required time that was no longer available. In the case of Fort McPherson, the Army had to overcome this lack of preparedness by embarking on a crash building program to address the new missions of the post: training officer candidates, housing war prisoners, and caring for sick and injured soldiers.<sup>48</sup>

### New Construction

Fort McPherson's significant contributions to the war effort prompted a great deal of new construction at the post. Most of this new construction was associated with the officers' training camp, the hospital, or the war prison barracks. Although it was not part of Fort McPherson during the war, the Army also constructed more than 75 new buildings at Camp Jesup by 1919. The majority of the buildings constructed during this period were small wood frame buildings, but several substantial wood frame and masonry buildings were also added to the Fort McPherson landscape.<sup>49</sup>

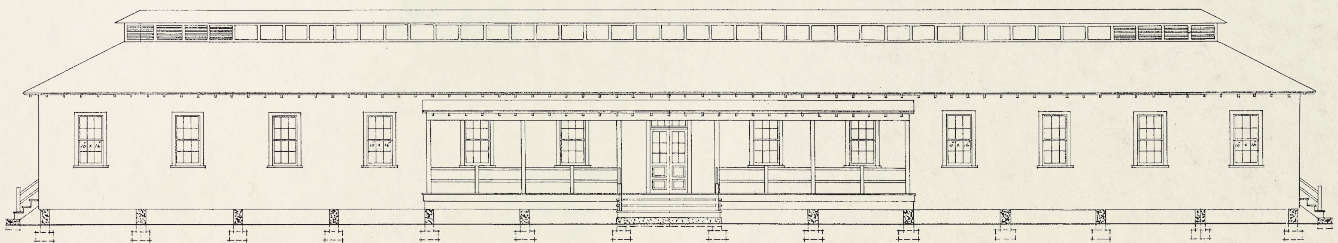
**Temporary Wood Frame Buildings** The Army hastily built hundreds of temporary wood frame buildings at the officers' training camp, the war prison barracks, the hospital, and Camp Jesup in 1917 and 1918. The buildings were constructed based on the Quartermaster Department's 600-Series Mobilization Building plans developed in 1914. Intended to meet the needs of a mobilizing army, the buildings were easy to erect and adaptable to multiple environments. The 600-Series provided plans for



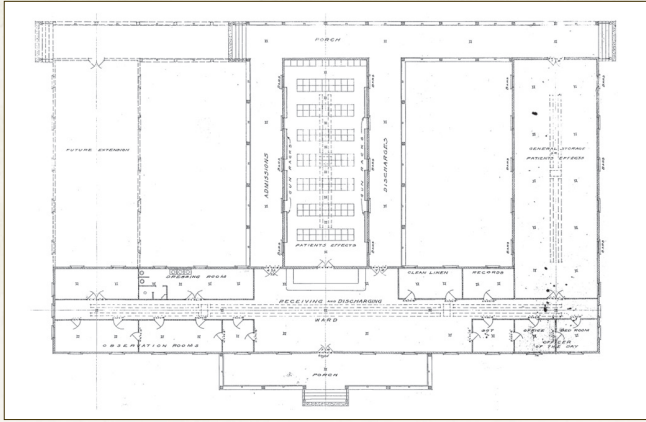
600-Series Mobilization Buildings at the War Prison Barracks, c. 1918.

officer and enlisted barracks, kitchen and bakery buildings, latrines and shower facilities, storehouses, administrative buildings, and stables that were all similar in form but varied in size depending on their function. The one-story rectangular buildings featured board-and-batten construction, but "instead of heavy timbers used for sills, plates, and posts, lightweight dimensioned lumber – largely two by fours and two by sixes – were nailed together to form built-up sections for these structural members. Exterior cladding was formed of one by 12s, with vertical butted joints covered with one-by-three-in battens."<sup>50</sup> A raised foundation of 2.5-foot-long six by sixes provided support for each building. The 600-series buildings had gabled roofs sheathed in tar paper, metal chimneys, and six-light sash windows. Each building featured multiple entry doors that varied in placement depending on the size and function of the building. They were heated with either coal- or wood-fired stoves. The buildings were considered temporary, and as such, they were only intended to last four or five years. None of the 600-series mobilization buildings constructed at Fort McPherson or Camp Jesup is extant.<sup>51</sup>

**Nurses' Quarters, "The Chateau" (Building 22)** In order to house the large number of nurses required for the war effort, the Army built new nurses' quarters on Walker Avenue, north of the western end of Staff Row. The building came to be known as "The Chateau." Construction proceeded in two phases. The



Elevation Drawing of the Nurses' Quarters (Building 22), 1917.



Architectural Plan of Hospital Receiving Ward and Administration Building (Building 44), c. 1917.

western portion of the building was completed in 1917, and the eastern portion was completed in 1919. Each portion of the building was composed of an elongated rectangular main block with three projecting wings. When the building was completed in 1919, the projecting wings of the western portion faced eastward, and the projecting wings of the eastern portion faced westward. The two portions were connected by their central projecting wings. The resulting building was almost square, with two enclosed courtyards flanked by covered porches at its center.

The one-story frame building featured a hipped roof topped by roof monitors, central entry porches on the east and west elevations, six-over-six double-hung sash windows, and a foundation composed of brick piers. The interior of the Chateau featured more than 40 bedrooms for the nurses, four sizeable bathrooms, two large living rooms, an office, a reception area, a kitchen and mess hall, and a variety of storage rooms. The total construction cost for the building was \$55, 847.07.<sup>52</sup>

**Hospital Receiving Ward and Administration Building (Building 44)**

The increase in hospital activity at Fort McPherson necessitated the construction of a separate receiving ward and administrative building for the hospital. Building 44 was composed of an elongated rectangular main block with two projecting wings. A third wing was added after the war, giving the building the form of an “E.” The wood frame building featured space for administrative offices, a receiving and discharge ward, and observation rooms. It was located east of the parade field near the original main entry for Fort McPherson.<sup>53</sup>



Hospital Boiler House (Building 160), c. 1919.



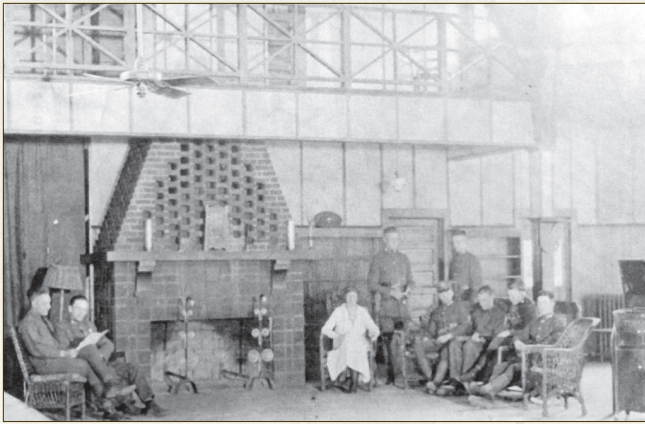
Red Cross Convalescent Building (Building 46), 1918.

**Hospital Boiler House (Building 160)**

In order to provide heat for the expanding hospital, the Army built a boiler house in two phases between 1917 and 1919. The boiler house was located west of the main post hospital (Building 171) within Bates Circle. The one-story rectangular brick building has a gabled aluminum roof and features an externally-located cylindrical brick chimney stack that projects from its northern elevation. The northern portion was completed in 1917, and the southern portion was completed in 1919. At some point after World War I, the southern portion of the boiler house was converted into administrative offices. The Army continued to operate the boilers from the northern portion of the building.<sup>54</sup>

**Red Cross Convalescent Building (Building 46)**

Between July 1, 1917, and February 28, 1919, the Red Cross built 92 convalescent buildings at military installations throughout the United States. The convalescent buildings were intended to provide a place “where soldiers and sailors on the road to recovery could pass their leisure time and find recreation.”<sup>55</sup> The convalescent



The Lounge of the Red Cross Convalescent Building at Fort McPherson, 1918.

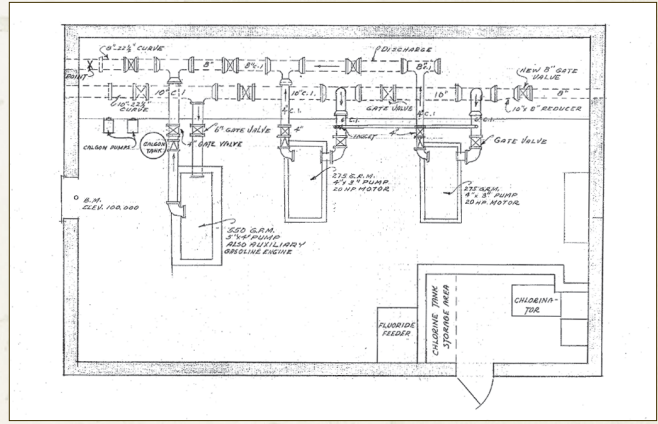


Post Fire Station (Building 50), c. 1918.

buildings were constructed under a special arrangement in which the government would provide the land for the buildings on its military installations, and the Red Cross would supply the buildings. The agreement also stipulated that the buildings would become government property at the conclusion of the war.<sup>56</sup>

Construction of the Red Cross convalescent buildings used standardized plans and pre-cut lumber shipped directly to the building site. The two-story wood frame buildings had the form of a Maltese cross and featured a red metal roof that made them a clear symbol of the Red Cross organization when viewed from the air.<sup>57</sup>

Fort McPherson's Red Cross convalescent building was completed in 1918. The Red Cross designed a larger and a smaller version of the buildings, and Fort McPherson received the larger size, probably due to its status as a general hospital. The building was constructed on the eastern border of Fort McPherson near the post's original main entrance. Areas for relaxation and socialization were provided on the first floor of the building, including a sizeable lounge with two fireplaces, a solarium, and several smaller gathering



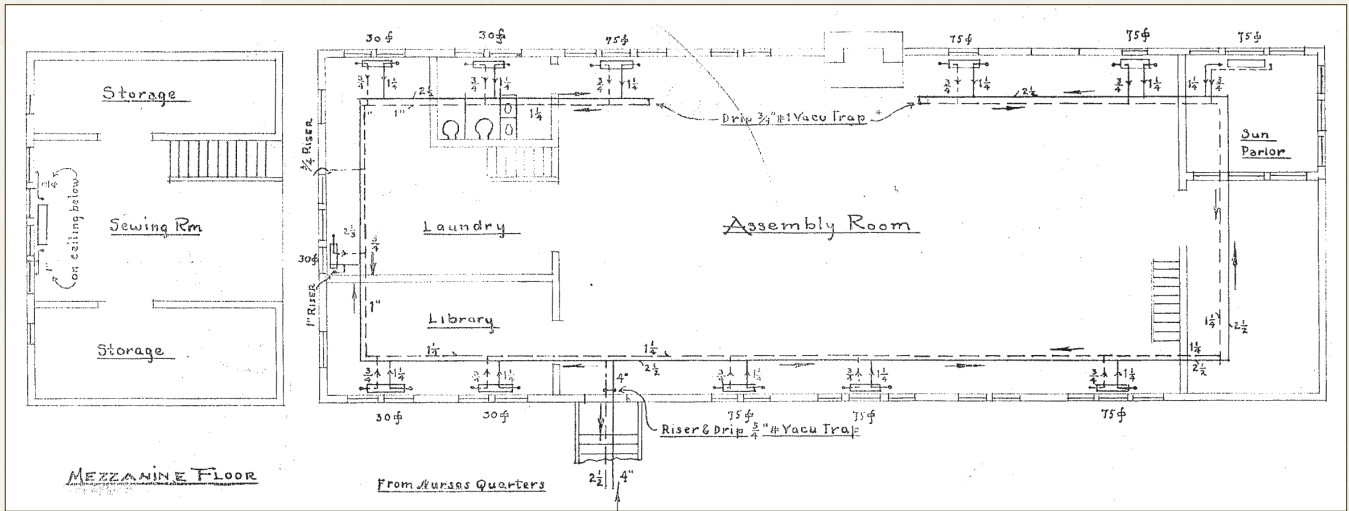
Architectural Plan of Pump House (Building 52), 1949.

rooms. The rooms on the upper floor of the building were made available for the families of convalescent soldiers to rent for 25 cents per day.<sup>58</sup>

When the war came to an end, the Red Cross turned the building over to the government. The Army promptly converted the convalescent building into an enlisted men's service club and guest house, and the rooms on the second floor were still available to rent for 25 cents per day. Fort McPherson was reportedly the first post in the United States to provide such a facility for enlisted personnel. Fort McPherson's service club was still operating from Building 46 into the installation's final decade, and it was the oldest active organization of its type in the United States.<sup>59</sup>

**Post Fire Station (Building 50)** In 1918, the Army constructed a new post fire station (Building 50) to replace the outdated 1898 hose house that had previously been used to store fire-fighting equipment. Building 50 was located on the eastern side of the post near the original main entrance gate. The post fire station was a one-story rectangular brick building that provided a garage area for one fire truck and sleeping quarters for seven men.<sup>60</sup>

**Pump House (Building 52)** The wartime growth of Fort McPherson prompted the Army to build a new fire station in 1918. Building 52 was constructed to house a series of pumps that were installed to ensure that there would be sufficient water pressure for fighting fires at the post. The one-story rectangular brick building with a gabled roof was completed in 1918. Building 52 was located near the post fire station (Building 50). The pump house was eventually converted into administrative office space for the post.



Architectural Plan of Red Cross Recreation House (Building 502), c. 1918.

**Red Cross Recreation House (Building 502)** Between July 1, 1917, and February 28, 1919, the Red Cross built 61 nurses' recreation houses at military installations around the country where nurses could "rest and amuse themselves when not at work."<sup>61</sup> The nurses' recreation house at Fort McPherson was built in 1918. It was located toward the northern boundary of the post near the nurses' quarters (Building 22). The two buildings were connected by a breezeway. Building 502 featured a large assembly room, a sun porch, a laundry room, a library, a sewing room, and two large storage areas. The nurses' infirmary was located just west of the nurses' recreation house.<sup>62</sup>

### Building Repurposing and Conversions

The Army also modified or repurposed existing buildings to meet wartime demands. Before the war officially began, Army troops had been forced to vacate the barracks on Troop Row so they could be used as temporary housing for the German prisoners of war that arrived in late March 1917. Later that year, the Troop Row barracks were converted into hospital wards for the patients being treated at General Hospital No. 6. Fort McPherson's original Consolidated Mess Hall (Building 181) had been converted into a post exchange in 1908. A portion of the building was also used as a gymnasium until 1917, when the gymnasium was converted into a mess hall for the hospital. The post chapel (Building 42) began service as a school for the six days of the week that it was not being used for church activities. After the departure of the officer candidates, the buildings of the officers' training camp were put to use as hospital wards for General Hospital No. 6 and temporary housing for the personnel of Camp Jesup before their barracks were completed in 1918.<sup>63</sup>

## THE GREAT WAR COMES TO AN END



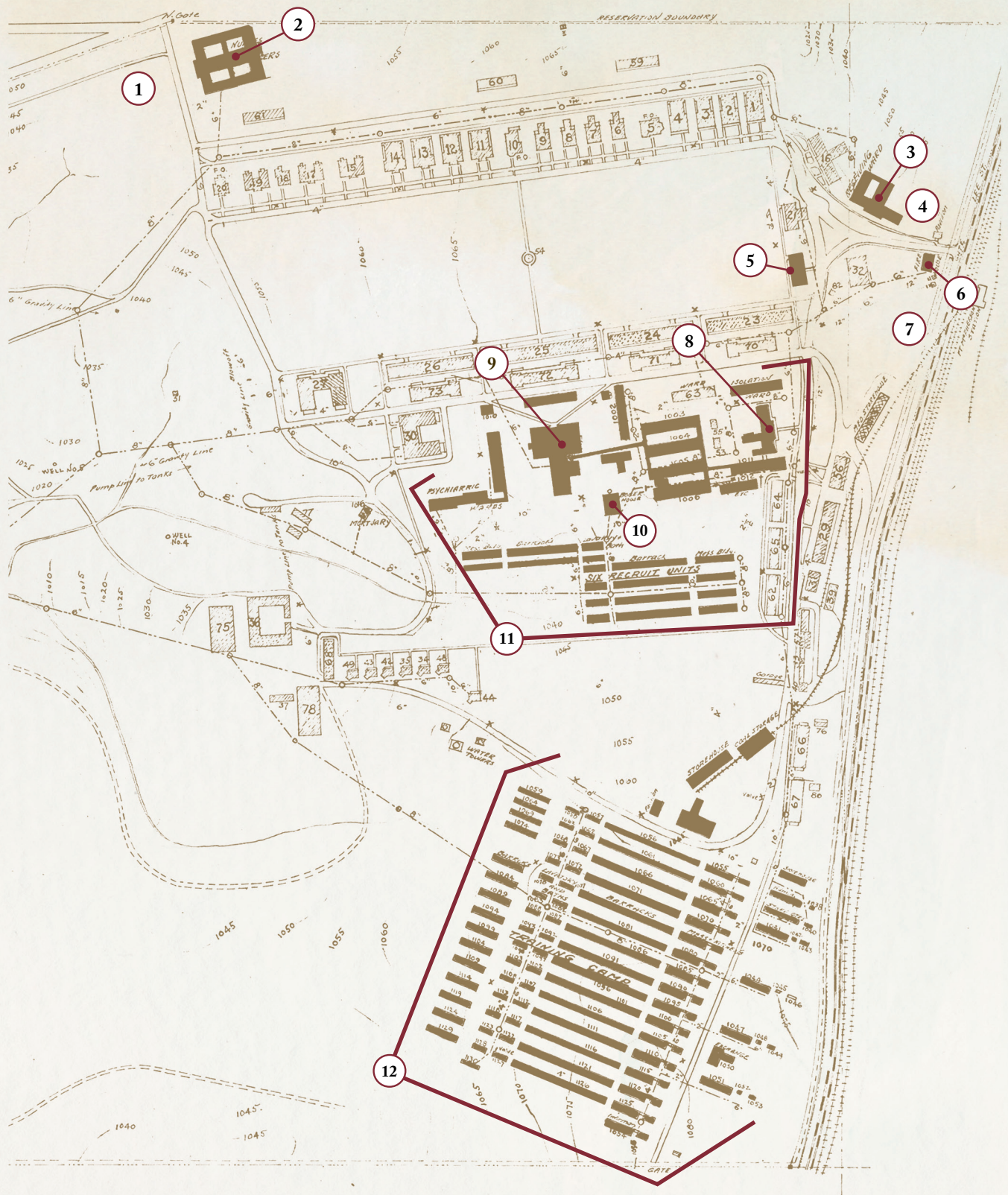
America's entry into the war tipped the scales toward victory for the Allied Powers. When the fighting ceased on November 11, 1918, the combatants were reeling from their losses. In the midst of their shock and anger, they set out to create a new world order and redraw the map of Europe, not knowing that they were sowing the seeds of a future conflict. Upon hearing the news of the peace terms adopted at Versailles, Marshal Ferdinand Foch, the Allied Supreme Commanded, declared, "This is not peace. It is an armistice for 20 years."<sup>64</sup>



An American Soldier Surveys the Ruins of the Village Church at Montfaucon, France, 1918.







- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| 1. Location of Building 502                                     | 5. Building 42                               | 10. Building 160  |
| 2. Building 22  | 6. Building 50                               | 11. New Wards and Support Buildings<br>for General Hospital No. 6 |
| 3. Building 44  | 7. Location of Building 52                   | 12. Officers' Training Camp                                       |
| 4. Location of Building 46,<br>Red Cross Convalescence Building | 8. Building 171, Original Post Hospital      |   |
|   | 9. Building 181, Post Exchange/Gym/Mess Hall |   |



World War I Victory Parade in Atlanta, 1918. Courtesy of the Georgia Archives, Vanishing Georgia Collection, ful0003. Note the Message on the Billboard that Reads, "Their Liberty Bonds Paid in Full On the Fields in France, They Died to Save You." The Billboard Also Gives the Names of Fulton County "Boys" Lost in the War.

CHAPTER

IV

PEACE FOR  
A TIME

**THE GREAT WAR BROUGHT GREAT CHANGE** to America. The crusading idealism of the pre-war period held little appeal for a nation that sacrificed so much of its blood and treasure in a foreign war on foreign soil, no matter how worthy the cause. In many minds, the pendulum swung in the opposite direction, toward isolationism in foreign policy and isolationism in their own lives. Many Americans dealt with the war by living their lives in a smaller sphere and taking care of their own. They took comfort in the practices and conventional wisdom of the past in the face of rapid social and technological change. Other Americans viewed the war as an indictment of past ideals and practices, and they dealt with its aftermath by embracing modern culture and mores. Wherever they fell along this spectrum, they could not countenance involvement in another war. Americans were ready to move forward with their lives into what they hoped would be a peaceful and prosperous future.<sup>1</sup>

**FORT McPHERSON AFTER THE WAR**

After the war, the pace of life at Fort McPherson slowed considerably. The General Hospital that had treated thousands during the wartime emergency became a post hospital and a center for rehabilitation where soldiers regained their health and vitality. The war prison barracks were deactivated, and the German prisoners were released and returned to their homes. The buildings of the war prison barracks were subsequently sold at auction. The men of the officers' training camp had long since gone to fight the war, leaving their barracks to be used as hospital wards and temporary housing for the personnel of Camp Jesup. These buildings were eventually considered surplus and removed to make way for a polo and athletic field in the late 1920s.<sup>2</sup>

The personnel of Fort McPherson were more intimately familiar with the horrors of the war than the general public. Many had personally experienced the conflict, while others witnessed its aftermath in the shattered bodies and minds of the men delivered to the hospital for treatment. It is therefore not surprising that they would try to reclaim some normalcy for their lives by embracing activities they had enjoyed before the war, such as bingo,



Polo at Fort McPherson, c. 1930.

You are Cordially Invited to a Dance

given by

Co. B 22nd Infantry

Wednesday Evening, June 29, 1927, 8:00 P. M.

Service Club, Ft. McPherson, Ga.

