

The Flying Marines



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
AIR STATION



Cherry Point
North Carolina

James Carson Breckinridge



MARINE CORPS SCHOOLS
QUANTICO, VIRGINIA

THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
AIR STATION
CUNNINGHAM FIELD
CHERRY POINT, NORTH CAROLINA



*LARGEST MARINE CORPS AIR STATION
IN THE WORLD*

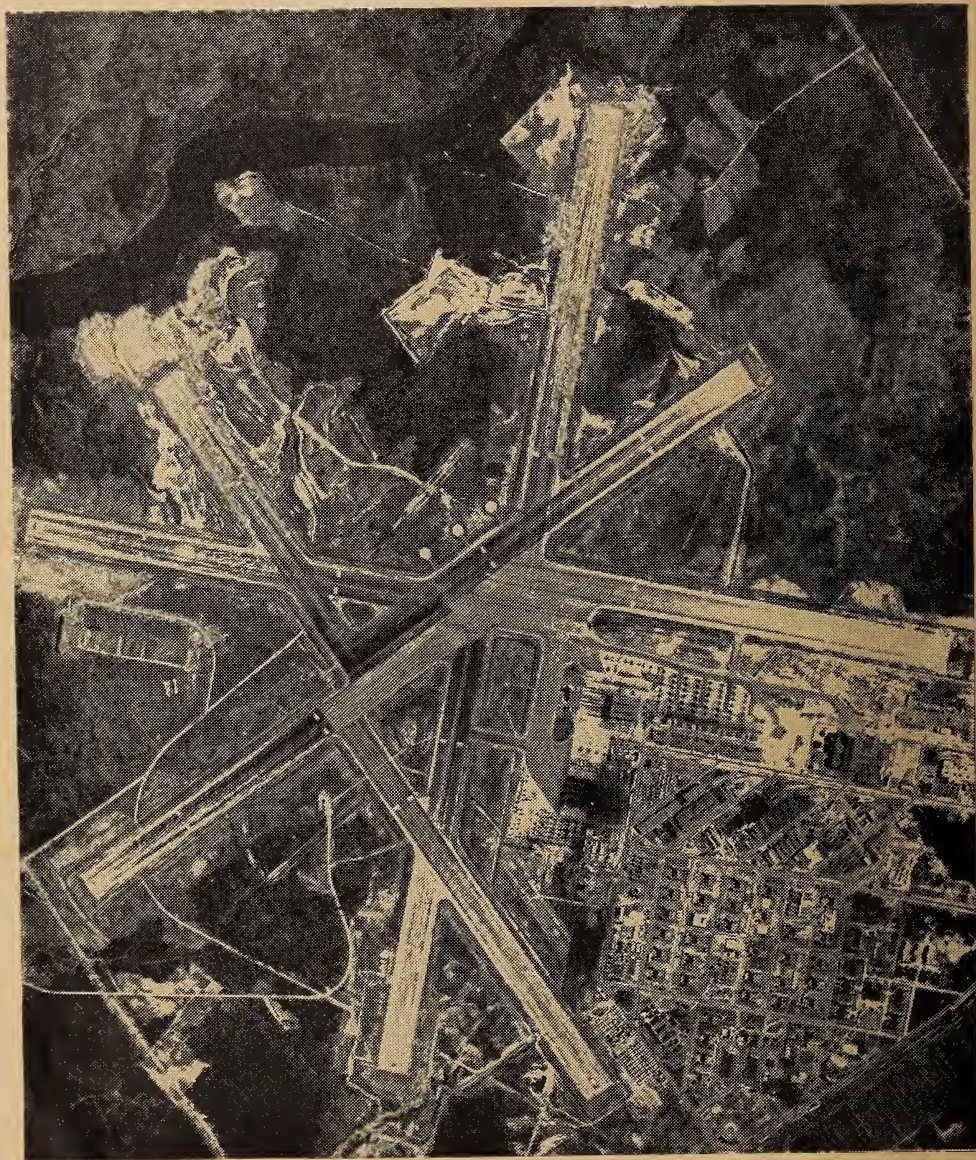
By
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With the Cooperation of the Public Information Division of
Marine Corps Headquarters and the Marine Corps
Air Station at Cherry Point

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AIR VIEW OF THE MARINE AIR STATION AT CHERRY POINT

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION AT CHERRY POINT

The Marine Corps Air Station at Cherry Point, started Aug. 6, 1941, and commissioned May 20, 1942, on Neuse River between Hancock and Slocumb Creeks in Craven County, North Carolina, ranks as the largest air station of the United States Marine Corps. In February, 1946, it was officially reported to be the biggest airport in runway area in the United States.