Entertainment

Music

Refreshments

Invitation to a Service Club Dance, 1927.

card games, and dancing. Many evenings at the Service Club were spent popping popcorn or roasting sweet potatoes in the fireplaces and singing as a group around the piano. The polo matches that had been popular since 1913 resumed after the war, with the Fort McPherson team challenging many local rivals on the central parade field. Once again, Fort McPherson adopted the rhythm and activities of a peacetime military post.<sup>3</sup>

## FORT McPHERSON'S GARRISON



In December 1919, the hospital at Fort McPherson ceased to be General Hospital No. 6 and returned to post hospital status. Very little changed in the day-to-day operations of the hospital, as there were still 1,500 patients in the wards who required care. Colonel Thomas S. Bratton commanded Fort McPherson while General Hospital No. 6 was in operation, but command of the post was returned to a line officer when the hospital's status changed in late 1919. There is no official record of post commanders between December 1919 and June 14, 1922. Other than the post hospital, the garrison of Fort McPherson consisted of a motor transport company and a fire company in 1920.<sup>4</sup>

On June 4, 1920, the United States Congress passed sweeping legislation that resulted in a complete reorganization of the Army of the United States and brought new prominence to Fort McPherson. The new legislation was a reaction to the War Department's recommendation made after the Armistice of 1919 that Congress authorize a "permanent Regular Army of roughly 500,000 and a three-month universal training system that would permit quick expansion of this force to meet the demands of any new major war."<sup>5</sup> Knowing that the American people would never support a large standing army, Congress adopted the National Defense Act of 1920, which "rejected the theory of an expansible Regular Army that Army leaders had urged since ...the early nineteenth century. In its place [sic]



The 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry (Less the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalions) on Fort McPherson's Parade Field, 1930.

the new defense act established the Army of the United States as an organization of three components: the standing Regular Army, the National Guard, and the Organized Reserves. That component consisted of the Officers' Reserve Corps and the Enlisted Reserve Corps, two distinct organizations. Each of the three Army components was to be so regulated in peacetime that it could contribute its appropriate share of troops in a war emergency."<sup>6</sup> The act also replaced the Army's six WWI-era territorial departments with nine geographic corps areas that each had roughly the same population. Nine southeastern states, including North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas, made up the IV Corps Area that was established on September 1, 1920. The headquarters of the new IV Corps Area was originally in Charleston, South Carolina, but the Army relocated it to Fort McPherson on November 15, 1920. The arrival of the IV Corps Area headquarters brought 50 new officers and their families to Fort McPherson, and a clerical staff of 150 men (many of whom were civilians) and their families to Atlanta. The presence of a corps area headquarters brought new prominence to Fort McPherson and helped to ensure a continued Army presence at the post in an era when many Army leaders were calling for the consolidation of Army resources onto fewer, larger reservations.<sup>7</sup>



Panoramic View of Fort McPherson from the East, c. 1930.

Several troop organizations, including the 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry, the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry, and Headquarters, 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, established a presence at Fort McPherson over the next few years. Elements of the 6<sup>th</sup> Infantry were the first to arrive in 1921, but they departed the post in May 1922. On June 14, 1922, the headquarters, regimental band, and a nucleus for each company of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment arrived at Fort McPherson. Soon after its arrival, the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry began recruiting to fill each of its companies to their authorized strength. On September 15, the Headquarters of the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry brigade was reorganized at Fort McPherson. Both of these organizations would have a presence on the post for almost two decades. During this time, the command of Fort McPherson changed hands several times between the ranking officers of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment and the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade.<sup>8</sup>

The National Defense Act of 1920 changed the typical activities of Regular Army units and gave them the responsibility of training the newly established civilian components of the Army of the United States. Regular Army personnel at Fort McPherson still adhered to their normal training regimens, but added to their responsibilities the tasks of supervising, training, and inspecting Reserve Officer Training Corps programs and summer encampments, Citizens' Military Training Camps, West Point Preparatory Schools, Organized Reserve Schools, and Organized Reserve Corps summer encampments. Many of these training camps and schools took place at Fort McPherson, but others were held at other military installations throughout the IV Corps Area. Aside from these activities, there was very little major change at Fort McPherson for the remainder of the decade. The IV Corps Area Headquarters departed Fort McPherson on April 10, 1923, only to return to the post on June 25, 1927. Military personnel at Fort McPherson were able to enjoy the routine of a peacetime military post until an emerging national crisis required them to take on a new role.<sup>9</sup>

## THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND ROOSEVELT'S TREE ARMY



America plunged into an unprecedented economic depression when the stock market crashed on October 29, 1929. No sector of the economy remained unscathed. International trade declined sharply. Industries such as construction, mining, and logging collapsed. Rural areas were devastated when crop prices dropped by 40 to 60 percent. By 1933, "one out of every four Americans was unemployed, and in many large cities nearly half the adults were out of work."<sup>10</sup> In an effort to revive the economy and alleviate the human suffering caused by the collapse, President Franklin D. Roosevelt offered Americans a "New Deal."<sup>11</sup>

The poor health of the American economy was mirrored by the poor health of the environment. The nation's forests and farmland had been exploited for three generations, with disastrous results. Logging companies had reduced the nation's stock of virgin timber from 800 million acres to 100 million acres. In many cases, they had clear-cut the forests and left the land vulnerable to extraordinary erosion. Many farmers had not adopted scientific farming techniques such as crop rotation, and eventually nothing would grow in the nutrient-stripped soil. Wind and water began to carry away the topsoil in the barren fields, with almost six billion tons disappearing each year.<sup>12</sup>



Dust Storm in Rolla, Kansas, 1935.



President Roosevelt was concerned about the multitude of young, unmarried, unemployed men in America's cities. He was also an ardent conservationist who believed that "the Nation that destroys its soil destroys itself."<sup>13</sup> These concerns led him to propose the creation of a program in which unmarried men between the ages of 18 and 25 were put to work preserving and rehabilitating America's forests and farmland. On March 21, President Roosevelt sent a message to Congress explaining his goals and requesting their support:

*I propose to create a Civilian Conservation Corps to be used in simple work, not interfering with normal employment, and confining itself to forestry, the prevention of soil erosion, flood control, and similar projects. More importantly, however, than the material gains, will be the moral and spiritual value of such work. The overwhelming majority of unemployed Americans, who are now walking the streets and receiving private or public relief, would infinitely prefer to work. We can take the vast army of these unemployed out into healthful surroundings. We can eliminate to some extent at least the threat that enforced idleness brings to spiritual and moral stability. It is not a panacea for all the unemployment, but it is an essential step in this emergency.... I estimate that 250,000 men can be given temporary employment by early summer if you will give me the authority to proceed within the next two weeks.<sup>14</sup>*

After receiving Congressional approval, President Roosevelt signed the bill creating the Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) program on March 31, 1933. He then signed the executive order putting the program eventually called the Civilian Conservation Corps in motion. The press and the public preferred the name Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) to the Emergency Conservation Work (ECW), and never really adopted its official name. To reflect their preference, the name officially changed in 1937.<sup>15</sup>

The CCC program was intended to provide employment for 500,000 men per year. The initial term of employment was six months, with 250,000 men to be employed during each term. The CCC had strict eligibility requirements; only unmarried, unemployed men between the ages of 18 and 25 that were physically healthy and American citizens were eligible for the CCC. A few months later, the eligibility requirements were altered to permit American Indians and World War I veterans to participate. The men accepted into the CCC were paid \$30 per month, which amounted to \$1 per day. They were required to send \$25 per month home to their families.<sup>16</sup>



Civilian Conservation Corps Clearing the Land for Soil Conservation, 1934.



United States Civilian Conservation Corps Badge.

Several federal agencies were involved in the CCC project. "The Department of Labor was to initiate a nationwide recruiting program; the Army was to condition and transport enrollees to the work camps; and the Park Service and Forest Service were to operate the camps and supervise the work assignments."<sup>17</sup> After the Park Service and Forest Service realized that they did not have the personnel, equipment, or experience to operate the work camps, the Army took on this responsibility as well. The Park Service and Forest Service continued in their roles as supervisors and technical advisors at the work sites.<sup>18</sup>

Recruits for the CCC program were selected at the county level and told to report to a regional conditioning camp. The Army then gave them two weeks of physical conditioning before it transferred them to their assigned work sites. The CCC workers “performed a variety of jobs in forests, parks, and recreational areas and on soil conservation projects. They built roads, bridges, campgrounds, and fish hatcheries; planted trees; taught farmers how to control erosion; and fought fires.”<sup>19</sup> The CCC workers eventually came to be known as Roosevelt’s Tree Army.<sup>20</sup>

Among their many accomplishments between 1933 and 1942, the more than two million men who made up Roosevelt’s Tree Army planted more than two billion trees, built 13,100 miles of foot trails, restored 3,980 historic structures, spent more than six million man-days fighting forest fires, and built 3,400 fire lookout towers.<sup>21</sup>

### Fort McPherson and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)

In the spring of 1933, Army leaders at Fort McPherson learned that they would be contributing to the administration of the CCC program and hosting a conditioning camp at the post. On May 22, 1933, Fort McPherson became the headquarters for District B, Civilian Conservation Corps, IV Corps Area. Fort McPherson’s commander, Brigadier General George H. Estes, became the commanding officer for District B.<sup>22</sup>

President Roosevelt set a goal of having 250,000 CCC workers at conditioning camps or assigned to work sites by July 1, 1933. Almost immediately after the commencement of the program, hundreds of recruits began arriving at Fort McPherson’s conditioning camp. The Army erected a “tent city” to house them in an open area south of the main post buildings and north of the former Camp Jesup warehouses.<sup>23</sup>



CCC Conditioning Camp at Fort McPherson, 1936.

## WORLD WAR HERO IS FOUND AMONG FOREST WORKERS



*Augusta Chronicle, August 21, 1933*

Cloudland, Ga., Aug. 20. (AP) – Bill Pitts was just another Carroll county [sic], Georgia, farmer who couldn’t make ends meet under disastrous prices when he came to this Civilian Conservation Corps camp on top of Lookout Mountain.

Bill made a dollar a day up here and the government sent 66 cents of it home to his wife and the five little Pitts. Bill sent the rest home when he got it.

Officers recognized in Pitts a natural ability as a director of men and a “leader.”

Nobody knew it here but 15 years ago officers of Company D, 18<sup>th</sup> infantry of the First Division recognized in Private William Pitts a natural ability [sic] as a director of men and made him a sergeant.

Sergeant Pitts went out with 36 other doughboys to look over a ravine in Hill 270 which was and is in the midst of the Argonne forest. They turned a corner and a German machine gun opened up. When it quit Sergeant Pitts went around looking at the 36 men. He found one of them alive and started back with him.

Another machine gunner saw them and when Pitts reached the safety of his own trenches he was carrying a dead man and his own coat was shot full of holes.

Sergeant Pitts went on to Soissons where his company of 252 men met the enemy in a wheat field and went to it with bayonets and fists. Pitts and 16 others left the wheat field alive. He looked over Cantigny and St. Mihiel and went into action north of Exelmont.

The official report to the war department from Exelmont said “after depositing his men in a place of safety Sergeant William Pitts advanced, capturing three Germans and a machine gun.”

For this and other acts the French government gave Sergeant Pitts a Croix de Guerre and the Medal Militaire. The United States gave him a distinguished service cross and two silver star citations and Sergeant Pitts came home with bands playing and flags flying.

The memory of the bands didn’t help much when the bottom dropped out of the cotton market and the five Pitts kids, ranging from one and a half to 12 years old, couldn’t eat the medals so Bill became a CCC.

“Leader” Pitts lined up his group at camp here the other morning.

“Appling,” he yelled. There was no answer.

“Hmm,” mused Leader Pitts. “Appling, first name John, too, used to have a guy in France named John Appling who was always late in the mornings.”

A sleepy-eyed CCC stumbled into line with the awkwardness of a man half awake.

Pitts’ jaw dropped. Then the sergeant got the better of him.

“Appling.”

The bark of authority came echoing down 15 years and awakened John Appling. He took one look at “Leader” Pitts and grinned. Pitts grinned back.

Then both snapped back their shoulders, stuck out their chins and with military precision marched off to the economic battle.

Private Appling and Sergeant Pitts were fighting the wars again.



Men of the District B Supply Depot in Front of the Former Camp Jesup Mechanical Repair Shop (Building 363), 1933. Courtesy Gerald W. Williams Collection, Oregon State University Libraries.

Most of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry was reassigned to support CCC activities for District B. They initially supervised the two weeks of training and conditioning provided for the recruits. When the director of emergency conservation work began approving specific projects, members of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry were sent to the work sites to select locations for the camps. By early June, men of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry were working to prepare the campsites for the arrival of the recruits. In an effort to relieve the officers of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry and allow them to return to their regular duties, the Army ordered Reserve officers to report for duty at Fort McPherson. After a brief period of instruction at the post, they were put in charge of the CCC work camps. The Reserve officers relieved most of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry's officers by October 1933. CCC workers who fell ill or were injured at one of the work sites were usually treated by the camp medical officers that were charged with their care. If their illness or injury required hospitalization, they were transferred by ambulance to the post hospital at Fort McPherson.

In the fall of 1933, District B expanded to a rectangle that was approximately 300 miles north to south and 200 miles east to west. The district included parts of North and South Carolina as well as Georgia. A force of 6,000 men, 100 officers, and 300 forestry officials manned the supply company and the 28 work camps of District B.<sup>24</sup>

The CCC supply depot for District B was located at Fort McPherson. The district was divided into five supply areas, each of which were served once per month by a vehicle convoy of approximately 30 trucks. "Every available motor vehicle at Fort McPherson was pressed into service to transport supplies and personnel... This convoy system delivered more than 300 tons of supplies of every description to the camps of the district every month."<sup>25</sup>

In December 1939, the Army transferred control of the CCC to the Department of the Interior. Fort McPherson's involvement with the CCC ended when the program was suspended in 1942.

## PEACETIME CHANGE AT THE POST



After World War I, Congress made significant cuts to the Department of the Army's budget. These austerity measures resulted from prevailing isolationist sentiment in the country, as well as the government's commitment to investing in the Navy, considered America's first line of defense. The Army directed its limited resources toward maintaining personnel, at the expense of purchasing equipment and building construction. In the case of Fort McPherson, new construction was put on hold for a decade, so many buildings were converted or repurposed to meet the needs of the post.<sup>25</sup>

### New Construction

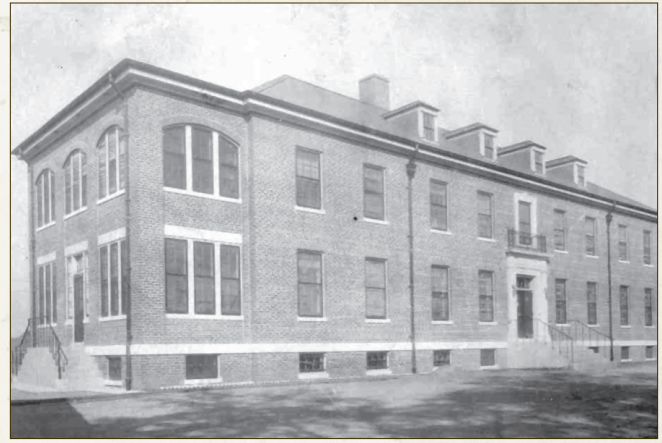
The Army undertook very little new construction at Fort McPherson between the end of World War I and 1940. Three of the buildings erected during this time were associated with the post hospital, and their construction reflected the Army's ongoing interest in retaining the facility as a rehabilitation center. The other two buildings reflected the Army's adoption of advances in technology for applications as divergent as entertaining soldiers and providing auxiliary radio communications support during an emergency.<sup>27</sup>

**Post Hospital Clinic and Ward (Building 170)** In 1929, the Army constructed a new clinic and ward building (Building 170) for the post hospital at Fort McPherson. The two-story brick building was





Post Hospital Clinic and Ward (Building 170), c. 1930.



Nurses' Quarters (Building 168), 1933.

built on the south side of the hospital and connected to the original building with a hyphen. The basement of Building 170 featured a property clerk's office, a linen storage room, a storeroom for medical supplies, a supply office, a storage area for narcotics, and an autopsy room with an associated viewing area. Most of the clinic operations took place on the first floor of the building. The clinic area featured doctors' offices and examining rooms, bathrooms and dressing areas for patients, a dispensary, two dental operating rooms, and an x-ray facility with associated dark rooms. The second floor of Building 170 featured a 16-bed ward for regular patients, a five-bed prison ward, two isolation wards that each accommodated two beds, two rooms for the containment of "disturbed patients," several storage areas and bathrooms, and two offices.<sup>28</sup>

**Nurses' Quarters  
(Building 168)**

In order to house the nursing staff associated with the burgeoning post hospital, the Army built a new nurses' quarters (Building 168) south of the post hospital (Building 171). Completed on September 30, 1933, at a total cost of \$34,140.00, the two-story brick quarters provided housing for 13 nurses.<sup>29</sup>

**Post Hospital  
Contagious Ward  
(Building 169)**

The post hospital contagious ward (Building 169) was constructed in 1933 to provide additional clinic space for the hospital and a place for hospital personnel to isolate patients with communicable diseases. Building 169 was located on the south side of the post hospital clinic and ward (Building 170), and a bridge connected the two buildings at their second story. Virtually identical on the exterior, the two buildings differed on the interi-



Post Hospital Contagious Ward (Building 169), 1939.

or due to their different functions. The basement of Building 169 featured several storage areas for different types of supplies and equipment, a sick call room, an examining room, a dispensary, a bathroom, and a sterilizing room. Like Building 170, the first floor of Building 169 was generally devoted to clinic operations. It featured three laboratory and preparation spaces of varying size, four dental operating rooms, a dental x-ray room, office space for a dentist, two waiting rooms, a bathroom, several storage areas, an examination room, and a medical library. The wards for contagious patients were located on the second floor of Building 169. Unlike Building 170, which featured a large, 16-bed open ward, the eight two-bed wards in Building 169 allowed the medical staff to isolate sick patients in smaller numbers and therefore keep their diseases from spreading. The second floor of Building 169 also featured two four-bed emergency overflow wards, eight bathrooms, a treatment room, an office, a nurse's room, several utility and storage areas, and a kitchen used to provide food for patients of the contagious ward.<sup>30</sup>



Post Theater (Building 183), 1939.

**Post Theater (Building 183)** The first movie theater in the United States was built in Philadelphia in 1905. Within three years, nearly 10,000 movie theaters were constructed nationwide. Fifty million people visited movie theaters each week in the mid-1920s, and by the mid-1930s, movies became the chief form of mass entertainment. Movies were a relatively inexpensive way to entertain large numbers of troops, so the Army built movie theaters at installations throughout the country. Fort McPherson's post theater (Building 183) was constructed in 1939. It was based on standardized quartermaster plans and provided seating for 422 patrons.<sup>31</sup>

**Military Auxiliary Radio System (MARS Station), (Building 326)** The Army Amateur Radio System (AARS) was established by the United States Army Signal Corps in 1925. The AARS program used amateur radio operators to train soldiers in the new technology of radio and promote research and development in radio technologies that benefitted the Army. National security concerns prompted the government to suspend the AARS program when the United States entered World War II. In December 1941, approximately 5,600 amateur radio operators were members of the AARS program. The AARS program was reactivated in 1946 to continue its training of Army communications personnel. It was renamed the Military Auxiliary Radio System (MARS) in 1948. In addition to its training activities, the MARS system provides auxiliary communications support for military and civil organizations at the local, national, and international level during emergency situations.<sup>32</sup>

The Army used standardized quartermaster plans for a radio transmitter building (plans 6217-112 through 6217-



MARS Station (Building 326), c. 1939.

117) to build Fort McPherson's MARS Station (Building 326). The small, rectangular brick building was located on the south side of the post and completed in 1939.<sup>33</sup>

### New Roles for Existing Buildings

In the 1920s and 1930s, a number of existing buildings at Fort McPherson were converted or repurposed to meet the evolving requirements of the garrison. Building 184, the barracks located just south of Troop Row, was converted into administrative office space in 1919 before becoming the home for Headquarters, IV Corps Area in 1927. Another barracks, Building 65, was converted to officers' quarters in 1920. This conversion was probably necessary to provide housing for a portion of the 50 officers that arrived on post when Headquarters, IV Corps Area was established at Fort McPherson. In 1921, the post hospital no longer needed a separate receiving ward and administration building, so Building 44 was converted into the post library.<sup>34</sup>

Although not technically a new role, the interior of the post chapel (Building 42) was renovated in 1921. The Army added stained glass windows and oak woodwork to the chapel to make the building more worthy of its function. In 1928, the post bakery (Building 102) was converted to an ordnance warehouse. In the following year, the Red Cross nurses' quarters was converted into the post Officers' Club. Originally used for ordnance storage, the Army decided to convert Building 104 into an ambulance garage in 1931. Fort McPherson's post hospital had been providing care for sick or injured CCC workers since 1933. By 1936, additional space was required, so the Army converted a quartermaster storage building (Building 101) into a dedicated CCC hospital ward.<sup>35</sup>



1940 Aerial Image of Fort McPherson Showing New Construction and Expansion of the Post.

In 1937, the Staff Row Boiler House (Building 500) was converted into the post Officers' Club. Elements of the interior spatial arrangement and the equipment of the boiler house were retained to provide architectural interest for the new club. The Officers' Club was previously housed in Building 502, which was the Red Cross nurses' quarters. With the relocation of the Officers' Club to Building 500, Building 502 was adopted as the Warrant Officers' Club in 1938.<sup>36</sup>

The large open floor plan and centralized location of Fort McPherson's Post Exchange (Building 181) made it a highly adaptable building. The basement housed a bowling alley and a target range. In the 1920s and 1930s, a portion of the building was employed as a gymnasium. The building served in that role until 1936, when the Army converted one of the quartermaster stables (Building 400) into a gymnasium. Building 181 also hosted a 600-man theater until the new post theater (Building 183) was constructed in 1939.<sup>37</sup>

### Expansion and Change at the Garrison

On August 23, 1927, Camp Jesup ceased to operate as an independent installation. Fort McPherson therefore expanded southward by an area of approximately 136 acres, making the total area of the post approximately 373 acres. During the following year, the Army began construction on a polo and athletic field located just north of the former Camp Jesup warehouses.

Fort McPherson's parade field was named Hedekin Field on August 27, 1939. The new name was given to honor Capt. David D. Hedekin, who served at Fort McPherson from November 1934 until his death in 1938. During his time at Fort McPherson, Captain Hedekin served as Commander of Headquarters Company, 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, and as Aide-de-Camp to General Van Horn, Commanding General of the 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade and Fort McPherson. Captain Hedekin was fatally injured during a polo tournament at Fort Oglethorpe on July 17, 1938. He died there on July 20, 1938.

By the late 1930s, officials at Fort McPherson began taking steps to absorb the Atlanta National Guard Target Range located on the western border of the post. The official transfer of the land to Fort McPherson did not occur until June 21, 1941, but the Army was able to build a nine-hole golf course on the property in 1937-1938. The addition of the Atlanta National Guard Target Range brought the total area of Fort McPherson to approximately 505 acres.<sup>38</sup>

## THE LUXURY OF ISOLATION



With rare exceptions, the United States had been able to enjoy the luxury of isolationism since its founding. Blessed with vast resources and geographical separation, America was able to engage the rest of the world on its own terms. Before World War I, America had the freedom to enjoy its prosperity and pursue happiness in relative solitude. Part of this prosperity came from the decision to develop economic interests overseas. It was when these interests were threatened that the nation was pulled into the Great War. Although America's involvement in the war was limited in comparison with the other combatants, it was still a cruel lesson for the nation to learn. The foreign policy of the 1920s and 1930s reflected the nation's patent unwillingness to repeat such a lesson. With the onset of the Depression, America turned inward to focus on the salvation of its own economic life. Events in Europe and Asia soon drew America's attention overseas and proved that isolationism was no longer an option.



Fort McPherson Parade Field (Hedekin Field), c. 1930.



Baseball Backstop on Fort McPherson's Parade Field (Hedekin Field), c. 1930.



Entrance to Fort McPherson, 1935.



Adolf Hitler Reviewing SA Troops in Nuremberg, September 1935 (SA stands for Sturmabteilung or "Stormtroopers").



The United States government was determined to be more prepared for possible combat in Europe than it had been at the beginning of the First World War. Congress increased military spending to \$17 billion in 1940, and President Roosevelt ordered the production of 50,000 combat aircraft per year. On August 27, 1940, Congress took the first steps toward developing an Army of 1.5 million soldiers by inducting the National Guard into federal service and activating the Organized Reserves. Less than a month later, Congress approved the Selective Service and Training Act of September 14, 1940, the first peacetime draft in the history of the United States. Approximately 16 million men between the ages of 21 and 35 were required to register for the draft. Those chosen in the draft lottery and found fit for duty were required to serve in the military for a term of one year. By this time, most Americans were convinced that preparations for war were necessary, but they still fervently hoped to avoid being forced to fight.<sup>6</sup>

## PREPARATIONS AT FORT McPHERSON

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Fort McPherson began preparing for potential involvement in the war during the summer of 1940. From July 8 to August 6, the post held a Citizens' Military Training Camp. One hundred sixty-nine volunteers ranging in age from 25 to 50 paid \$41.70 to participate in a 30-day course of instruction. The volunteers were newspaper editors, businessmen, attorneys, and other professionals from throughout the IV Corps Area. When they arrived at the post, they were given a physical examination at the hospital, assigned to barracks, and provided with their military clothing issue of uniforms, fatigues, and shoes. They received training in a variety of military skills, including shooting rifles, digging foxholes and trenches, and marching in formation.<sup>7</sup>

The Army's preparations for war resulted in changes to Fort McPherson's garrison, many of which involved the transfer of troops to alternative posts for training. The 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry began its permanent departure from Fort McPherson in July 1940. The transfer was completed on June 6, 1941 when the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry's 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion departed the post for Fort McClellan, Alabama. The 62<sup>nd</sup> Signal Battalion, a new unit organized in October 1939, arrived from Texas to garrison Fort McPherson in July 1940. The battalion was subsequently transferred to Camp Blanding, Florida, on September 30, 1941. Headquarters, 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, which had been stationed at Fort McPherson for almost 19 years, also left the post on July 2, 1941.<sup>8</sup>

## The Reception Center at Fort McPherson

In late 1940, the Army opened the Reception Center at Fort McPherson to process the men drafted under the Selective Service Act. Incoming recruits reported to Army Induction Stations where they were sworn into service. They then reported to the Reception Center to undergo a series of processing steps before being sent to their permanent station assignments. When they arrived, the Army welcomed the recruits, assigned them to their barracks, and provided them with their first Army meal. They attended orientation talks, filled out their finance paperwork, and received their clothing issue. Army medical professionals gave them physical examinations during which they received vaccinations. The recruits also took an intelligence test and attended a classification interview so that the Army could assess their skills and abilities and assign them to the appropriate unit. Processing at the Reception Center took between 48 and 72 hours, after which the recruits departed for their permanent station assignments.<sup>9</sup>



New Recruits Line Up to Receive Their First Meal in the Army, 1943. Courtesy of the Georgia Archives, Lamar Q. Ball Collection, lball0555. U.S. Army Signal Corps Photograph.



Uniforms Issued at Reception Center, c. 1941. Courtesy of the Georgia Archives, Lamar Q. Ball Collection, lball0539. U.S. Army Signal Corps Photograph.



## New Construction In Preparation for War

The Army's preparations for potential involvement in another war necessitated two new building efforts at Fort McPherson. One construction effort related to the preparation of equipment that would be necessary for a war effort. The other construction effort related to the preparation of the soldiers who would fight the war. Both projects began in late 1940 after Congress had approved millions of dollars to support the build-up of the nation's defenses.<sup>12</sup>

### Motor Repair Shop/ Quartermaster

### Motor Transport School

In December 1940, War Department officials announced that they would be spending \$1,150,000 to develop a new

motor repair shop and Quartermaster Motor Transport School at Fort McPherson. Several buildings were constructed near the World War I-era mechanical repair shop (Building 363) that was formerly part of Camp Jesup. Motor repair shop personnel repaired and maintained motorized vehicles from the IV Corps Area. The Quartermaster Motor Transport School opened in July 1941. An original group of 450 students trained on more than 180 damaged or condemned vehicles formerly used by the CCC and the Forest Service. In subsequent years, the school provided hundreds of additional students training in every aspect of vehicle repair and maintenance.<sup>13</sup>

### Fort McPherson Reception Center

The Army awarded the Smith-Pew Construction Company a \$287,000 contract in November 1940 to

construct the buildings for Fort McPherson's 1,000-man Reception Center. The Reception Center was built in the open area north of what was formerly Camp Jesup and south of the main post buildings – the same area used for the CCC "tent city" during the Depression. Recruits that arrived at the Reception Center before the buildings were completed in 1941 were housed in former CCC camp buildings that had been disassembled and transferred to Fort McPherson. More than 50 buildings were constructed at the Reception Center, including 32 barracks, a mess hall, two administrative buildings, an infirmary, a classification center, a guesthouse, two bachelor officers' quarters, a post exchange, two warehouses, a chapel, and several other support buildings.<sup>14</sup>

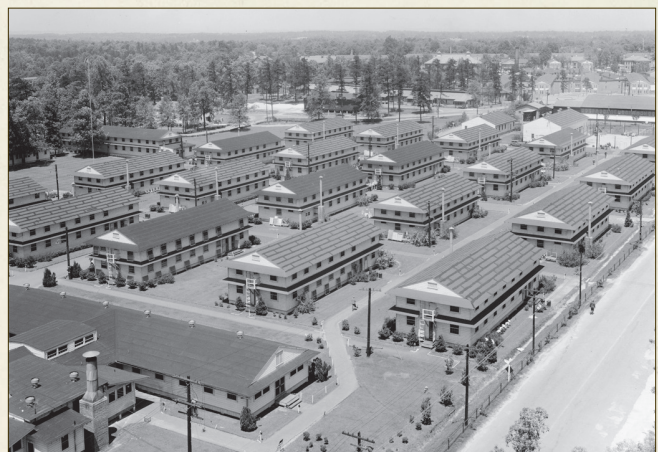
The Army based the Reception Center buildings on the Quartermaster Department's 700-Series Mobilization Building plans. The 700-Series plans were the next



Soldiers Lined Up to Receive Their Vaccines at the Infirmary, 1942. Courtesy of the Georgia Archives, Lamar Q. Ball Collection, lball0564. U.S. Army Signal Corps Photograph.



Soldiers Stand Next to Trucks at Motor Repair Depot, 1943. Courtesy of the Georgia State University Library.



View of Reception Center from Water Tower, 1944. Courtesy, Georgia Archives, Lamar Q. Ball Collection, lball0494. U.S. Army Signal Corps Photograph.

## 24 Hours of Splendor, Gaiety Await Farm Boy, First Draftee

*Dignitaries Will Join Here Today in Feting Clyde Odell Brown, of Heard County, 'No. 1 Soldier' of 8 States.*

Clyde Odell Brown, of Heard county [sic], walked down to the barn and said a few affectionate words of goodbye to the bay mare mule named Kate. He spoke briefly to the black mule, Tom, who is a fool and a kicker. He went back to the house and chopped some wood for the stove and split up some kindling to start a fire with.

When all this was done he drew some water from the well on the back porch, heated it on the kitchen stove, poured it into a galvanized washtub in the kitchen, peeled off his overalls and proceeded to scrub himself until he shined.

Then he went into the back room where he sleeps, dressed himself up in his Sunday suit, threw a few things into a shiny new black suitcase and went back out in the living room to sit by a blazing fire to talk with his folks until bedtime, while the portraits of his two grandfathers, who fought in the War Between the States, peered sternly down at him from the walls.

Such was the last day at home of Clyde Odell Brown, 25, height five feet 11, weight 158 pounds, the first man in Georgia, the first in the eight states of the Fourth Corps Area in fact to be inducted into the Army of the United States under the selective service act [sic].

There was not much difference in what Clyde Odell Brown did on his last day at home and what some multiple thousands of other young men of his age will be doing in the next few days. But today – that's a different story.

For a 24-hour period, the Heard county [sic] farm boy will move in something strikingly resembling a Mohammedan's dream of paradise. Dignitaries will make much of him. His rugged form will be draped in resplendent garments. Sumptuous viands will be spread before him and in the evening, when he feels the need of relaxation, beauteous maidens will sway and swirl in the stately measures of the dance.

He will fall to sweet repose amid luxurious surroundings, his couch bedraped, of all things, in silk sheets. He will awaken in the morning to find obsequious servants waiting to serve him breakfast in bed.

An hour later this roseate dream existence will pop like a soap bubble and Clyde Odell Brown, of Heard county, [sic] will be out at Fort McPherson going through the final formalities that make him a soldier. He may be peeling potatoes before the week is out.

Assuredly he will be subjected to the fatigue of carrying a pack and a rifle that makes a tender shoulder hurt. The brass-hats with whom he will have hob-nobbed on his last day of freedom he will address respectfully as "sir" and he will stand at attention in their



Atlanta's Biltmore Hotel Where Clyde Odell Brown Slept on Silken Sheets, 1940. Courtesy of the Georgia State University Library.

presence until they tell him to be at ease. There will be no silk sheets on his bed and nobody will wake him up to serve him his breakfast. He'll get up when the bugle blows or he'll go hungry until midday.

There are, though, very good and laudable reasons behind all the to-do that is to be made today over the entry of Clyde Odell Brown into the service of his country.

He is being honored, not as himself alone, but as a symbol of the patriotism of the south as a whole, and of the county [sic] of Heard in particular. For, when the Army statisticians figured it out after the draft was over, they found that Heard county, [sic] Georgia, had more men among its draftees who volunteered to go in at once than any other county in the Fourth Corps Area, figured on a basis of population.

So draft officials thought it fitting that Heard should be asked to provide the man who, with the proper ceremonies, would become Georgia's and the Fourth Corps Area's first soldier to go in under the selective service act [sic]. Proud to accept the honor, they picked Clyde. Which made his father, William W. Brown, who farms near Franklin, Ga., mighty proud.

Early this morning Clyde is going to catch a bus to Franklin, the county seat. He is going to the draft board headquarters, where J. W. Gentry, chairman; H. A. Lane and R. L. Wilson, members, and E. D. Goodson, clerk, will give him his papers and wish him God-speed.

Then he will roar out of town in a state highway patrol car, with General Marion Williamson on one side and Colonel H. Cliff Hatcher, assistant director of selective service [sic], on the other.

### *Tailored Uniform.*

At 10 o'clock they will reach the Fulton county [sic] line, where motorcycle policemen will meet them to clear their path with



**From Silk Sheets to K.P. in 24 Hours - Clyde Odell Brown Peeling Potatoes in Post Kitchen, 1940. Courtesy of the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center.**

screaming sirens to a haberdashery. There, a resplendent private's uniform, tailored to measurements sent up earlier, will replace the brown Sunday suit that Clyde will be wearing.

From there the procession will move to the Biltmore hotel [sic], where a delegation of high officials will be waiting and where Clyde's suitcase will be carried to the most sumptuous suite in the house.

At 12:45 o'clock a feast will be spread at the Governor's Mansion and Clyde will dine as the guest of His Excellency. His fellow guests will be Brigadier General John P. Smith, commanding general of the Fourth Corps Area; General Williamson, head of Selective Service; Colonel H. Cliff Hatcher, Colonel James H. Skelton, Colonel C. P. Moses, Major Clark Howell, Frank Fling, and Mayor Hartsfield.

### *Will See Cyclorama.*

At 2:15 o'clock the party will proceed in the mayor's car to the Cyclorama, accompanied by a Confederate veteran, a Spanish War veteran, a Mexican War veteran and a World War veteran.

At 3:30 o'clock the young volunteer and his party will be guests of the management at the Fox theater [sic] and at 5:30 o'clock will return to the Biltmore, where refreshments will be served.

At 6:30 o'clock will come dinner at the Henry Grady hotel [sic], with a private floor show following which there will be dancing. And after that, until 12 :30 o'clock in the morning, the new recruit will trip the light fantastic at a dance in his honor at the American Legion hall on Piedmont avenue [sic]. After that, sleep, between silken sheets, according to officials.

Then comes the dawn, breakfast in bed ... and the Army, the real Army, where the sheets aren't silk and there are no floor shows after meals.<sup>10</sup>

## **Lionized 'Rookie' Proves A Veteran**

*Buck Private Brown, Georgia's First Draftee, Turns Up Record of Two Years in Infantry*

ATLANTA, Ga., Dec. 5—The faces of several Army generals and colonels turned red tonight when it leaked out that Private Clyde Odell Brown, the South's much-feted "first draftee," was a soldier of long experience before he was conscripted.

Private Brown, 25-year-old "rookie" from Heard County, Ga., had served nearly two years in the infantry before being honorably discharged to aid his farm family.

No sooner had he regained his touch at the plow than along came the draft and suddenly Clyde was in the Army again.

But officials here didn't know about Clyde's fine military record until a lavish program of entertainment for "Draftee No.1" was in progress and, in a tailored uniform, he had danced with the colonel's lady.

"Let's give him a great send-off," was the motto on Tuesday when the State's military department and high representatives of the Army rushed Clyde from one highly publicized function to another.

They put him up at one of Atlanta's best hotels. Much was made of Clyde's home county, which has no railroad, and his house, which has no lights or telephone. He seemed to be just a country boy come to do his duty for Uncle Sam.

But, actually, it was a homecoming for Private Brown. He sat in the reception center at Fort McPherson tonight, still dizzy from the social whirl that accompanied his re-entry into the Army.

"Do you like it now better than the first time?" he was asked.

"Umph," was Private Brown's reply, as he remembered the party of two nights ago when he dined with the generals and the Governor, when he danced with society girls and posed for countless pictures as "draftee No.1."

"You were in the Army before?"

"Yes, but—" and Private Brown looked guardedly toward a group of officers looking at him just as guardedly.

"Were you told not to say anything about being in the Army before, particularly after all the publicity the other day?"

"Look, friend," said the private, "I'm right proud you have this interest in me, but about this other thing - I'd rather you not say anything about it. Personal reasons. See?"<sup>11</sup>

generation of the 600-Series plans that the Army used for temporary mobilization buildings during World War I. In addition to designs for over 300 different types of buildings, the 700-Series included plans for camp and cantonment layouts, roads, and utilities.<sup>15</sup>

The 700-Series buildings were similar in form to the 600-Series buildings in that they were generally rectangular, wood-frame buildings with gabled roofs, and only differed in size and construction. The larger size of the 700-Series buildings reflected the Surgeon General's required increase in living space for each soldier from 500 cubic feet in 1917 to 700 cubic feet in 1940. In many cases, this extra square footage was created by the addition of a second story to the barracks buildings. The 700-Series also employed platform framing rather than the board-and-batten construction of the 600-Series.<sup>16</sup>

The Quartermaster Department made other improvements to the 700-Series designs. After observing the rapid deterioration of the 600-Series buildings, the Army constructed the 700-Series on masonry piers rather than on treated wooden posts. The buildings were painted with ivory-colored enamel to check weathering. Electrical service to the buildings was improved, and enhanced heating was provided by furnaces instead of stoves. The 700-Series also featured indoor plumbing rather than showers and latrines located in separate facilities. Like the 600-Series buildings, the 700-Series buildings were considered temporary construction. The decision of the Quartermaster Department to use masonry piers and paint the exterior of the buildings extended the life of the buildings far beyond the expected life span of five to seven years.<sup>17</sup>



The U.S.S. Arizona Sinks in Pearl Harbor, 1941.

## AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
America remained officially neutral for the first 27 months of the war. In 1941, the nation's attention was focused on German U-boat activities in the Atlantic, as most Americans believed that the sinking of Allied vessels would ultimately provoke the United States to join the war. That it took place on the other side of the world made Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor all the more shocking. During the attack on the morning of December 7, 1941, the Japanese sought to cripple America's ability to check its aggression in Southeast Asia by destroying the U.S. Pacific Fleet at anchor in Pearl Harbor and the fighter planes stationed on Oahu. "Of the eight U.S. battleships in Pearl Harbor, three were sunk, and the others were badly battered. Altogether, nineteen ships were sunk or disabled. At the airfields on the island, the Japanese destroyed about 180 planes. Before it was over, the raid had killed more than 2,400 American military personnel and civilians."<sup>18</sup>

The national debate between interventionists (who wanted to join the war effort) and isolationists (who wanted to avoid going to war) ended with the attack on Pearl Harbor. President Roosevelt asked Congress for a declaration of war on December 8, and Congress obliged with only one dissenting vote. Italy and Germany declared war on the United States on December 11, 1941. Despite all of its efforts to avoid doing so, America had become a belligerent in a global conflict.<sup>19</sup>

## FORT McPHERSON DURING THE WAR

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
Officials at Fort McPherson took immediate action upon hearing about Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. The Commanding General of the IV Corps Area dispatched an officer and 25 enlisted men to serve as guards for the Army's Atlanta General Depot. Fort McPherson provided 24 rifles and 260 rounds of ammunition to personnel at the Depot, as well as 12 pistols and 60 rounds of ammunition to personnel at Atlanta's Candler Airport.<sup>20</sup>

Fort McPherson's commanders took steps to secure critical areas of the post that may have been targets for attack or sabotage. They posted guards at the post ammunition dump, near electrical transformers, in the post quartermaster area, and at Building 184, the headquarters for the IV Corps Area. Fort McPherson's commanding officer subsequently ordered all officers to a meeting at the Post Headquarters (Build-



American Flag Being Raised at Reception Center, 1943. Courtesy of the Georgia State University Library.



Soldiers Line Up at Reception Center, 1943. Courtesy, Georgia State University Library.

ing 41) at 9:30pm. The officers called the military police to guard duty at 11:00pm on December 7. A guard detail from the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry at Fort McClellan arrived at 10:00am the next morning to provide security for Fort McPherson's Post Headquarters.<sup>21</sup>

The United States' entry into the war led to increased activity at Fort McPherson. The post experienced a multitude of arrivals, activations, reorganizations, temporary billets, and departures. In the midst of all of this change and turnover of organizations at the post, the IV Corps Area was re-designated as the Fourth Service Command.<sup>22</sup>

Thousands of new recruits poured into the Reception Center. "Men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five were now drafted....The average soldier or sailor was twenty-six years old, stood five feet eight inches, and weighed 144 pounds, an inch taller and eight pounds heavier than the average recruit in World War I. Less than half the servicemen had finished high school."<sup>23</sup>

## Motor Distribution Pool

In recognition of the post's strategic location in the Southeast and its proximity to major rail lines, the Quartermaster General of the Army decided to establish the Fourth Service Command Motor Distribution Pool at Fort McPherson. The post served as a reception and distribution depot for the tactical and administrative motor vehicles for all Army installations in the Fourth Service Command Area. As soon as the vehicles left the assembly line, manufacturers shipped them by rail directly to the Motor Distribution Pool. The Army built 1,800 feet of additional spur trackage and a series of unloading platforms to facilitate the transfer of the vehicles from the trains to the depot.<sup>24</sup>

The Motor Distribution Pool faced a major logistical challenge when the vehicles were delivered to the post. Fort McPherson had approximately 40,000 square yards of paved area for parking, but this area would only accommodate 1,200 average-sized automobiles and trucks. Depot personnel had to park the additional 5,000-6,000 vehicles along the reservation's eastern boundary fence and in other open space on hillsides and in ravines. At one point, a shipment of 3,500 vehicles arrived over a ten-day period. The depot personnel filled Fort McPherson's parade ground with vehicles for months, preventing activities such as the presentation of a Distinguished Service Medal for lack of space to hold the associated review of troops.<sup>25</sup>

Aware that space limitations were hampering operations at Fort McPherson, the post's commanding officer, Colonel Clifford C. Early, considered purchasing a large tract of land adjoining the southern and western borders of the reservation. The 500 acres of vacant land was owned by the Central of Georgia Railroad, which expressed interest in selling the tract to the Army at a favorable cost. The land purchase would have almost doubled the size of the post, but wartime budget constraints prevented the Fourth Service Command from moving forward with the purchase.<sup>26</sup>



Vehicles of the Motor Distribution Pool Being Stored at Fort McPherson, 1943. Courtesy of the Georgia State University Library.