Approximately \$85,000,000 has been spent or authorized for construction at Cherry Point and its auxiliary facilities and outlying fields since the original site on the south side of the Neuse River about halfway between New Bern and Morehead City was officially designated for the purpose July 9, 1941.

In addition to the main station of 11,155 acres at Cherry Point, there are auxiliary air stations at Atlantic, Bogue, Pollocksville and Kinston in North Carolina; Congaree in South Carolina; Newport, Arkansas; and Eagle Mountain Lake, Texas. Outlying fields were established at Beaufort, Greenville, New Bern, Camp Lejeune, Washington and Wilson.

Of these, Kinston and Oak Grove air field at Pollocksville have been announced as permanent installations. Atlantic and Bogue fields are owned outright by the government and a small group of service personnel will likely be retained there. Kinston was slated to go May 1 on caretaker status.

About \$65,000,000 has been expended or authorized for the main station at Cherry Point, which includes perhaps the largest airport in the world. About \$7,000,000 of the total appropriations for the station and its air facilities and outlying fields was not handled through Cherry Point but was provided through other Federal agencies, chiefly for the auxiliary or outlying fields.

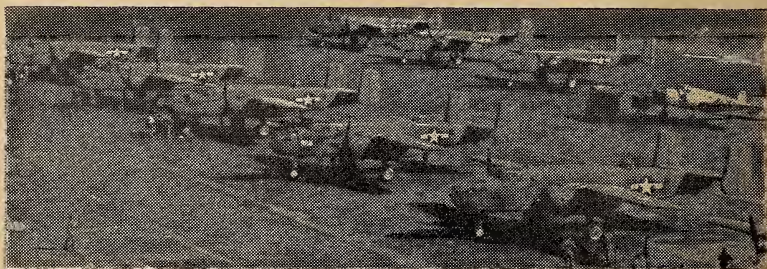
On the other hand, the Naval engineers at Cherry Point supervised the construction of the Navy Section Base at Morehead City, the building of the Navy Amphibious Training Command at Ocracoke, and the \$1,000,000 rehabilitation of the State-controlled Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad.

During the summer of 1941 the site now occupied by the mammoth Marine Air Station at Cherry Point proper was just a vast stretch of swamplands. Under the magic of expert craftsmanship, it was rapidly developed into a modern air base which served its nation well in time of war and will continue to serve its country in time of peace.

The main airfield was originally named Cunningham Field, for the late Lt. Col. Alfred A. Cunningham, the first Marine officer

to become a naval aviator. This name, however, was not officially used during the war period, under naval rules which gave only general names for all air stations.

More paving was perhaps done on this project than at any other place at one time in the history of mankind. There were mixed and placed 500,000 cubic yards of concrete. The 600,000 square yards of concrete areas for airplane parking would be equivalent to 27 miles of 20-foot highways. The 5,431,500 square yards of asphalt paving, for roads, streets, runways and vehicle parking, would be equivalent to 242 miles of 20-foot road, farther than the distance from Beaufort to Greensboro.



MITCHELL BOMBERS ON PARKING APRON

About 5,000 acres of land were cleared and grubbed at Cherry Point and other sites under its jurisdiction. Approximately 10,000,000 cubic yards of earth had to be excavated. Trees in the way of construction were cut down and converted into lumber, about 5,000,000 feet of timber being thus cut at a sawmill erected on the base. In the first three years of construction 50,000,000 board feet of lumber were used, as well as 20,000,000 bricks.