## Fort McPherson's Wartime Medical Activities

Fort McPherson's station hospital was highly active during the war years. The hospital continued its role as a convalescent center and added several new services that enhanced patient care. In December 1942, the hospital established a 236-bed Genitourinary (G.U.) Section for the sulfanilamide treatment of patients with venereal diseases. The hospital's overcrowded maternity ward expanded by 35 beds to provide 10 days of hospitalization for an additional 100 mothers and babies per month. Fort McPherson managed the wartime increase in patients by vastly increasing the number of beds in the hospital and adding 27 new buildings to the post medical complex.<sup>27</sup>

Fort McPherson's Central Dental Laboratory made a significant contribution to the war effort. Approximately 21 percent of the men drafted within the Fourth Service Command were initially barred from Army service because they had an insufficient number of teeth or other dental problems.



Nurse Holds Baby in the Hospital Nursery, c. 1942. Courtesy of the Georgia Archives, Lamar Q. Ball Collection, lball0558.

The Army eventually had to lower its standards for dental health to meet wartime demand for soldiers. The resulting increase in dental patients required a staff of four officers and 55 enlisted men to work long hours six days per week to produce between 4,000 and 5,000 dentures each month.<sup>28</sup>

The station hospital was also a center for training and research. In addition to providing care for hundreds of patients, the hospital staff trained other medical professionals. Several Army convalescent units were activated at Fort McPherson before leaving the post to provide care in other regions. Officers of the Fourth Service Command Medical Laboratories at Fort McPherson conducted research intended to help the Army fight in the tropical environments of the South Pacific. Major Stanley J. Carpenter, the head of the Entomology Department, experimented with a new insecticide called DDT (dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane), while another laboratory undertook concentrated studies of tropical diseases.<sup>29</sup>



Recovering Patients Enjoy a Baseball Game, 1943. Courtesy of the Georgia Archives, Lamar Q. Ball Collection, lball0530. U.S. Army Signal Corps Photograph.



Patients Convalescing Outside the Hospital, 1943. Courtesy of the Georgia State University Library.



Student Technicians Work at the IV Corps Area Medical Laboratory, c. 1942. Courtesy of the Georgia Archives, Lamar Q. Ball Collection, lball0487. U.S. Army Signal Corps Photograph.

## Women and the War Effort

American women made innumerable contributions to the war effort on the home front and overseas. Faced with the daunting prospect of fighting a two-front war, the government created the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) in May 1942. The civilian women of the WAAC worked alongside the Army in non-combatant roles, making more men available for combat. When the WAAC program began in May, the Army set a goal of recruiting 25,000 women within a year. WAAC recruiting met the goal within six months, so the Secretary of War raised the recruiting ceiling to 150,000 women. Fort McPherson had one of the main recruiting and induction posts for the WAAC in the Fourth Service Command area.<sup>30</sup>

In recognition of the WAAC's contributions to the war effort, the Army created the Women's Army Corps (WAC) in July 1943. Unlike the members of the WAAC, who served alongside the Army as civilians, members of the WAC were part of the Army itself. In November 1943, eight WAC photographers graduated from the Fourth Service Command Photographic School at Fort McPherson, the first to do so in the history of the Armed Services.<sup>31</sup>

In August 1945, the first permanently assigned WAC contingent, a detachment of 55 women, arrived at the post. They were billeted in the former barracks of the military police near the post's main gate. The WACs assigned to Fort McPherson at this time served in administrative positions at the Army Personnel Center.<sup>32</sup>

## The Army Personnel Center at Fort McPherson

On July 11, 1944, the War Department announced the selection of Fort McPherson as host to one of the 18 Army Personnel Centers it planned to establish in the United States. The component organizations within the Personnel Center were responsible for the induction and reception of new recruits into the Army, as well as the discharge or reassignment of returning veterans. Four months after the end of the war, the Personnel Center had a staff of 3,221 military personnel and 322 civilian employees to provide support for incoming and outgoing members of the Army.<sup>33</sup>

## The Separation Center at Fort McPherson

Established on July 24, 1944, the Separation Center at Fort McPherson assisted "military personnel in making an orderly and satisfying transition from military to civilian status or to another military status."<sup>34</sup> The separation process for soldiers involved a number of steps and lasted approximately 36



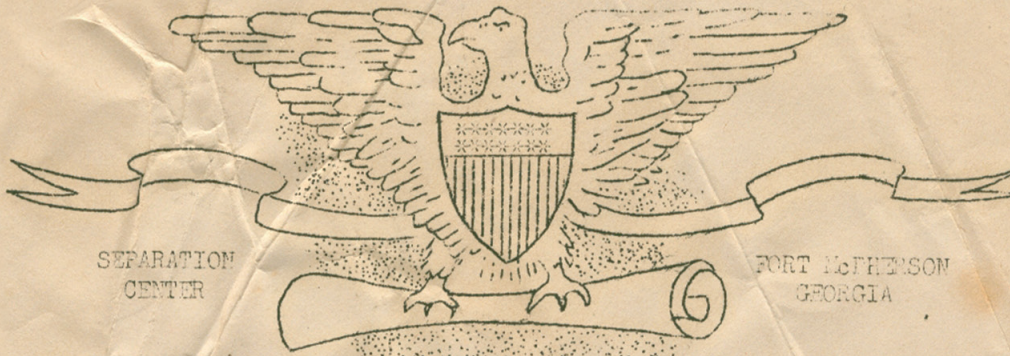
WACs Visiting Injured Soldiers at Fort McPherson Station Hospital, c. 1943. Courtesy of the Georgia Archives, Lamar Q. Ball Collection, lball0595. U.S. Army Signal Corps Photograph.

hours. When the soldier arrived at Fort McPherson, music from the post band greeted him and the Commanding General of the Personnel Center, or his designated representative, welcomed him. He was provided with a meal and billeted before meeting with Separation Center personnel to turn in his clothing issue and records.<sup>35</sup>

During the subsequent orientation phase of the separation process, the soldier viewed informational films and received explanations from Separation Center personnel familiarizing him with the process. The soldier then proceeded to the medical department where he was examined to assess his physical condition. The Army used the information collected during his examination to complete his permanent military record.<sup>36</sup>

The soldier then visited the counseling branch where he was informed of his rights and benefits as a veteran. The Separation Center also provided an information booth where a soldier could ask for help with a problem or have any outstanding questions answered. In some cases, he was referred to a representative of the Veterans Administration, the Red Cross, the Civil Service Commission, the U.S. Employment Service, or the Selective Service, all of which maintained an office at the Separation Center.<sup>37</sup>

After visiting the counseling branch, the soldier "received two freshly cleaned uniforms complete with all the insignia, stripes, badges, chevrons, ribbons, and combat stars that he was entitled to wear. The new discharge emblem was sewn over the right pocket of all the outer garments. The soldier then signed his discharge papers, received any awarded medals that were not previously issued, and proceeded to the Finance Section."<sup>38</sup> The personnel of the Finance Section gave the soldier his first installment of the payments he was due, including his back pay, travel pay, and mustering-out pay.<sup>39</sup>



As a memento of your discharge from the Army of the United States, the speech delivered at your discharge ceremony is reproduced hereon:

SPEECH DELIVERED AT DISCHARGE CEREMONY.

"Men, for most of you, this is your last military formation as a soldier. Your patriotism, skill, courage and devotion have developed the United States Army into the greatest military team in history. As soldiers, you have accomplished miracles both in battle and supply. Your country is proud of you....and you have every right to be proud of your achievements.

Many of you have worked and fought in foreign lands. You have seen what can happen when the people of a nation lose interest in their government, follow false leaders, and accept hate and intolerance. All of us should be determined that this will not happen here.

On your return to civilian life you will be called upon to occupy positions requiring the courage and stamina demonstrated by your leadership during active service. You realize that as American citizens we cannot afford to be disinterested in any part of our government, be it city, county, state or federal.

As you have fought for the rights of this nation, so should you individually and collectively, both as civilians and veterans, make your thoughts and opinions known for the benefit of all mankind.

No one knows better than you do what war is, and there need not be another war. You can prevent it - if you select as leaders of this great nation, those who are as determined as you that there shall not be another war.

Your nation, your Army, are proud of you, men, and place in your trust the future peace of America and the world at large,

On behalf of the Chief of Staff, General George C. Marshal, and the Commanding General of this Post, I congratulate all of you for a job well done, and wish each one of you the most of luck, the most of success, and the most of happiness. Good luck, congratulations and Godspeed to all of you.



The soldier was then ushered to his official separation ceremony. The post band played while the soldier stood in formation for a final time. The Commanding General of Fort McPherson or his representative presented the soldier with his honorable discharge from the Army of the United States and thanked him for his services to his country.<sup>40</sup>

Brigadier General Isaac Spalding commanded the Fort McPherson Personnel Center between July 8, 1945 and January 22, 1946. During his tenure, General Spalding conducted each separation ceremony and personally presented each soldier with his honorable discharge certificate. At times, he presented as many as 800 honorable discharge certificates each day.<sup>41</sup>

On September 1, 1945, Fort McPherson's Separation Center staff comprised 597 military personnel and 76 civilians. By December 8, a staff of 1,916 military personnel and 253 civilians was necessary to process the increase in the number of soldiers arriving at the Separation Center. Between September 1945 and February 1946, the Separation Center processed an average of 20,000 soldiers per month. Approximately 200,000 soldiers were discharged from the service by the time Fort McPherson's Separation Center closed on June 30, 1946.<sup>42</sup>

## WARTIME ACTIVITIES AT THE POST

The war affected almost every aspect of life at Fort McPherson. Fort McPherson's community and the citizens of Atlanta made direct contributions to the war effort by conserving key resources needed by the military and boosting the morale of the troops.<sup>43</sup>

### Atlanta Theater Guild Variety Shows

In the spring of 1941, the Atlanta Theater Guild began providing variety shows at the Fort McPherson Recreation Hall to entertain the soldiers being processed through the Reception Center. After their initial performances, the popularity of the shows prompted the Guild to offer a performance every other week. By early 1942, they offered multiple performances per week. The shows featured one-act plays, musical numbers, impersonations, comedy routines, and typically closed with an ever-popular boogie dance number. Members of the Atlanta Theater Guild considered raising the morale of the soldiers their contribution to the war effort. In addition to their performances, they provided the guild address at the bottom of the playbills and promised to respond to any letters that soldiers wished to send.<sup>44</sup>



Personnel Relax Inside the Service Club, 1943. Courtesy of the Georgia State University Library.

THIRD ANNIVERSARY  
PROGRAM

ATLANTA THEATER  
GUILD

"THREE YEARS OF SERVICE"  
"INDUCTION PROLOGUES OF 1944"  
PRESENTED  
AT THE RECREATION HALL  
RECEPTION CENTER  
FORT MCPHERSON  
GEORGIA  
TUESDAY, MAY 9, 1944  
UNDER THE DIRECTION OF DR. FRANK L. BELYEU  
MUSIC BY PVT. WILLIAM L. SCHEITZER AND THE REC HALL ORCHESTRA  
SOUND-LIGHTING-STAGE DIRECTION BY SGT. JAMES L. DIXON AND CORP. ALBERT B. PARKER  
MASTER OF CEREMONIES-DR. FRANK L. BELYEU  
PLANTIG-TIGGS KATHLEEN CLAYTON

PROGRAM

- 1 -- "HI SOLDIER" ..... ENTIRE COMPANY
- 2 -- "YOU ARE LY SHINING HOUR" .....(VOCAL)..... ANNE McLAUGHLIN
- 3 -- "MAZIE DOTES" .....(TAP DANCE)..... HELGA MONSON
- 4 -- "WHY DID YOU DO IT FRANK?" ..... COMEDY SKIT  
Sydney F. Owen, Dr. Frank L. Belyeu, Anne McLaughlin, Wilma Gifford  
and Miriam Quinker
- 5 -- "CUDDLE UP A LITTLE CLOSER".....(VOCAL)..... JACKIE JONES  
"BESSIE MICHOU".....(VOCAL)..... JACKIE JONES
- 6 -- "LA PETIT SISTERS"..... DR. FRANK BELYEU, BARBARA YARN, ANNE McLAUGHLIN
- 7 -- "THE ORIGINAL A F "..... (MONOLOGUE)..... SYDNEY F. OWEN
- 8 -- "MATERNITY SCENE" ..... COMEDY SKIT  
Barbara Yarn, Wilma Gifford, Miriam Quinker, Anne McLaughlin, Dr. Belyeu
- 9 -- ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY ..... GUILD'S THIRD ANNIVERSARY  
Presentation of Anniversary Cake To Guild, Sgt. James L. Dixon
- 10-- "YOU OUGHT TO KNOW SOLDIER".....(GUILD'S QUIZ PROGRAM)..... AUDIENCE  
(Sydney F. Owen--Judge)(Quiz Master--Dr. Belyeu) (Sponsors--Jackie Jones,  
Barbara Yarn, Dottie BluenEAU, Betty Bradley)
- 11-- "THAT'S HOW BOOGIE WAS BORN" ..... BARBARA YARN....., DOTTIE BLUENEAU
- 12-- "THE SWAMP ROOT GIRLS" .....TOBACCO ROAD DEBUTANTES
- 13-- "ST. LOUIS BLUES".....(TAP DANCE)..... HELGA MONSON
- 14-- "LOST IT AT MCPHERSON"..... (BLUES AND BOOGIE-WOOGIE SINGER).... BARBARA YARN  
"I'M GOING TO LEAVE YOU ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN" ..... BARBARA YARN  
"PISTOL PACKING MAMA" ..... ENTIRE COMPANY
- 15-- "GOD BLESS AMERICA"..... (FLAG DISPLAY)..... EVERYBODY

\*\*\*\*\*  
(NOTE). FOLD THIS PROGRAM AND TAKE IT WITH YOU...ALL GUILD MEMBERS PROMISE TO  
ANSWER EVERY LETTER FROM SERVICE MEN --SHOULD YOU CARE TO WRITE ANY OF THE MEMBERS  
ADDRESS ALL LETTERS TO 610 CANDLER BUILDING, ATLANTA, GEORGIA.....  
\*\*\*\*\*  
"BUCK" BELYEU RIDES AGAIN

Program for Atlanta Theater Guild Third Anniversary Performance, 1944.

## Atlanta's Scrap Metal Drive

Colonel Clifford C. Early, Fort McPherson's commanding officer, announced the post's participation in Atlanta's scrap metal drive in August 1942. He expected that the post would be able to contribute hundreds of pounds of metal to the war effort, noting, "The fancy grill [sic] and ornamental ironwork in front of officers' quarters, steel railing and unnecessary iron fences, iron stakes and posts and many other items not absolutely essential for protection or utility must go."<sup>45</sup>

## Fort McPherson's Literacy School

Fort McPherson founded one of the first schools for illiterate soldiers in the history of the Army during the war years. The Army typically did not accept illiterate draftees, but lowered its literacy standards in the case of skilled mechanics. When the quartermaster department discovered that two of its new recruits could not read or even write their own names, their company commander approached Fort McPherson's commanding officer to obtain permission to start a literacy school. He contacted the Works Progress Administration (WPA), which had already founded literacy schools for the 22,000 Georgians rejected by the Army for illiteracy. Forty-five students enrolled in the first WPA literacy class held at the post. "News of the school spread, and it was found that many of the soldiers who had passed the literacy test wanted to learn more than just merely reading and writing. They wanted to learn spelling, grammar, typing, Spanish, and several other elementary subjects."<sup>46</sup> The WPA provided teachers and textbooks in support of the ongoing education effort.<sup>47</sup>

## Mounted Security Patrols

In order to conserve fuel while ensuring the post's security, the Officer-in-Charge of Fort McPherson's Military Police Detachment instituted police patrols on horseback. The eight soldiers selected for the patrol duty received a review of horsemanship skills before they were assigned to their tours of duty. The mounted patrols supplemented the existing motorized patrols at the post.<sup>48</sup>

## The Hospital "Radio Station"

In August 1944, two employees of the Fort McPherson Station Hospital set up a ward-to-ward public address system over which they broadcast news and music programs from national radio networks that were played on local radio stations. They also broadcast the Sunday morning



Sign Promoting a Scrap Metal Drive, 1942. Courtesy of the Georgia Archives, Lamar Q. Ball Collection, lball0560. U.S. Army Signal Corps Photograph.



Special Training Unit Classroom, 1943. Courtesy of the Georgia Archives, Lamar Q. Ball Collection, lball0566. U.S. Army Signal Corps Photograph.

services from the post chapel. The hospital employees gave their ersatz “radio station” the call letters FMSH, for Fort McPherson Station Hospital. The broadcasts reportedly “went a long way in boosting the morale of the patients at the hospital.”<sup>49</sup>

### Efforts of the Red Cross

As it had during World War I, the Red Cross again established a presence at Fort McPherson. One of their main contributions was serving the convalescent soldiers in the post hospital. They worked to boost morale by delivering donated magazines and gifts and helping them communicate with their families. In March 1944, the Post Commander observed that they had helped 10,000 men the previous year. In appreciation of the Red Cross’ efforts, the Fort McPherson community had 100 percent participation in the March 1944 War Fund Drive. Three months later, the Atlanta Red Cross opened a canteen at the Fort McPherson Reception Center, the first of its kind in the Fourth Service Command. “The new canteen was designed to offer refreshments and a word of good cheer to the men arriving at the Reception Center for induction. This service was greatly appreciated by those who had spent many hot hours on crowded transportation facilities before reaching Fort McPherson.”<sup>50</sup>



Groceries and Supplies Delivered by Horse and Buggy to Conserve Fuel, c. 1942. Courtesy of the Georgia Archives, Lamar Q. Ball Collection, lball0503. U.S. Army Signal Corps Photograph.

## WARTIME BUILDING CONSTRUCTION AND CONVERSION



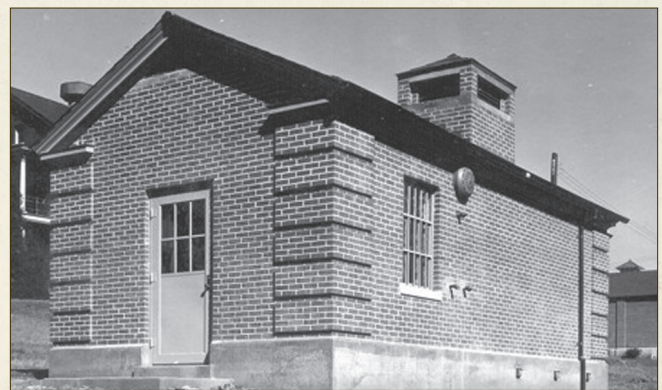
The Second World War brought a great deal of change to Fort McPherson as the post mobilized in support of the war effort. The Army built more than 100 new buildings and altered or repurposed others to meet the demands of new missions and a burgeoning population.<sup>51</sup>

### General New Construction

During the war years, the Army embarked upon new construction for a variety of reasons. Construction of two transient officers’ quarters (Buildings 27 and 28) provided accommodations for officers making wartime visits to the post. The increased number of convalescents in the hospital and new recruits in the reception center necessitated the building of a new post guesthouse (Building 48) to supplement the rooms available for rent in the post Service Club. The Army ensured prompt wartime communications with Washington D.C. and other installations by building a new radio receiver building (Building 606) on the western side of the post. Improvements to the physical plant of the post included the dry cleaning plant (Building 302), the post laundry (Building 209), and a fire station (Building 106). An additional chapel (Building 240), as well as a new recreation center (Building 155), and a new 1,000-seat post theater (Building 422) were added to the post in order to accommodate the wartime influx of soldiers. A post stockade composed of an administration building, two confinement barracks, a mess hall, a latrine, and several sentry houses was constructed within a fenced area behind Buildings 183 and 184.<sup>52</sup>

**Film Vault (Building 144)** The post film vault (Building 144) was used for film storage and maintenance.

Located south of the western end of the parade field, Building 144 was completed in 1944.<sup>53</sup>

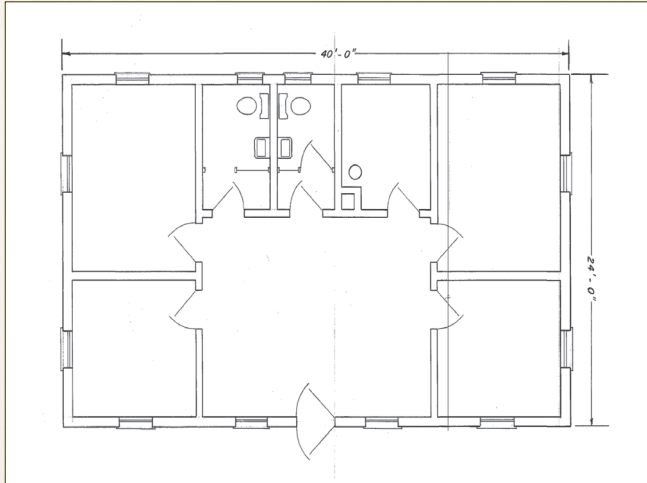


Film Vault (Building 144), c. 1944.

**Red Cross Building  
(Building 53)**

Building 53 was constructed in 1944 when the Red Cross established a larger presence at Fort

McPherson in order to provide services to convalescent soldiers and draftees arriving at the Reception Center. The rectangular brick building was located on the eastern side of the post between the Service Club and the hospital complex.<sup>54</sup>



Architectural Plan of Red Cross Building (Building 53), 1966.

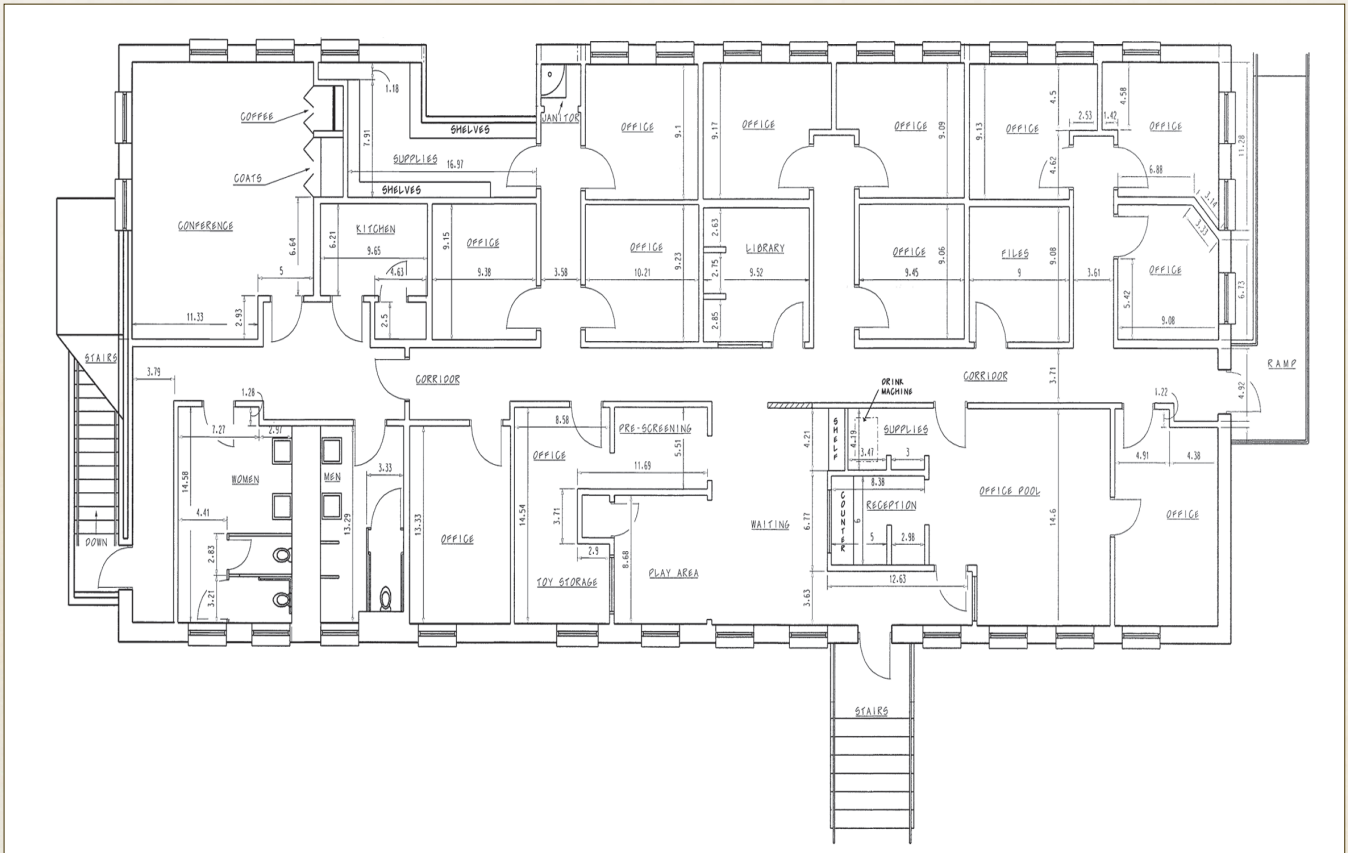
**The Transformation of Fort McPherson's  
Station Hospital**

New construction transformed Fort McPherson's Station Hospital during the war years. More than two dozen buildings were added to the hospital complex to meet wartime demands. One of the most significant construction efforts was the Genitourinary (G.U.) Section, which was built to provide treatment for patients with venereal disease. The 236-bed G.U. Section was composed of seven wards, two latrines, a mess hall, a dispensary, and a treatment clinic. The Army also constructed five regular hospital wards (Buildings 127-131), a contagious disease ward (Building 164), three additional medical laboratories (Buildings 161-163), two mess halls (Buildings 132 and 166), one additional nurses' quarters (109), and two additional barracks for hospital personnel (Buildings 178-179).

**Post Dental Laboratory  
(Building 47)**

The Post Dental Laboratory (Building 47) was constructed in 1943 to accommodate the increase in dental patients associated with the wartime draft.

The rectangular, structural clay tile building was located in the northeastern corner of the reservation.<sup>55</sup>



Architectural Plan of Post Dental Laboratory (Building 47), 2003.

**Nurses' Quarters (Building 167)**

The wartime growth of Fort McPherson's Station Hospital necessitated the construction of new nurses' quarters.

The two-story, rectangular, structural clay tile building provided accommodations for 36 nurses. Located on the eastern side of the main hospital complex, Building 167 was completed in 1943.<sup>56</sup>

**Station Hospital Laboratory (Building 180)**

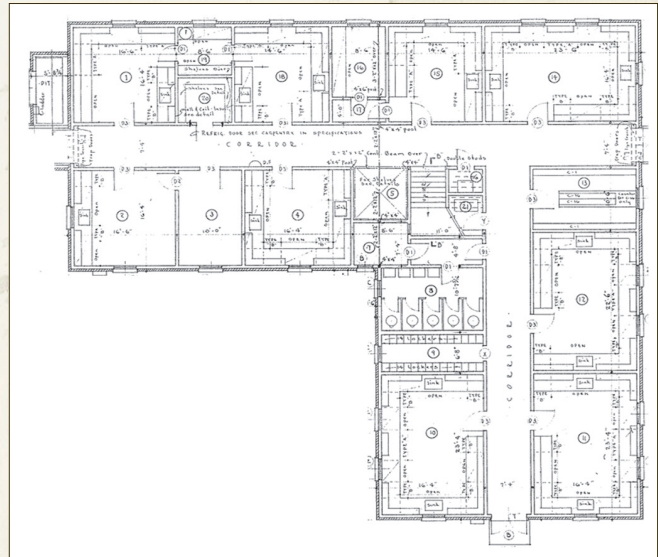
Building 180 was one of four hospital laboratories constructed in the station

hospital complex during World War II. The L-shaped brick building was completed in 1944.<sup>57</sup>

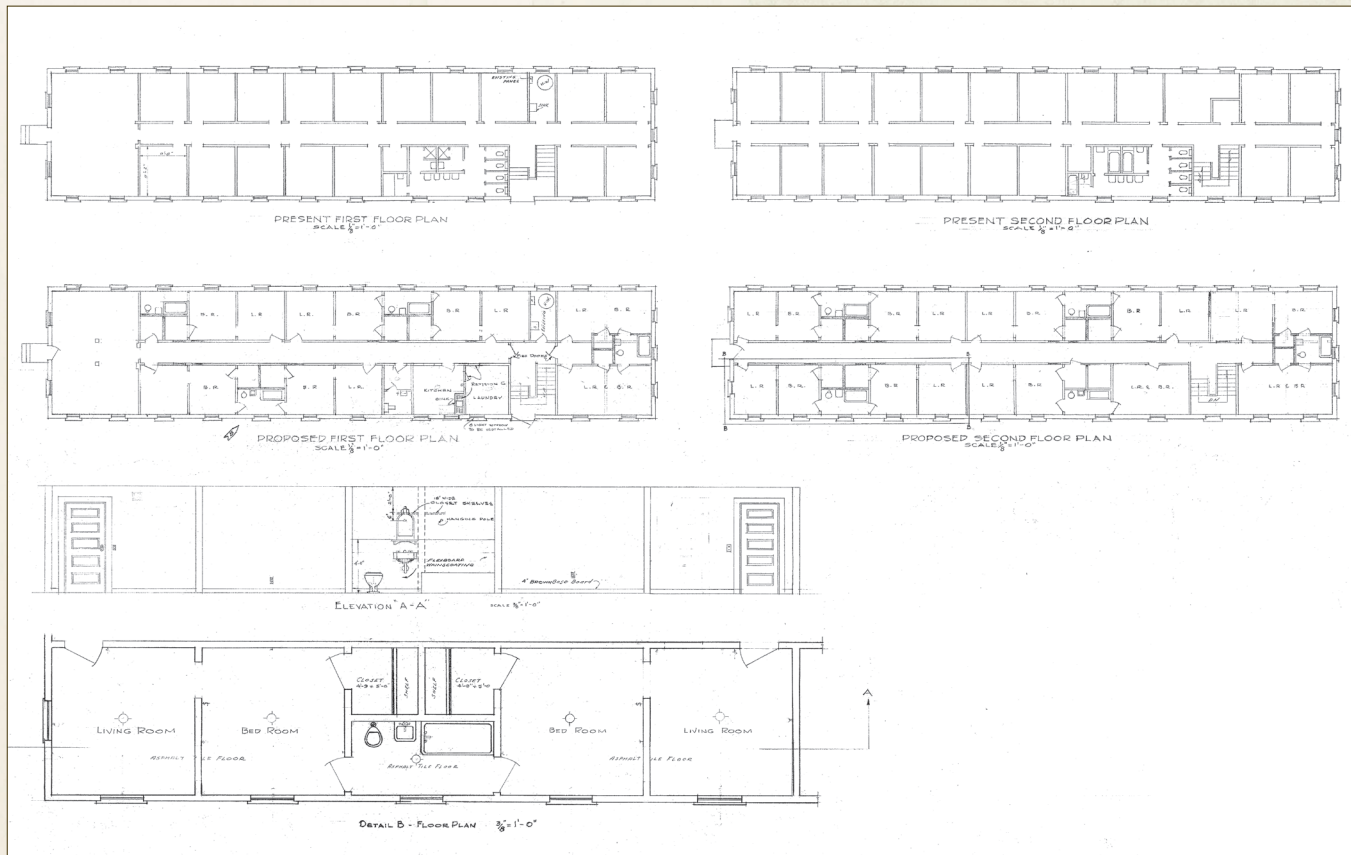
**Building Alterations and Repurposing for the War Effort**

Fort McPherson met most of its wartime responsibilities through new construction, but some buildings were repurposed or altered to fill new roles or meet wartime demand for raw materials. Several post buildings, particularly those on Staff Row, were slightly altered when their decorative ironwork was removed during Atlanta's Scrap Metal Drive

of August 1942. After an enlarged fire station was completed in 1941, the old fire station (Building 50) was converted to a post office. APO (Army Post Office) 303 provided mail services to the residents and personnel of Fort McPherson, as well as prepared Army postal clerks for overseas service.<sup>58</sup>



Architectural Plan of Station Hospital Laboratory (Building 180), 1944.



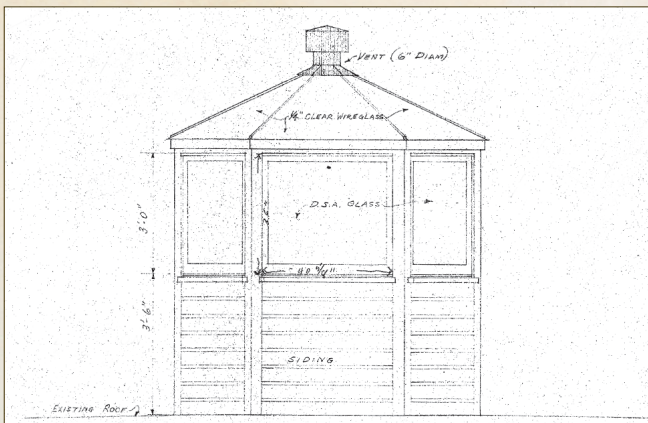
Architectural Plan of Nurses' Quarters (Building 167), 1949. (1943 Quarters Were Renovated in 1949).

The Post Headquarters (Building 41) took on a new role as a observation post during the war. The Army built a hexagonal lookout cupola on the roof of Building 41 so that a sentry could keep watch for enemy aircraft. The glass roof of the cupola and the large glass panels in each of its six walls provided panoramic views of the sky above the post.<sup>59</sup>

Building 210, which became the Army Personnel Center in September 1944, was originally constructed in 1918 as an automotive ordnance warehouse for Camp Jesup. The Personnel Center's component organizations each had hundreds of employees scattered in different offices throughout Fort McPherson. The significant size of Building 210, approximately 32,640 square feet, provided accommodations for 1,000 employees of the Personnel Center. The building came to be known as "The Little Pentagon" for "its maze of small rooms, hallways, stairs, cubbyholes, side entrances, fences, and so forth."<sup>60</sup> By December 1945, the staff of the Personnel Center had outgrown Building 210. It had expanded to 3,221 military personnel and 322 civilian employees in order to meet the increase in demand brought about by the end of the war.<sup>61</sup>



Headquarters Building with Temporary Observation Cupola on Roof, 1943. Courtesy of the Georgia State University Library.



Elevation of Temporary Observation Cupola, 1943.

## VICTORY



In 1945, the Allies defeated the Axis Powers in a conflict that was even more costly than the First World War. An estimated 50 million soldiers and civilians were killed. Several factors contributed to the Allied victory.<sup>62</sup>

The United States had the largest economy in the world, and when its incredible productive capacity was brought to bear, the Axis found it overwhelming. "By the time World War II ended, America's wartime production record included almost 300,000 airplanes, more than 100,000 tanks and self-propelled guns, 88,000 warships, 370,000 artillery pieces, 47 million tons of artillery ammunition, and 44 billion rounds of small-arms ammunition."<sup>63</sup>

German miscalculations also contributed to the Allied victory in Europe. Examples include letting the British Expeditionary Force as well as other Allied troops escape from Dunkirk at the beginning of the war, and unnecessarily starting a land war in Asia with the declaration of war on the Soviet Union. Unlike Hitler's miscalculation of the location for the Allied invasion of *Fortress Europa* that was precipitated by Allied misinformation, these unforced errors in judgment were nonsensical, but nevertheless quite fortuitous for the Allies.<sup>64</sup>

The Allies also developed knowledge and technologies that proved decisive. The radio proximity (VT) fuze made anti-aircraft artillery effective against faster, more maneuverable modern aircraft. The United States also developed the revolutionary Norden Bombsight, making its targeting of Axis strategic sites much more accurate. "Using this device, bombardiers could drop their bombs within a 100-foot circle from an altitude of well over 20,000 feet."<sup>65</sup> The British made significant technological contributions as well. Their breaking of the German Enigma code and use of radar helped them to withstand the onslaught of the Luftwaffe during the Battle of Britain and counter German U-boat attacks during the Battle of Atlantic. These innovations were particularly significant when Great Britain was the sole nation preventing full Axis domination of Europe. Arguably the most decisive technology of the war was the atomic bomb, which ultimately precipitated the Japanese surrender.<sup>66</sup>

With the Axis defeated, the Allied Powers collaborated for the second time in the twentieth century to remake the post-war world. Unlike the First World War, the United States had moral certainty about the rightness of its actions. Americans believed they had shed their blood for the sake



American Soldiers Cross the Sauer River on Their Way into Germany, February 19, 1945.

of freedom, and they were determined that the people they had helped liberate would not be returned to tyranny under a new ideological system. Believing that free people do not seek conflict, and that sustaining democratic nations was the best way to prevent yet another world war, the United States charted a course to ensure that its efforts in the war would not be in vain. Thus the seeds of a new conflict that would dominate world affairs for more than 40 years were sown.<sup>67</sup>



- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Transient Officers' quarters, Buildings 27-28     | 11. Hospital Wards, Buildings 127-131   | 20. Radio Receiver Building, Building 606                   |
| 2. Dental Lab, Building 47                           | 12. Fire Station, Building 106  | 21. Mess Hall, Building 132                                 |
| 3. Guest House, Building 48                          | 13. G.U. Section, Building 111-126  | 22. Approximate Location of Recreation Center, Building 155 |
| 4. Red Cross Facility, Building 53                   | 14. Chapel, Building 240  | 23. Post Stockade   |
| 5. Barracks for Hospital Personnel, Building 178-179 | 15. Fort McPherson Reception Center   | 24. Film Vault, Building 144                                |
| 6. IV Corps Area Lab, Building 162                   | 16. Post Laundry, Building 209  | 25. IV Corps Area Lab, Building 161                         |
| 7. Medical Lab, Building 163                         | 17. Dry Cleaning Plant, Building 302  | 26. Approximate Location of Medical Lab, Building 180       |
| 8. Contagious Disease Ward, Building 164             | 18. Motor Repair Shop/<br>Quartermaster Motor Transport<br>School/Motor Distribution Pool |   |
| 9. Mess Hall, Building 166                           | 19. New Post Theater, Building 422  |   |
| 10. Nurses' Quarters, Building 167 and 109           |   |   |

Fort McPherson Site Plan, 1943.





HEADQUARTERS  
THIRD UNITED STATES ARMY



O each officer and soldier in the Third United States Army, I wish a Merry Christmas. I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty, and skill in battle. We march in our might to complete victory. May God's blessing rest upon each of you on this Christmas Day.

*G. S. Patton, Jr.*  
G. S. PATTON, JR.,

Lieutenant General,  
Commanding, Third United States Army.

PRAYER



LMIGHTY and most merciful Father, we humbly beseech Thee, of Thy great goodness, to restrain these immoderate rains with which we have had to contend. Grant us fair weather for Battle. Graciously hearken to us as soldiers who call upon Thee that armed with Thy power, we may advance from victory to victory, and crush the oppression and wickedness of our enemies, and establish Thy justice among men and nations. Amen.



The Allied Invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944 was the Largest Amphibious Invasion in World History and Ultimately Led to the Defeat of the Axis Powers in Europe.





Ticker Tape Parade in Downtown Atlanta Celebrating the End of the War, 1945.  
Courtesy of the Georgia Archives, Lamar Q. Ball Collection, lball0567.

## CHAPTER

## VI

# BECOMING FREEDOM'S GUARDIAN

**THE DROPPING OF ATOMIC BOMBS** on Hiroshima and Nagasaki may have brought an end to the Second World War, but it did not ensure peace. Relations between the United States and the Soviet Union had become more strained by the end of the war. Marshal Joseph Stalin, the leader of the Soviet Union, was convinced that the Allies had delayed the invasion of France in order to let Germany and the Soviet Union bleed each other to death on the eastern front. Additional distrust developed as the victorious powers divided Europe into occupation zones. The wartime alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union subsequently unraveled, and tensions grew between the two nations.<sup>1</sup>

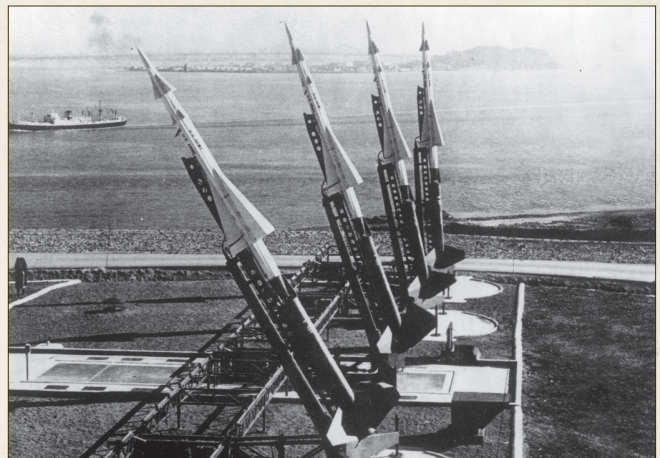
By the late 1940s, the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union had deteriorated. Europe was soon divided into two armed camps. Western European nations aligned themselves with the United States, and eastern European nations willingly or unwillingly became part of the Soviet Union's sphere of influence. Observing the pressure

that the Soviet Union brought to bear on these nations, the United States became convinced that the Soviet Union had embraced the teachings of communism that promoted worldwide expansion. Believing that it had sacrificed a great deal to deliver the world from tyranny during the Second World War, the United States was unwilling to accept the expansion of another oppressive ideology that threatened freedom. The resulting competition for global influence between the United States and the Soviet Union, in which they engaged in a political, economic, and indirect military struggle for more than forty years, came to be known as the Cold War.<sup>2</sup>

For the first years of the Cold War, the U.S. had a monopoly on atomic weapons and their delivery platform, the B-29 long-range strategic bomber. The monopoly ended when the Soviets used reverse engineering to build their own version of the B-29. The first TU-4 was unveiled in 1947. In 1949, the Soviet Union tested its first atomic weapon. By 1954, they possessed a stockpile of 200 bombs,



B-29 Super Fortress in Flight, c. 1945.



Nike Missile Batteries Providing Air Defense during the Cold War, 1963.

which was smaller than the American arsenal, but still formidable. Americans were painfully aware after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor that the measure of security afforded by geographic separation from Europe and Asia was waning, but Hawaii was still a significant distance from the American mainland. The Soviet development of the TU-4 and their possession of nuclear weapons removed that remaining sense of security, because it meant for the first time that an adversary could decimate America's largest cities from above.<sup>3</sup>

Faced with what it deemed to be an ideological threat and advances in technology that undermined the security historically provided by geographical separation, the United States abandoned isolationism as the fundamental guiding principle of its foreign policy. It adopted a policy of "containment," which was intended to check the expansion of communism throughout the world. In order to enact its policy of containment, the United States developed a military that was able to project power worldwide in defense of liberty.<sup>4</sup>

### FORT McPHERSON IN THE LATE 1940s

In the summer of 1945, the Fourth Service Command Headquarters began planning for the post-war period. The headquarters had occupied 147,929 square feet of office space in the old post office and six other downtown Atlanta office buildings since November 6, 1934. Among other options, the Fourth Service Command considered moving its headquarters to Fort McPherson, but it was unable to because the post buildings were fully utilized by Fort McPherson's Separation Center. As Fort McPherson was the most desirable destination, the Fourth Service Command decided to postpone the relocation of its headquarters.<sup>5</sup>

On June 11, 1946, the Seventh U.S. Army returned from duty in Germany and assumed the duties and offices of the Fourth Service Command in downtown Atlanta. Fort McPherson's Separation Center was deactivated on June 30, 1946, and the Seventh Army subsequently selected the post as the location for its new headquarters, with the move commencing in September of that year. The Seventh Army's stay at Fort McPherson was brief, as it was replaced by the Headquarters, Third U.S. Army on March 15, 1947, when it returned from service in the European Theater. The Third Army contingent at Fort McPherson was the administrative headquarters for the Third Army's area of geographic responsibility in the southeastern states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Its mission was to supervise the training and sup-

port of the soldiers in the seven-state area, with a particular focus on the Reserves, the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), and the National Guard.<sup>6</sup>

### POST-WAR CHANGE IN FORT McPHERSON'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Fort McPherson had undergone an unprecedented construction boom during the war years. As wartime activities waned, the post was left with an abundance of new building stock. This allowed the post to repurpose many buildings rather than engage in extensive new construction.<sup>7</sup>

#### Post-War New Construction

With the exception of the new boiler plant (Building 208) constructed in 1948, new construction at Fort McPherson was intended to address the critical post-war housing shortage. It was the first new construction activity at the post since the building of the Reception Center and the expansion of the hospital complex. The army allocated approximately \$800,000 for the 1947 construction of 22 two-story brick houses (Buildings 506-538 and 601-605) that served as quarters for officers and their families. Two years later, the Army provided two new quarters (Buildings 409 and 410) for non-commissioned officers.<sup>8</sup>

#### New Functions for Existing Buildings

In 1947, the Army spent \$205,000 to prepare Building 210 and 22 other buildings that were part of the former Reception Center for occupation by the Headquarters, Third Army. Twenty barracks were converted to provide apartments for officers and non-commissioned officers. Part of the Reception Center's large mess hall became the Post Exchange Cafeteria, while the remainder was set aside as office space for the headquarters' Information Section. The following year, the Army converted the large reception center storehouse into the Civilian Personnel Office and the Civilian Club.<sup>9</sup>



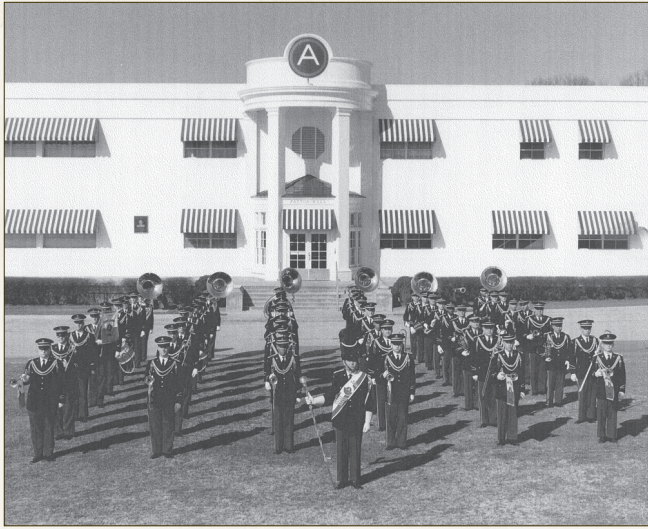
Third Army Headquarters in Patton Hall (Building 210), c. 1950. Note the Encircled A that is the Symbol of Third U.S. Army.

# Brief History of FT MCPHERSON, GA.



HOME OF  
***THE FAMOUS THIRD ARMY***

Fort McPherson, GA: Home of the Famous Third Army, c. 1949.



Band in Front of Patton Hall (Building 210), 1950.

The Army also repurposed several other buildings. In 1947, it transformed a mess hall (Building 246) into the U.S. Army Atlanta Finance Office, and a vehicle repair shop (Building 280) into the post transportation office. Two years later, the Army determined that three additional buildings should serve a new purpose. The original post guardhouse (Building 51) became the central telephone exchange, the recreation center (Building 155) became the NCO Club, and the 1,000-seat post theater (Building 422) became a gymnasium.<sup>10</sup>

## FORT McPHERSON DURING THE HEIGHT OF THE COLD WAR

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
 Headquarters, Third Army was the major tenant organization at Fort McPherson during the 1950s and 1960s. The conflict in Korea occupied the attentions of the post from 1950-1953. At the conclusion of the conflict, the headquarters returned to its core mission of ensuring the readiness of the forces in the southeastern United States. During the 1960s, the Vietnam Conflict that once occupied little of the nation's attention became one of the dominant features of national discourse. Headquarters, Third Army at Fort McPherson continued its mission of training and preparing soldiers to combat communism in the jungles of Southeast Asia.<sup>11</sup>

### The Korean Conflict

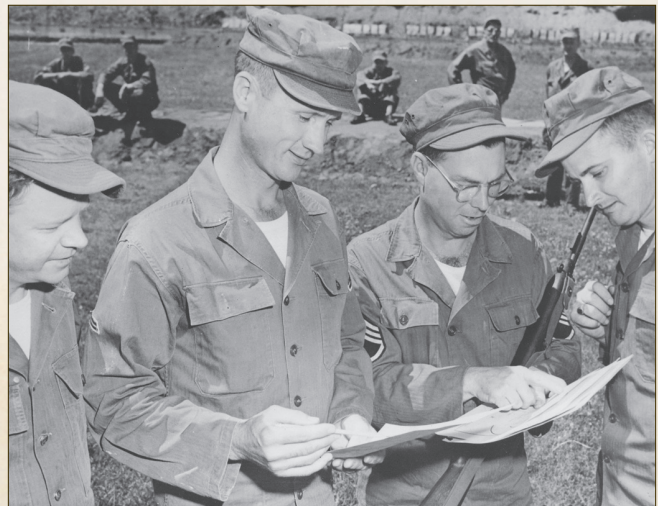
After liberating the Korean peninsula south of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel from Japan during World War II, the United States demobilized and rapidly departed for home. The Soviet Union and North Korea observed the drawdown of forces and concluded that the U.S. military would be unwilling or unable to inter-



The Army's New Summer Uniforms Featured on the Cover of Stars and Stripes, 1957.



United Nations Forces Retreat Across the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel, 1950.



Soldiers Compare Results on the Firing Range, 1952.





U.S. Air Force Combat Assault Mission Over the Mekong Delta, 1970.

vene if North Korea attacked South Korea in order to unite the peninsula. At the urging of the Soviet Union, over 80,000 North Korean troops invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950. President Harry Truman viewed the invasion as exactly the type of communist aggression the containment doctrine was intended to check. He acted decisively and asked the United Nations (UN) to act on South Korea's behalf. When the North Koreans ignored their ultimatum, a UN coalition was assembled to dispel the North Koreans from South Korea.<sup>12</sup>

Headquarters, Third Army at Fort McPherson was tasked with training and mobilizing sufficient numbers of troops from across the southeastern United States to respond to the President's declaration of a national emergency. The experience gained in the three years after World War II during periods of mobilization, economy, and expansion prepared the Third Army Commander and his staff to rapidly prepare and mobilize the men under their command.<sup>13</sup>

## The Vietnam Conflict

The United States' involvement in what would become the Vietnam Conflict began in 1946 during the Truman Administration, when foreign aid was provided to the French government to support its suppression of Vietnamese nationalism. The United States was bothered by French efforts to restore colonial rule, but felt compelled to maintain close relations with the French to keep them from moving toward communism. Financial support for the French continued, and "[b]y the end of 1953, the Eisenhower administration was paying about two-thirds of the cost of the French war effort in Indochina."<sup>14</sup> These policies were consistent with the United States' policy of containment, as well as the theory that if South Vietnam

fell, the rest of Southeast Asia would likewise fall like dominoes. The Eisenhower administration also sent military advisors to assist South Vietnam in its efforts to counter North Vietnamese aggression. When President Kennedy took office, there were "2,000 U.S. troops in South Vietnam; by the end of 1963, there were 16,000, none of whom had been officially committed to battle."<sup>15</sup>

In 1964, North Vietnamese forces were accused of attacking two U.S. destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin. Responding to what became known as the Tonkin Gulf Incident, Congress gave President Johnson permission to escalate the military's involvement in the conflict. General William Westmoreland requested combat troops in March 1965, and by the end of the year, there were 184,000 troops in Vietnam. The number of soldiers in Vietnam reached its peak in 1969, when 560,000 troops were active in the war effort. As the conflict escalated, the war became more controversial on the home front, with protests becoming a common occurrence across the country. After taking office in 1969, President Nixon began working to pull the United States out of the war, and by 1973 there were only 50,000 troops still in Vietnam. When the last soldier left on March 29, 1973, the longest war in United States history had cost 58,000 lives and more than \$150 billion. After a war that "divided Americans more drastically than any event since the Civil War,"<sup>16</sup> the American people were ready to put Vietnam behind them and adopt a non-interventionist foreign policy.<sup>17</sup>

Headquarters, Third Army at Fort McPherson continued its mission of training and supporting the soldiers under its command. In the months after the Vietnam War ended, the U.S. Army underwent a fundamental change in its command structure, which had far-reaching implications for the Third Army and Fort McPherson.<sup>18</sup>

## CHANGE IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT DURING THE 1950s AND 1960s



During the 1950s, the changes in the built environment of Fort McPherson and the area surrounding the post addressed the ongoing shortage of housing for military families, provided comfort and convenience for post residents and visitors, and enhanced the recreational opportunities available to the post community.<sup>19</sup>

### New Construction During the 1950s

New construction during the early 1950s provided much-needed housing for military families. Between 1956 and 1957, new brick garages (Buildings 23–26 and 29–35) were constructed behind the Staff Row quarters to replace the deteriorated wood frame garages. The construction efforts of 1959 included a commissary annex (Building 186), a Post Exchange service station (Building 143), a post garage complex (Building 187), and a golf clubhouse (Building 650).<sup>20</sup>

**Fort McPherson’s Wherry Housing Developments** In the early 1950s, private contractors built two housing developments just outside the western border of Fort McPherson to address the persistent post-war housing shortage faced by members of the military and their families. The housing shortage was not unique to military installations, as communities nationwide were having difficulty providing housing for the millions of returning veterans and their families. In 1949, Secretary of Defense Louis A. Johnson explained that the lack of adequate housing for the military was an issue of national security:<sup>21</sup>

*Rather than be separated from their families because of lack of Government quarters and scarcity of adequate rental housing at their places of assignment, many service personnel have accepted disgraceful living conditions in shacks, trailer camps and overcrowded buildings, many at extortionate rents. It cannot be expected that competent individuals will long endure such conditions... There is nothing more vital or pressing in the interest of morale and the security of America than proper housing for our Armed Forces.*<sup>22</sup>

The 1949 Wherry Housing Bill allowed housing developers to obtain low-interest loans insured by the Federal Housing Administration. The housing developers, known as Wherry “sponsors,” built single or multi-family houses on or around



Fort McPherson’s Lee Street Gate, c. 1960.

military installations. Military families were given rental priority on houses owned and maintained by the sponsors. After 40 years, ownership of the houses would be transferred to the government.<sup>23</sup>

In order to allow sponsors to build houses as quickly as possible, the Wherry bill did not specify architectural types or styles for the houses. Sponsors used the same “off-the-shelf” housing plans that were used by developers to build houses in civilian communities. Therefore, no defining architectural designs or characteristics for Wherry houses exist. One drawback of this practice was that many of the sponsors used poor or sub-standard construction techniques and materials. “[A] total of 264 Wherry projects were built for three military departments, totalling [sic] 83,742 units. While housing construction nationwide continued at a breakneck pace, by 1957 there was still a shortfall of housing in the military, with the Army estimating a deficit of 100,000 housing units.”<sup>24</sup>

Fort McPherson’s Wherry developments were the 225-unit “Fort Homes” and the 200-unit “Valley Homes.” The two- to three-bedroom units were desirable for their reasonable rental rates and proximity to the post.<sup>25</sup>

### Building Repurposing and Conversions During the 1950s

During the 1950s, several post buildings were repurposed or converted to fulfill new roles. Fort McPherson’s status as the home of a major Army headquarters brought a number of visiting officers and distinguished guests to the post. The former radio receiving station (Building 525, Chaumont Lounge) was converted into a quarters for VIP visitors to the



1. Officers' / NCO Quarters, Buildings 506-538, 601-605
2. Brick Garages, Buildings 23-26, 29-35
3. Commissary Annex, Building 186
4. Garage Complex, Building 187

5. PX Service Station, Building 143
6. NCO Quarters, Buildings 409 and 410
7. Golf Clubhouse, Building 650

post, and the World War I-era nurses' quarters (Building 22, the Chateau) became an officers' guesthouse. The Army converted the Quartermaster Repair Shop (Building 360) into the Post Commissary in 1956. The following year, Building 65, which had already been converted from a Troop Row barrack to officers' quarters, was converted to office space. Building 401, originally a quartermaster stables, was converted to a bowling alley in 1959.<sup>26</sup>

### Limited Change in the Built Environment During the 1960s

Fort McPherson underwent very little change in its landscape and built environment during the 1960s. In 1965, the golf course was expanded from nine to eighteen holes, and two small streams were sequestered to form manmade lakes. The Post Exchange (Building 181) was renovated in 1966. On June 26, 1968, the post commander moved into Building 65, making it the garrison headquarters for Fort McPherson.<sup>27</sup>



Opening of the New Commissary, 1956.



Hedekin Field, c. 1960.

## REBUILDING THE U.S. ARMY AFTER VIETNAM



The Army that returned to the United States was a weakened institution after more than a decade of war in Vietnam. It was at a low point in terms of morale, discipline, effectiveness, and public esteem. In an effort to move forward with their mission, the Army embarked on a 20-year rebuilding effort. The years of involvement in Southeast Asia and the expense of the war effort had precluded the Army from modernizing and maintaining its forces elsewhere in the world. Army officials were painfully aware that the conventional forces of the Soviet Union and its allies in the Warsaw Pact in Europe had a qualitative and quantitative advantage over the United States and its allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). America would have been hard-pressed to check Soviet aggression in Europe in the 1970s.<sup>28</sup>



Morale-Boosting Activities Included Hanging Christmas Decorations, 1971.

The Army took steps to reinvent itself in several key areas and address the challenges that came with the transition to an all-volunteer army, the majority of which would be drawn from reserves. Military planners such as Generals William DePuy and Donn Starry, who each served as the commander of the Army's Training and Doctrine Command, spent time thinking about the type of war they would fight in the future. They developed new doctrines and a new operations manual intended to help American forces win wars quickly in order to minimize casualties and win when faced with a larger fighting force.<sup>29</sup>

The United States used its technological advantage to create five new weapons systems to counter the larger conventional forces of the Warsaw Pact, including the M1 Abrams tank, the M2 Bradley infantry fighting vehicle, the AH-64A Apache attack helicopter, the UH-60A Black Hawk utility helicopter, and the Patriot air defense missile system. Preparing soldiers to fight this new kind of war required a new training approach, so Army planners "evolved a comprehensive and interconnected training program that systematically developed individual and unit proficiency and then tested that competence in tough, realistic exercises." Realizing that the current command and control structure was inadequate to

implement this modernization effort, the Army came to the conclusion that reorganization would be required.<sup>30</sup>

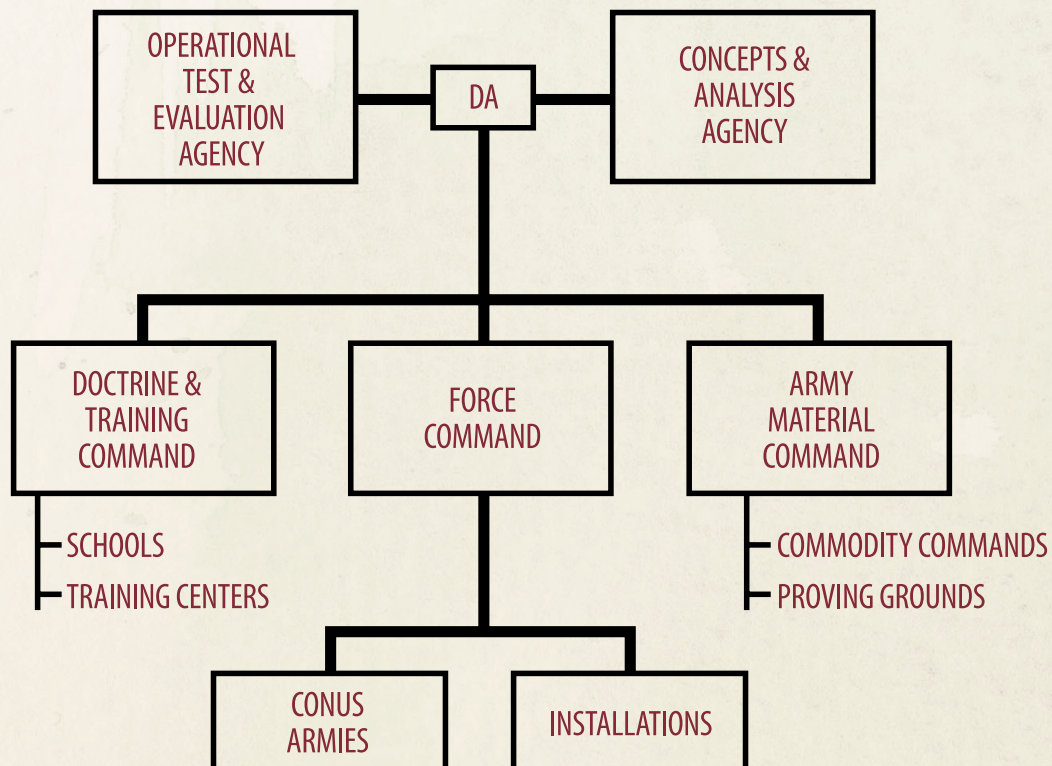
## REORGANIZATION OF ARMY COMMAND AND CONTROL



The U.S. Army had struggled with its command and control organization for most of the twentieth century before it undertook a sweeping reorganization in the early 1970s. Measures adopted at that time would have far-reaching implications for Fort McPherson.<sup>31</sup>

As the Vietnam War came to an end, military officials planned for their post-war operating environment. The Army had used a draft to fill its ranks during the war, but its authority to continue doing so would end with the fighting. Knowing there would be no peacetime draft, military officials worked to address the challenges associated with developing a robust and capable all-volunteer Army. At the same time, the military was implementing a Total Force Policy under which "...there would be reductions in all facets of the active forces and concomitantly increased reliance of the reserve components for both combat

**Chart 5 – PROPOSED ORGANIZATION FOR DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**



Proposed Organization for the Department of the Army Under Operation STEADFAST, 1973.

and combat support capabilities.”<sup>32</sup> The cessation of hostilities in Vietnam, coupled with the planned movements toward an all-volunteer Army and a greater reliance on reserve forces, would create new challenges for the Army and ultimately necessitate a wholesale reorganization of its command and control structure.<sup>33</sup>

Since 1962, the command and control and the training of all combat forces in the United States fell under the U.S. Continental Army Command (CONARC). Responsibility for these missions was daunting enough, but the transition to the all-volunteer Army and the greater reliance on reserve forces under the Total Force Policy instituted in the early 1970s complicated CONARC's mission significantly. An all-volunteer Army made ensuring the readiness of American forces more difficult, as CONARC was required to spend more time and effort on recruiting instead of relying on the draft. The Total Force Policy also presented challenges for readiness, as the reserve forces that were to make up the preponderance of the Army would not be available for unit-level training or individual training as often as active duty personnel.<sup>34</sup>

*[T]he Army's Assistant Vice Chief of Staff concluded that, by any standards, the mission of maintaining Active and Reserve Forces in readiness in the continental United States was vast enough to fully occupy the span of attention and control of a single major commander. However, the mission of training individuals in tactics, techniques, and skills was also of sufficient size and significance to fully occupy the span of attention and control of a single major commander. Consequently, the Department of the Army Staff concluded that the span of control of the Commander, U.S. Continental Army Command, would soon become overtaxed and that commander would be unable to devote the required attention to each of these major functions... [T]he U.S. Continental Army Command would be split in to two new independent commands – a Force Command and a Doctrine and Training Command.*<sup>35</sup>

Under Operation STEADFAST, the Army's command and control reorganization plan, the Army developed two new co-equal commands: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), headquartered at Fort Monroe, Virginia, and U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), headquartered at Fort McPherson, Georgia. TRADOC was assigned responsibility for individual-level training, doctrine development, and combat developments.<sup>36</sup>

When it was established in July 1973,

*[t]he U.S. Army Force [sic] Command was responsible for organizing, training, equipping, and ensuring the combat readiness of all assigned troop units and for establishing training criteria for, and supervising the training of, Army National Guard units within the continental United States. The Force [sic] Command also participated in the Army's combat developments and materiel development programs, when these programs concerned the combat readiness of its assigned troop units. Consequently, the U.S. Army Force [sic] Command was required to provide assistance, advice, and direct support to the commanders of the Army Materiel Command and the Training and Doctrine Command, in the areas in which the Force [sic] Command was involved. The Force [sic] Command also planned for and executed functions which had geographical area implications in the continental United States, such as civil emergencies and area representation. Likewise, the command was required to plan for and execute those missions which had been assigned to the Army Chief of Staff relative to the defense – other than air defense – of the continental United States and relative to military participation in civil defense.*<sup>37</sup>

## Headquarters, U.S. Army Forces Command at Fort McPherson

Headquarters, U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) was established at Fort McPherson on July 1, 1973. The Army's new command and control structure moved away from geographically-oriented commands and toward mission-oriented commands. Consequently, Headquar-



Forces Command (FORSCOM) Headquarters at Patton Hall (Building 210), c. 1975. Note that the Forces Command Symbol has Replaced the Third U.S. Army Symbol.

ters, Third Army, which was responsible for forces in seven southeastern states, was deactivated on July 1 with the activation of Forces Command. This reorganization would have significant implications for Fort McPherson. As the home of Headquarters, Third Army, the post had been the center of Army operations in the southeastern United States since just after World War II. The arrival of Forces Command Headquarters at Fort McPherson brought new prominence to the post, as it was the garrison of a command with national, rather than regional, responsibilities. It fundamentally changed the relationship between the Fort McPherson garrison and its major tenant organization, because Forces Command did not have the same geographical ties to Fort McPherson and could carry out its mission of ensuring Army readiness elsewhere in the United States.<sup>38</sup>

### FORTS GILLEM AND BUCHANAN BECOME SUB-INSTALLATIONS

On July 1, 1974, the Army designated the former Atlanta Army Depot a sub-installation of Fort McPherson. The depot was given the name Fort Gillem in honor of Lieutenant General Alvan C. Gillem, Commanding General of Fort McPherson and Third U.S. Army in the late 1940s. Located 13 miles southeast of Atlanta, the 1,474-acre depot was established as a logistical support installation for the Army in 1941.<sup>39</sup>

On October 1, 1977, Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico, was designated a sub-installation of Fort McPherson for administrative purposes. The 728-acre installation “ha[d] a primary mission of providing administrative and logistical support for the Active Army, National Guard, Reserves, and Reserve Officer Training Corps elements located in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.”<sup>40</sup>



Fort Gillem Headquarters (Building 101), 1942.

### ARMY BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
 The United States Army was founded on June 14, 1775. Fort McPherson organized two days of festivities on June 13-14, 1975, to celebrate the anniversary. The post hosted a 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Picnic on Hedekin Field for 3,428 civilian and military personnel from Fort McPherson and Fort Gillem that featured sporting events and music from the 214<sup>th</sup> Army Band.<sup>41</sup>

*During the following day, the celebration continued with the general public being invited to visit the post and attend a Military Fair and Open House on Hedekin Field. Festivities during this day included a parade by 400 soldiers of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, along with the Forces Command Marching Band and Color Guard dressed in authentic 1889 uniforms. Other highlights of the day were a demonstration of Special Forces techniques by the Green Berets, a free-fall parachute demonstration by Army skydivers, plus displays of Army vehicles, helicopters, and equipment. Musical entertainment was provided by the Forces Command Band and Chorus along with several other local groups and organizations. The attendance for the day was in excess of 10,000 people. That same evening, a formal military ball was held at the Marriott Hotel as part of the Bicentennial activities. The feature [sic] attraction was a gala musical salute to the Army's two centuries of service. A total of 907 members and guests of the Active Army, National Guard, and Army Reserves as well as retirees and Department of the Army civilians were in attendance.<sup>42</sup>*



214<sup>th</sup> Army Band Chorus in Period Costumes for the U.S. Army Bicentennial Pageant - “100 Years of Readiness,” 1975.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

June 6, 1975

On June 14, 1775, the Continental Congress adopted the military units of New England as the official national Army. With this act, the Continental Army was created and the Nation's military service was born.

The Army can look with pride on its distinguished contribution to our national security and defense in these past two hundred years. In peace and war, the Army's achievements are a credit to the millions of dedicated American citizens who answered the call to arms to protect the freedom we cherish. The patriotic and loyal service of these brave men and women has added a gallant chapter to the annals of the American experience.

Their valiant sacrifices and unflinching devotion to the basic principles of our Founding Fathers have made the members of the United States Army a vital vanguard of our freedom.

I know that I am joined by my fellow citizens in paying tribute to the United States Army on its two hundredth birthday.

*Gerald R. Ford*



## THE RETURN OF HEADQUARTERS, THIRD U.S. ARMY

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
Headquarters, Third U.S. Army returned to active status at Fort McPherson on December 3, 1982. Between 1947 (when it returned from service in Europe after World War II) and 1973 (when Forces Command Headquarters was established at Fort McPherson), Headquarters, Third U.S. Army was the main tenant organization at Fort McPherson. It was responsible for all Army units and activities in the southeastern region, including Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.<sup>43</sup>

After observing the Iranian Hostage Crisis and the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan, the United States determined that it needed to strengthen its military presence in the Middle East. The military responded by creating the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), a unified command that was responsible for all U.S. military operations in Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, and Yemen. The Third Army was reactivated as the Army component of this unified command and was therefore responsible for all Army operations in U.S. Central Command's area of geographic responsibility. The reactivated headquarters moved into Building 363, which was originally the Camp Jesup Motor Repair Shop.<sup>44</sup>



Army Golden Knights Demonstrate Precision Skydiving Techniques in Front of Patton Hall, 1985.

## FORT McPHERSON'S CENTENNIAL

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Fort McPherson marked its 100<sup>th</sup> year of service in 1985. In that time, it evolved from “a regimental post in an era of horse-drawn artillery” to the garrison for Headquarters, U.S. Forces Command and Headquarters, Third U.S. Army.<sup>45</sup> In a history of the post published at that time, Fort McPherson's officials described its mission as follows:

*The primary function of Fort McPherson is to command, operate, and administer the resources of the post and its sub installations at Fort Gillem, Georgia, and Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico, in order to accomplish all assigned missions. In practice, this means providing support to the U.S. Army Forces Command, Third U.S. Army, and Second U.S. Army as well as all assigned, attached, and tenant units and activities in assigned geographical areas. This responsibility includes over fifty units, activities, and agencies belonging to the Department of the Army, Department of Defense, and the Federal Government and also covers metropolitan Atlanta and the 45 counties of North Georgia.*

*As of mid-December 1985, Fort McPherson also supported and assigned population that totaled 9,619 personnel to include 4,352 military personnel and 5,267 civilian employees. In addition, there are an estimated 74,000 retirees and their family members from all of the military services that reside in the region.<sup>46</sup>*

## FORT McPHERSON'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT IN THE 1970s AND 1980s

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
In the 1970s, the Army worked to leverage its existing buildings to meet its needs rather than engage in new construction efforts. Conversely, the Army embarked on a great deal of new construction during the 1980s, ranging from operational buildings that directly supported the Army's mission to smaller projects that served the residents of the post and the surrounding military community.<sup>47</sup>

### Limited Change During the 1970s

The 1970s brought comparatively few changes to Fort McPherson's built environment. Several buildings were upgraded to provide new utility, and others were renamed to reflect a new status or honor a former commander of the post. New construction was limited, and the practice of demolishing superfluous buildings to reclaim the limited land area of the post for new purposes continued.<sup>48</sup>

**New Construction During the 1970s**

The only new construction appears to have been the Multi-Craft Shop (Building 135).

Constructed in 1973, this facility provided the community access to photography darkrooms, woodworking shops, and ceramics studios.<sup>49</sup>

**Evolution of Existing Buildings During The 1970s**

In 1970, Building 65 was named Hodges Hall in honor of General Courtney H. Hodges, who commanded both First U.S. Army and

Third U.S. Army during World War II. Demolition of the post stockade, which was located south of Building 184, was completed in 1971. The buildings were removed to make way for a parking lot. Fort McPherson's pre-trial prisoners were transferred to Fort Gordon, and its post-trial prisoners were transferred to Fort Benning for their captivity.<sup>50</sup>

In 1974, Fort McPherson's Service Club (Building 46) was designated the Recreation Center and made available to members of the military and their families, retirees, and civilian employees of the post.<sup>51</sup>

The hospital underwent a series of renovations and upgrades in the early 1970s. The Army converted a portion of the medical supply warehouse into administrative and exam space for the Optometry Clinic and added six dental hygienist chairs to the Dentistry Clinic. It also converted portions of Ward #1 into two intensive care units and added an automatic fire sprinkler to areas of the hospital designated for patient care.<sup>52</sup>

On October 1, 1977, the Army deactivated the U.S. Army Hospital at Fort McPherson and established an expanded U.S. Army Health Clinic in its place. The clinic provided outpatient services for members of the military community and referred patients needing inpatient hospital care to local civilian hospitals or the Army hospital at Fort Gordon. This deactivation was a significant event in the history of Fort McPherson, as the hospital had been active for almost 90 years and represented a significant part of the post's identity and its utility for the Army.<sup>53</sup>

**Significant Change During the 1980s**

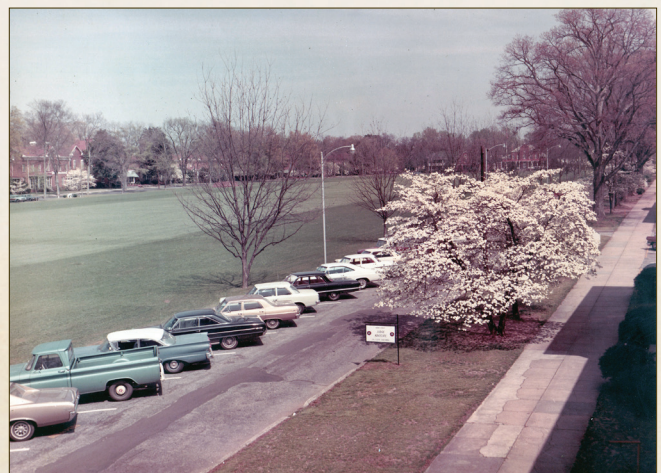
Fort McPherson's built environment changed a great deal during the 1980s. New construction resumed after a period of little activity in the 1970s. The Army built a major operational building, a large retail facility, and several other community activity buildings. Construction of a rail station facilitated transportation to and from the post.<sup>54</sup>



Aerial View of Fort McPherson, c. 1975.



Hodges Hall (Building 65), 1975.



Hedekin Field, c. 1970.



Construction of the Lakewood-Fort McPherson MARTA Station, 1984.



Lakewood-Fort McPherson MARTA Station, 1985.



U.S. Army Forces Command Headquarters (Command and Control Facility, Marshall Hall) Under Construction, 1985.

**New Construction During the 1980s**

The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) began work on the Lakewood-Fort McPherson rail station in the early years of the decade. Fort McPherson granted a 17-acre easement to the City of Atlanta for construction of the train station, which became operational on December 15, 1984. The construction effort required Fort McPherson to move its Automotive Crafts Shop (Building 370) from the southeastern side of the post to make way for the new station.<sup>55</sup>

On October 11, 1983, Fort McPherson hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Command and Control (C2) facility (Building 200) of U.S. Army Forces Command. The building was constructed on the site of the World War II Reception Center, which was commonly known as “Splinter Village.” All of the Reception Center buildings were eventually demolished to make room for the facility. Forces Command moved from its headquarters in Patton Hall (Building 210) when the Command and Control facility was completed in 1986. Patton Hall was subsequently demolished to provide additional parking for the Forces Command facility.<sup>56</sup>

Between September 7, 1984, and December 5, 1985, Fort McPherson built a \$2.7 million “Mini-Mall” (Building 238) to provide on-post shopping opportunities for the military community. The facility featured a Post Exchange, several retail stores, and a 200-seat cafeteria. Fort McPherson’s Learning Resource Center (Building 243) opened on September 25, 1984. The facility provided areas for individual and group training. Other new construction efforts during the late 1980s included a new library (Building 250), a Class VI [package] Store (Building 380), and a new fitness club (Buildings 415, 416, and 421).<sup>57</sup>



U.S. Army Forces Command Headquarters (Command and Control Facility, Marshall Hall), 2000.

### The Evolution of Existing Buildings During the 1980s

In 1983, the Army began a conversion of the Post Exchange (Building 181) into office space for the Finance and Accounting Office,

which was formerly located in Building 246. The activities of the Post Exchange were moved into the buildings formerly occupied by the G.U. Clinic (Buildings 116-124). To celebrate the 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the post Recreation Center (formerly the Service Club), the Army undertook a significant interior renovation and exterior restoration of the building. After the yearlong effort, the Recreation Center reopened with an anniversary celebration on November 1, 1984.<sup>58</sup>

After they were no longer needed by the hospital, Buildings 167 and 168, which were originally built as nurses' quarters and later used for hospital purposes, were converted into bachelor enlisted quarters and visiting officers' quarters, respectively.<sup>59</sup>

## FREEDOM PREVAILS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
The fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989, reunited a city physically divided for 28 years and made clear that freedom would once again prevail in Europe. "Within a few years, Soviet troops evacuated all of their former satellites in the Warsaw Pact countries, those satellites reconfigured themselves as independent and democratic states, the Soviet Union itself collapsed into fifteen different countries, and Germany reunited into a single nation."<sup>60</sup> The Soviet Union's collapse in December 1991 brought an end to the Cold War that had imperiled the world for more than four decades. Thus concluded "the American military's forty-year preoccupation with containing Communist expansion within an enormous arc that swept from the Norwegian border through Germany, around the southern rim of Eurasia, and across the Korean peninsula to the Bering Straits. In hot wars and in cold, two generations of American soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines had secured the line separating the Free World from the Communist bloc; now this frontier suddenly disappeared everywhere except in Korea."<sup>61</sup>

The titanic battle with the forces of the Warsaw Pact for which Army officials had planned appeared unlikely to occur after the Soviet collapse. Americans felt that the major threat to their security had passed and began to question the necessity of maintaining the military at its Cold War levels. Conventional wisdom held that the end of the Cold War would bring about a reduction in conflict around the world. Seeking a "peace dividend" that could be spent elsewhere, and believing that peace would define the post-Cold War world, the gov-



Crowds Gather at the Berlin Wall, December 1989.

ernment drastically reduced the defense budget. Paradoxically, the number of regional conflicts increased worldwide. Several factors contributed to this trend, but perhaps the most influential was the lessening or wholesale removal of the pressure that the United States and the Soviet Union exerted on their allies and client states for decades to keep regional conflicts from escalating into broader wars with nuclear consequences.<sup>62</sup>

The Army made great progress in rebuilding itself in the years between Vietnam and the end of the Cold War. "By 1990 the claim could be made reasonably that the service had arrived at a sound doctrine, the proper weapons, an appropriate organization, and a satisfactorily trained, high-quality force to fight the intense war for which Generals DePuy and Starry [Army strategic planners at the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command] and their successors had planned."<sup>63</sup> The Army was at the peak of its capabilities when the Warsaw Pact began to crumble. Government officials began making calls almost immediately for reductions in defense spending. In order to glean a peace dividend, the government decreased "the total size of the active service from approximately 780,000 in 1989 to approximately 535,000 soldiers in 1995,"<sup>64</sup> a 32% reduction. The Army's gains in terms of preparedness were therefore mitigated, just as its operational tempo for overseas deployments began to increase with the rise of regional conflicts.<sup>65</sup>

## FORT McPHERSON AFTER THE COLD WAR

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
As the Cold War ended, Fort McPherson was in the unenviable position of supporting its tenant organizations preparing to fight new and varied adversaries around the world while simultaneously facing substantial reductions in its funding and personnel.



- 1. Multi-Crafts Shop, Building 135
- 2. Learning Resource Center, Building 243
- 3. PX "Mini-Mall", Building 238
- 4. FORSCOM Command and Control, Building 200, Marshall Hall

- 5. Library, Building 250
- 6. Auto Crafts Shop, Building 370
- 7. Class VI [package] Store, Building 380
- 8. Fitness Club, Buildings 415, 416, 421

## Post-Cold War Conflicts

The U.S. Army's involvement in the Persian Gulf, Somalia, Haiti, Yugoslavia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq demonstrated that "contingencies such as peacemaking, peacekeeping, counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, humanitarian relief, and drug interdiction would characterize its post-Cold War operating environment." As an administrative post, Fort McPherson's direct involvement in these conflicts was limited, although it did occasionally offer the services of its health professionals and facilities. Its main contribution to the Army's efforts in these conflicts was the support it provided for Forces Command and Headquarters, Third U.S. Army as these organizations marshaled resources to address these challenges.<sup>66</sup>

## A New Tenant at Fort McPherson

On October 18, 1991, the United States Army Reserve Command (USARC) was established as a Major Subordinate Command under U.S. Army Forces Command. It had been operating as a provisional command since October 1, 1990, during which time it was tasked with the development of staff organizations for Reserve Commands. After it became fully operational, the Reserve Command's mission was expanded to include "training, support, logistics, operations, and facility management within the Continental United States (CONUS) for Army Reserve" units except for Special Operations Forces.<sup>67</sup>

## Budget Concerns After the Cold War

After the Cold War, Americans sought to collect a "peace dividend" by cutting funding for the armed forces. In the early 1990s, these efforts manifested themselves as cuts in Fort McPherson's budget that resulted in reorganizations and a loss of garrison staff.<sup>68</sup>

Despite these constraints, Fort McPherson sought to maintain high standards of service for its residents and tenant organizations. In 1998, the Post Commander introduced a three-year continuous improvement plan that "called for identification of objectives and goals to accomplish the mission, to become customer oriented, and to ensure quality products and services."<sup>69</sup>

As part of the continuous improvement plan, Fort McPherson developed a mission statement to guide its operations, which was "...providing a quality home and environment for active and reserve forces, retired military, and families; and to provide customers with world-class installation service and support."<sup>70</sup>



The Olympic Torch is Passed on Hedekin Field, 1996.

The post also developed a vision statement to define the future role for Fort McPherson and its subordinate installations, which was "for the installations to provide total force-sustainment that was business based and customer focused, always first in support and proudly serving tomorrow's Army today."<sup>71</sup>

## Fort McPherson and the Centennial Olympic Games

In 1996, the city of Atlanta hosted the Centennial Olympic Games. For the first time in history, the Department of Defense (DoD) provided support for the Games. The Secretary of the Army tasked the Commanding General of Forces Command to establish a task force, based out of Fort McPherson, that "provided support to more than 60 client organizations, processed over 770 support requests, and supported approximately 15,000 military personnel. There were over 11,000 National Guard troops utilized during the Games. The DoD provided over 300,000 items of equipment and supplies to requiring agencies."<sup>72</sup>

Fort McPherson's Directorate of Public Works provided maintenance assistance to many facilities in North Georgia that supported the Olympics. Fort McPherson's Health Clinic and the Veterans Administration also provided support for the Games. "At the end, the Fort McPherson Health Clinic had handled 184 Olympic related patient encounters from 20 May until 29 August 1996. The Veterans Administration treated 85 Olympic patients, and a total of 981 clinical visits were counted onsite at the U.S. Army Health Clinic."<sup>73</sup>

To acknowledge the importance of Fort McPherson to the city of Atlanta, the Coca-Cola Company sponsored the running of the Olympic flame through the post on July 19, 1996, culminating with a ceremony on the steps of Marshall Hall, the headquarters of Forces Command.<sup>74</sup>

## ATLANTA FORT QUIETLY HUMS WITH POWER



by Celestine Sibley

*The Atlanta Journal, August 30, 1990*

*"There lies a giant sleeping," he said.*

*And, following his gaze, I almost agreed. The post, baking under the noonday sun that glittered on the vast, stadium-size expanses of parked automobiles, gave the impression that nothing was stirring there except the flags at the post gate.*

*But I had to tell the gentleman he was wrong. I had just paid my first trip to Fort Mac in years and had come away a bit shaken at the absence of marching men, the sight of great khaki vehicles rolling by (the few I saw weren't khaki but sand-colored - to blend in on a desert) and even tents. It certainly wasn't the Fort Mac I remembered from the World War II years, when it seemed to us in Atlanta the urgent heartbeat of the biggest war we'd ever know.*

*In the 1940s, Fort Mac vibrated with activity. Recruits and volunteers poured in from all parts of the country to be put through physical exams, the first visit to a doctor for some of the country boys. They formed long lines outside wooden barracks, shivering in the chill winter weather waiting for khaki uniforms that would replace their civilian clothes. The stuff they were getting was labeled "General Issue" - and it wasn't long until the appellation became "GI" and applied, as it does today, to the wearers of that khaki. They bade goodbye to covets of relatives who hovered around the edges of the post. Then they entered the long wooden buildings, which, looking back, resembled chicken houses, for a three-day stay before they were shipped off for basic training.*

*A big hospital, long caretaker of military personnel, was preparing doctors to go overseas.*

*And a handful of strange and wonderful figures appeared on Fort Mac's historic parade ground - women soldiers, in uniform yet! We reporters and photographers were goggle-eyed and gleeful, a brand-new touch to the old business of fighting! We interviewed and photographed WACs endlessly. And I even inquired if I could join up. Not with little children, they said then - an edict no longer in effect.*

*It certainly isn't the Fort Mac of that long-ago war, nor even those others it saw, even if I didn't - Civil, Spanish-American, World War I. But it is neither a giant nor asleep. Physically, Fort Mac is a midget compared with Fort Benning and Fort Stewart. And if anybody thinks it's asleep they should talk to some of the wives who live in that pretty lineup of beautiful historic mansions facing the parade ground.*

*"Lights burn over there all night," one wife told me, nodding toward a vast monolith of a building which, if a building has guts, is Fort Mac's. "They work around the clock."*

*And a good thing, I found out, because that building houses the headquarters of Forces Command (called FORSCOM), from which our participation in the unpleasantness in the Middle East is planned, prepared for and executed.*

*Fort Mac, named for Gen. James Birdseye McPherson, a handsome, 34-year-old Yankee who was killed near Moreland Avenue during the Battle of Atlanta, is no stranger to change. It was first a wooden building housing Union soldiers in a cow pasture. In World War I it was chiefly a city of tents, where soldiers fought mud and the foibles of little heaters called Sibley stoves. (No kin of mine.)*

*The Spanish-American War sent its wounded and fever-ridden men to the big Army hospital which operated at Fort Mac until recent years. (It now has only a clinic.)*

*McPherson - pronounced "McFurson" by locals and "McFearson" by newcomers - trained Civilian Conservation Corps officers during the Depression. It played host to President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1935, firing off its first presidential salute of 21 guns. It kept - loosely, they say, because the subjects had no desire to escape - German prisoners from a cargo ship in the Atlantic during World War I, assigning them to build a boiler house that stands today as the post Officers Club.*

*The cosmopolitan social whirl of the military generously embraced Atlantans, many of whom learned about polo from their cavalry-trained hosts.*

*There was no way the man on the MARTA train could know. But beyond the vast parking areas and the quiet, seemingly leisurely comings and goings of a few hundred men and women, who swapped their regular uniforms for giddily patterned fatigues three weeks ago, there is a giant of a kind.*

*It is authority, authority unlimited over land forces throughout the country. And it doesn't sleep.*

## POST-COLD WAR CHANGE IN FORT McPHERSON'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT



The United States' involvement in the first Gulf War prompted the Army to improve security measures at Fort McPherson. A new entry complex that included a vehicle registration and welcome center as well as a sentry house (Building 313) was constructed at the Hardee Avenue entrance to the post. Fort McPherson permanently closed the Walker Street gate and provided only limited access to the post through the Lee Street Gate. In order to secure the perimeter of the post, the Army replaced the chain link fencing with wrought iron fencing and placed pre-cast concrete (jersey) barriers at vehicle access points. Headquarters, Third U.S. Army upgraded the security of its headquarters (Building 363) with the addition of a hardened façade in 1990.<sup>75</sup>

The Army undertook several new construction projects to improve the quality of life at the post. In 1996, it constructed a new gas station/convenience store (Building 366)

off Walker Drive near the post motor pool. In 1995, a driving range was added to Fort McPherson's golf complex, and the course was upgraded to meet U.S. Golf Association standards. To replace the NCO Club demolished in 1997 and the Officers' Club slated for demolition in 2000, the Army constructed a combined golf and community clubhouse called "The Commons" between 1997 and 1999. In addition to its clubhouse facilities, The Commons featured a restaurant, a banquet area, a snack bar, a pro shop, locker rooms, and a golf cart storage area.<sup>76</sup>

After becoming a fully operational command on October 18, 1991, the United States Army Reserve Command spent several years divided among temporary offices before the Army built its permanent headquarters at Fort McPherson. The Army hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Command and Control Facility (Building 315) on April 3, 1995. The Atlanta architecture firm Reynolds, Stewart & Associates, Inc. designed the building, which was completed and occupied in late 1997.<sup>77</sup>



The Commons, 2000.



The Army broke ground on the Lawrence Joel Medical/ Dental Clinic (Building 125) on April 3, 1995, the same day that ground was broken for the USARC Command and Control Building. Thirteen buildings once part of the World War II-era G.U. Clinic were demolished to make way for the new facility. The 74,451 square foot complex was completed in 1998.<sup>78</sup>

The Audie Murphy Barracks and Headquarters Complex at Fort McPherson opened in October 1997. A departure from traditional barracks in which large groups of soldiers bunked together in a common area, the modern Audie Murphy Barracks (Buildings 475-477) provided single and double occupancy rooms for soldiers, each of which featured a dedicated bathroom and closet. The Audie Murphy Company Operations area (Buildings 480-483) northeast of the barracks was eventually occupied by three headquarters command companies. Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC) for Third U.S. Army occupied a dedicated Audie Murphy Battalion Headquarters (Building 478) southeast of the barracks.<sup>79</sup>



The U.S. Army Reserve Command's Command and Control Facility (Building 315), 2000.



Forces Command Helicopter Flies Over Atlanta, c. 1979.



The Lawrence Joel Medical/Dental Clinic (Building 125), 2000.



Audie Murphy Barracks Complex, 2000.



Aerial View of Fort McPherson's Historic District, 1986.

## ADVANTAGES AND CONSTRAINTS



Fort McPherson's location in the city of Atlanta provided advantages such as proximity to a major international airport, but it also meant that the post was significantly constrained in terms of its size. Most of its personnel were required to live off-post for lack of sufficient housing facilities. Aside from a small target range on the southwest side of the post, training opportunities outside of those provided in a classroom had always been limited. Despite the post's steadfast commitment to serving its tenant organizations, Fort McPherson's ability to meet the long-term needs of the modern Army began to be called into question in the mid-2000s.<sup>80</sup>



Staff Row Looking Eastward, 1984.



1. Lawrence Joel Medical/ Dental Clinic, Building 125
2. Gas Station/ Convenience Store, Building 366
3. U.S. Army Reserve Command Headquarters/Command and Control Facility, Building 315

4. Audie Murphy Barracks and Headquarters Complex, Barracks: Buildings 475-477, Company Operations: Buildings 480-483, Battalion Headquarters: Building 478
5. The Commons



Fort McPherson's Color Guard Overlook the Atlanta Skyline.



**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FORT MCPHERSON FROM THE  
2005 DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE AND REALIGNMENT COMMISSION REPORT**

**FORT MCPHERSON, GEORGIA**

RECOMMENDATION # 3 (ARMY 8)

ONE-TIME COST: \$214.5M

ANNUAL RECURRING COSTS/(SAVINGS): (\$82.1M)

20-YEAR NET PRESENT VALUE: (\$878.6M)

PAYBACK PERIOD: 2 YEARS

**SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION**

Close Fort McPherson, GA. Relocate the Headquarters US Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), and the Headquarters US Army Reserve Command (USARC) to Pope Air Force Base, NC [collocated with Fort Bragg]. Relocate the Headquarters 3<sup>rd</sup> US Army to Shaw Air Force Base, SC. Relocate the Installation Management Agency Southeastern Region Headquarters and the US Army Network Enterprise Technology Command (NETCOM) Southeastern Region Headquarters to Fort Eustis, VA. Relocate the Army Contracting Agency Southern Region Headquarters to Fort Sam Houston, TX.

**SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JUSTIFICATION**

This recommendation closes Fort McPherson, an administrative installation, and moves the tenant headquarters organizations to Fort Sam Houston, Fort Eustis, Pope AFB and Shaw AFB. It enhances the Army's military value, is consistent with the Army's Force Structure Plan, and maintains adequate surge capabilities to address unforeseen future requirements. This closure allows the Army to employ excess capacities at installations that can accomplish more than administrative missions. The organization relocations in this recommendation also create multifunctional, multicomponent and multi-Service installations that provide a better level of service at a reduced cost.

The recommended relocations also retain or enhance vital linkages between the relocating organizations and other headquarters activities. FORSCOM HQs is relocated to Pope AFB where it will be co-located [sic] with a large concentration of operational forces. The USARC HQs has a mission relationship with FORSCOM that is enhanced by leaving the two collocated. 3<sup>rd</sup> Army is relocated to Shaw AFB where it will be collocated with the Air Force component command of CENTCOM. The IMA and NETCOM HQs are moved to Fort Eustis because of recommendations to consolidate the Northeastern and Southeastern regions of these two commands into one Eastern Region at Fort Eustis. The ACA Southern Region HQs is moved to Fort Sam Houston where it is recommended to consolidate with the ACA Southern Hemisphere Region HQs, and where it will collocate with other Army service providing organizations.

**COMMUNITY CONCERNS**

The community argued that cost was the overriding factor in DoD's decision to close this historic installation, and significant relocation costs were understated. The community maintained that the current co-location of three major Army headquarters (Forces Command, Reserve Command and Third Army) next to an international airport with unparallel [sic] access and point-to-point travel is an important synergy for training readiness

and operational planning. Loss of a major military presence in the Atlanta metropolitan area would adversely affect the City of Atlanta, a terrorist target; hinder military recruitment of African Americans; reduce military support to the Department of homeland security [sic]; disadvantage a significant number of handicapped employees at Fort McPherson; and adversely affect surrounding communities already suffering high unemployment rates and low per-capita income. It was the community's judgment that Fort McPherson, Atlanta's seventh largest employer, is ideally located to take advantage of Atlanta's major transportation and information technology hubs which they believed will be necessary to meet future military and homeland security command and control challenges. The community maintained DoD substantially deviated from criteria 3 and 4 by dispersal of headquarters which limits command and control at additional cost; criterion 1 by dispersing critical synergy; and criterion 5 by understating costs.

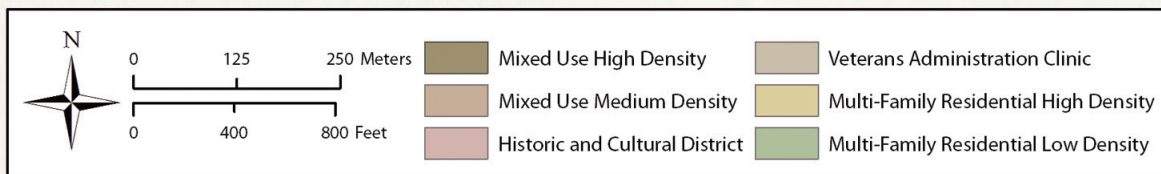
**COMMISSION FINDINGS**

The Commission found that the cost to relocate the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) regional communications hub at Fort McPherson was not accounted for in DoD's analysis. Subsequent DoD certified data revealed relocation of the hub would cost \$17.09M. Moreover, relocating Third Army Headquarters to Shaw Air Force Base could require more construction funding than anticipated. The Commission confirmed that Fort McPherson has a large number of historic facilities requiring maintenance and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office. Fort McPherson Garrison supports an 85-acre recreational area at Lake Allatoona, GA, consisting of cabins, boating and outdoor activities, and the Commission found no plan for the disposition of this Morale, Welfare and Recreational Area. The Commission notes that Fort McPherson borders East Point, GA, a Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Zone. The closure of Fort McPherson will have a negative economic impact on this already economically depressed, predominantly minority community, and because the Garrison provides employment opportunities to a large number of individuals with severe disabilities, the Commission strongly urges the Department to proactively work with the community to minimize these impacts. However, the Commission did not find these issues individually or collectively rose to the level of a substantial deviation.

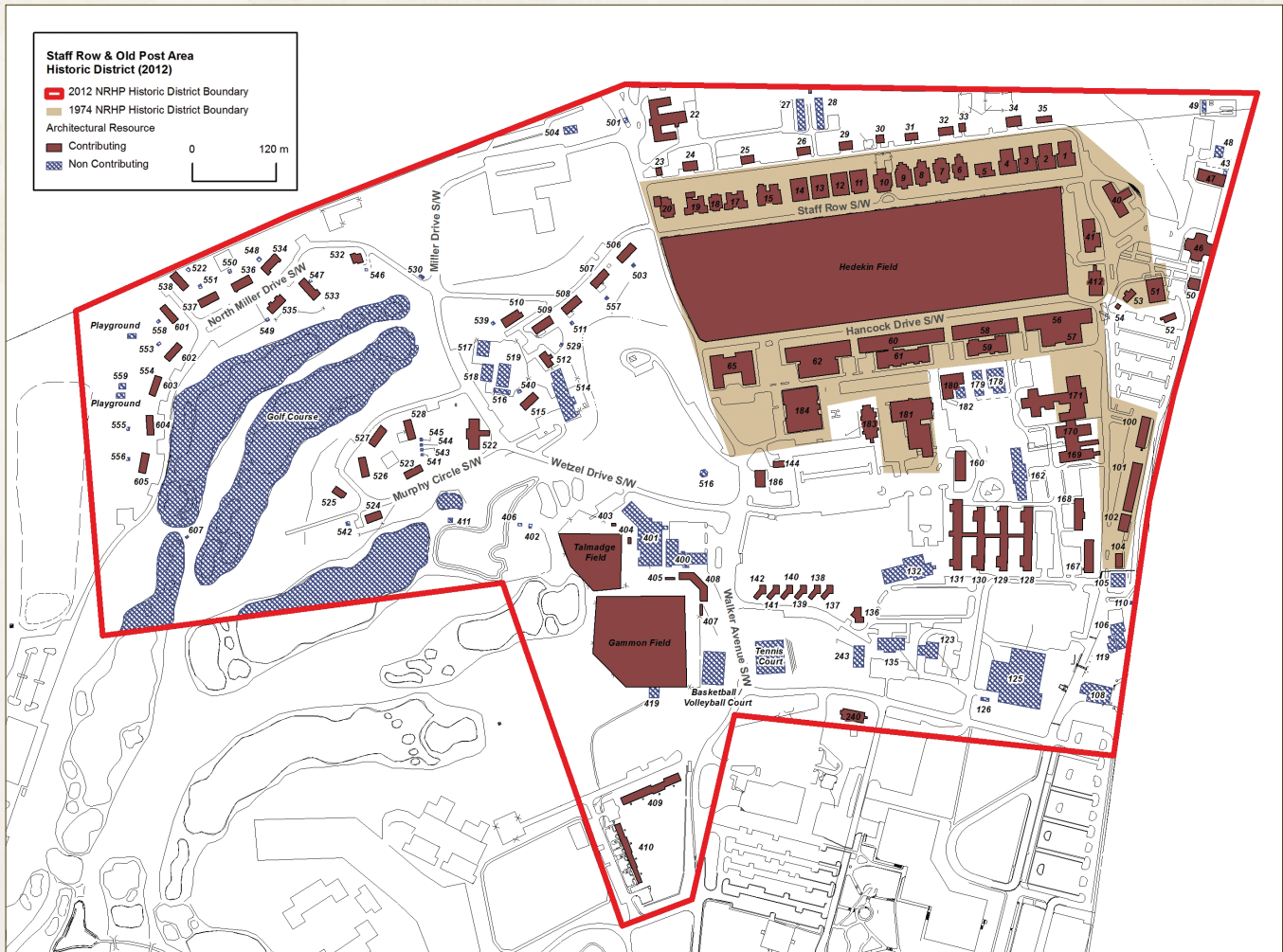
**COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Commission found the Secretary's recommendation consistent with the final selection criteria and force structure plan. Therefore, the Commission approved the recommendation of the Secretary.<sup>4</sup>

# Proposed Redevelopment Plan for Fort McPherson



Map Based on the 2007 Proposed Land Use Plan from the McPherson Implementing Local Redevelopment Authority.



Map of Fort McPherson's Staff Row and Old Post Historic District.

The McPherson Planning Local Redevelopment Authority worked with myriad stakeholders to develop a plan for the future of Fort McPherson. Their vision was for the post to become a work-live-play-learn community and an economic engine for the State of Georgia. In September 2009, the State of Georgia created the McPherson Implementing Local Redevelopment Authority to execute the redevelopment plan that was approved in 2007.<sup>6</sup>

**Highlights of the redevelopment plan include:**

- Renovation of the U.S. Forces Command Headquarters Building to house the Georgia Institute for Global Health, a public-private health research organization dedicated to research efforts in areas such as vaccines, neurosciences, and infectious diseases<sup>7</sup>
- Creation of a 10-acre Veterans Administration Medical Campus to provide an outpatient clinic for veterans, a residential rehabilitation center for veterans struggling with substance abuse, and a temporary housing center for homeless veterans<sup>8</sup>
- Renovation of the U.S. Army Reserve Command Headquarters Building to house various Georgia state agencies<sup>9</sup>
- Preservation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings within an established historic district<sup>10</sup>
- Creation of new housing and office space at varying levels of density<sup>11</sup>
- Retention, improvement, and expansion of existing green space<sup>12</sup>





The Centerpiece of Fort McPherson's Historic District, Staff Row Quarters 10, 2000.

## PRESERVATION OF FORT McPHERSON

In 1974, the Army took its first steps toward preserving the historic buildings at Fort McPherson with the listing of the Staff Row and Old Post Area Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places. The 42 contributing resources of the district were constructed between 1889 and 1910 and considered eligible for listing on the National Register for their architectural merit.

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on resources that are listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Commencement of the BRAC process at Fort McPherson required the Army to consider the effects of closing the post on the historic properties. In May 2010, the Army and the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office signed a Memorandum of Agreement under which the Army agreed to take steps to document and preserve Fort McPherson's historic resources. Several tasks were completed as part of this documentation process:

- Creation of a public history documenting the history and architectural development of Fort McPherson
- Large-format photographic documentation of Fort McPherson's landscape
- Digital photographic documentation of Fort McPherson's historic resources

- Completion of a conditions assessment of Fort McPherson's historic resources and the development of design standards that will ensure the retention of their National Register eligibility in perpetuity
- Revision of the 1974 National Register nomination

The revision of the 1974 National Register nomination resulted in the expansion of the historic district to include 73 contributing resources constructed between 1887 and 1959 and considered eligible for listing on the National Register for their historical associations and architectural merit.

## THE LEGACY OF FORT McPHERSON

Fort McPherson served the Army for 126 years. The buildings of the worthy post that was begun by Captain Jacobs in 1885 provided the Army a place for welcoming men and women as they came into the service, housing soldiers and their families, healing the sick and wounded, transitioning soldiers back to civilian life after they had completed their service, restoring and repairing equipment, and making plans for the defense of liberty. The value of these buildings has been recognized, and many will continue their legacy of service into the future.

### MESSAGE LEFT FOR FUTURE RESIDENTS OF STAFF ROW QUARTERS 11E

Farewell

Watch This Old Building With Anxious Care, Guard It As Best You May  
 And At Any Cost, From Any Influence Of Dilapidation,  
 Count Its Stones As You Would Jewels Of A Crown;  
 Set Watches About It As If At The Gates Of A Besieged City;  
 Bind It Together With Iron When It Loosens;  
 Stay It With Timbers When It Declines;  
 Do This Tenderly And Reverently And Continually,  
 And Many A Generation Will Still Be Born And Pass Away  
 Beneath Its Shadow!

Sadly We Have To Leave Our Beloved Staff Row Home But  
 Our Hearts Will Remain In These Old Walls Forever!

May Whoever Occupies This Beautiful Home In The Future  
 Be As Happy And Blessed As We Have Been During Our  
 Brief Stay Here!

The Reddish Family  
 July 2004 – July 2011



# END NOTES

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## CHAPTER ONE

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 233-236.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 233, 235.

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

<sup>20</sup> Deborah K. Cannan, Leo Hirrel, Katherine E. Grandine, Kathryn M. Kuranda, Bethany M. Usher, Hugh B. McAloon, and Martha R. Williams, *National Historic Context for Department of Defense Installations, 1790-1940, Volumes I-V* (Frederick, Maryland, R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Inc., 1995), 175.

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 176.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Martinez and Dale, *Fort McPherson/Fort Gillem: The First Hundred and Sixteen Years, 1885-2001*, 193.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 193-194.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.

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- <sup>48</sup> Martinez and Dale, *Fort McPherson/Fort Gillem: The First Hundred and Sixteen Years, 1885-2001*, 138.
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- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 126, 156.
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- <sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 122-123.
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- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>61</sup> Leo A. Daly Architects, *Fort McPherson Staff Row Survey: Quarters 1E Thru [sic] 20 and 532*, Quarters 5; Martinez and Dale, *Fort McPherson/Fort Gillem: The First Hundred and Sixteen Years, 1885-2001*, 123.
- <sup>62</sup> Martinez and Dale, *Fort McPherson/Fort Gillem: The First Hundred and Sixteen Years, 1885-2001*, 123-124.
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*
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- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.
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<sup>16</sup> "Intense Feeling in Atlanta: Troops at Fort McPherson Expect Orders to Move," *Omaha World Herald*, February 25, 1898, 2, <http://genealogybank.com/>. \*Note that Genealogy Bank incorrectly dates the article to January 25, 1898.

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### CHAPTER THREE

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- <sup>33</sup> Richard W. Stewart, ed., *American Military History Volume II: The United States Army in a Global Era, 1917-2003*, 375; Jean R. Moenk, *Operation STEADFAST Historical Summary: A History of the Reorganization of the U.S. Continental Army Command (1972-1973)*, (Fort McPherson, Georgia: Headquarters, U.S. Army Forces Command, 1974), i-ii, 31.
- <sup>34</sup> Jean R. Moenk, *Operation STEADFAST Historical Summary: A History of the Reorganization of the U.S. Continental Army Command (1972-1973)*, 31-35.
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 33-35.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 66-67, 89, 142.
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.
- <sup>38</sup> Martinez and Dale, *Fort McPherson/Fort Gillem: The First Hundred and Sixteen Years, 1885-2001*, 80.
- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 80-81.
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 81.
- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>43</sup> Martinez and Dale, *Fort McPherson/Fort Gillem: The First Hundred and Sixteen Years, 1885-2001*, 69-70; US Army Central, "United States Third Army: Continental Army," <http://www.arcent.army.mil/hidden/usarcent-history/third-army-end-of-wwii---911/continental-army.aspx>.
- <sup>44</sup> United States Central Command, "About U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM)," United States Central Command, <http://www.centcom.mil/about-u-s-central-command-centcom>.
- <sup>45</sup> Louis M. Martinez, *Fort McPherson: The First Hundred Years, 1885-1985* (Atlanta: US Army Garrison Public Affairs Office, 1986), 95.
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

- <sup>47</sup> Ibid., 70-92.
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid., 70-79.
- <sup>49</sup> Ibid., 89.
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid., 70-71, 76.
- <sup>51</sup> Ibid., 73.
- <sup>52</sup> Ibid., 79.
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- <sup>54</sup> Ibid., 73-92.
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid., 73.
- <sup>56</sup> Ibid., 81.
- <sup>57</sup> Ibid., 72, 76, 91-92.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid., 72-73.
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid., 79.
- <sup>60</sup> Richard W. Stewart, ed., *American Military History Volume II: The United States Army in a Global Era, 1917-2003*, 409.
- <sup>61</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>62</sup> Ibid., 403, 409-412.
- <sup>63</sup> Ibid., 403.
- <sup>64</sup> Ibid.
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- <sup>67</sup> Martinez and Dale, *Fort McPherson/Fort Gillem: The First Hundred and Sixteen Years, 1885-2001*, 112-113.
- <sup>68</sup> Richard W. Stewart, ed., *American Military History Volume II: The United States Army in a Global Era, 1917-2003*, 411; Martinez and Dale, *Fort McPherson/Fort Gillem: The First Hundred and Sixteen Years, 1885-2001*, 106.
- <sup>69</sup> Martinez and Dale, *Fort McPherson/Fort Gillem: The First Hundred and Sixteen Years, 1885-2001*, 106.
- <sup>70</sup> Ibid.
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- <sup>72</sup> Ibid., 111.
- <sup>73</sup> Ibid., 112.
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid., 100.
- <sup>76</sup> Ibid., 108-109, 162.
- <sup>77</sup> Ibid., 113-114.
- <sup>78</sup> Ibid., 109.
- <sup>79</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>80</sup> Ibid., 9, 73, 87.

## AFTERWORD

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<sup>3</sup> Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, *2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission Report*, 8-9, <http://www.brac.gov/docs/final/BRACReportcomplete.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-9.

<sup>5</sup> McPherson Implementing Local Redevelopment Authority, "About Us", McPherson Implementing Local Redevelopment Authority, <http://www.mcphersonredevelopment.com/content.aspx?ID=AU>.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Laura Diamond, "State Aims to Invest in Fort McPherson's Future," *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, February 9, 2012, <http://www.ajc.com/news/georgia-government/state-aims-to-invest-1339780.html>.

<sup>8</sup> Jeremy Redmon, "VA to Build New Medical Campus at Fort McPherson," *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, August 23, 2011, <http://www.ajc.com/news/va-to-build-new-1131136.html>.

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<sup>10</sup> McPherson Planning Local Redevelopment Authority, *Fort McPherson Outreach and Landuse Plan (McPherson Planning Local Redevelopment Authority, September 2007)*, <http://www.mcphersonredevelopment.com/content.aspx?ID=RP>.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*





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