There are 23 miles of drainage pipes on the main station, 20 miles of sewers, 26 miles of water mains, seven miles of steam distribution, 20 miles of electric wires underground and eight miles overhead, and 18 miles of telephone wires underground and four miles overhead. If outlying fields were included, these totals would be 50 per cent higher.

Cherry Point is a self-contained city, with a modern water plant, an incinerator, a sewage disposal system, automatic dial telephone system with a Carolina Telephone and Telegraph Company exchange building for long-distance calls, a branch of the First-Citizens Bank and Trust Company, two postoffices, libraries, and a heating plant capable of serving a town larger than New Bern.

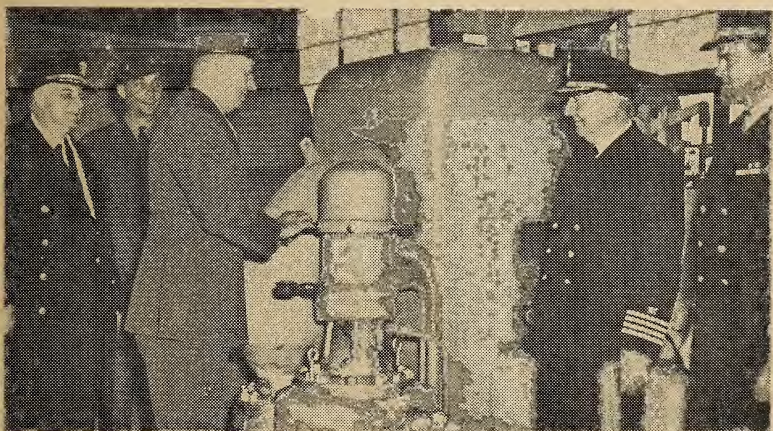


NEW FIRE STATION

At the \$1,800,000 power generating system, for which initial designs were made by Gibbs and Hill, Inc., of New York, consulting engineers, and the plant constructed under the authority of the Rural Electrification Administration, a second steam turbo-alternator was installed early in 1946 to double the output capacity of the huge system, which has been termed "probably the most modern and efficient plant of its type in the United States." An addition to the electric plant was built by Fischbach and Moore, Inc., of New York City.

This base-load plant is operated in conjunction with a 6,000 horsepower diesel peaking plant at Camp Lejeune, the two being inter-connected by a 110,000 volt transmission line. Through this link-up system distribution of excess power and rerouting of electricity can be assured for all emergency needs.

A third boiler is being installed as a reserve at the steam power plant on Slocumb Creek as a significant phase of Cherry Point's designated position as the major East Coast Marine Air Station, marking a step in the conversion of the air base to a permanent station.

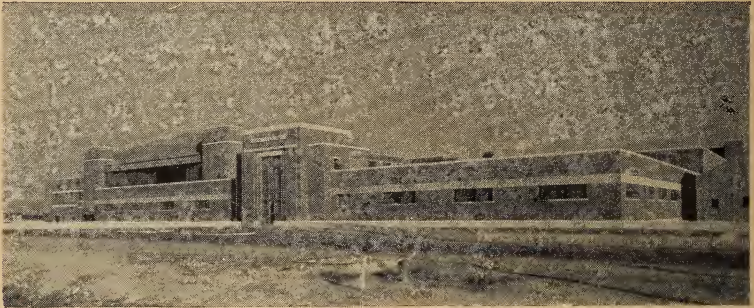


Brig. Gen. Thomas J. Cushman, USMC, station commander, starts new turbine Feb. 18, 1946, while four Naval officers witness the ceremony. (Left to right) Capt. George R. Brooks, USN, officer in charge of construction; Comdr. J. A. Dominy, USN, assistant officer in charge of construction; General Cushman; Capt. R. H. Sullivan, Navy Supply officer, and Lt. Comdr. F. M. Mueller, USNR, power superintendent for Cherry Point and Camp Lejeune.

A twelve-mile railroad runs to the major storage and industrial centers on the base, connecting with the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad, which is leased and operated by the Atlantic and East Carolina Railway Company. A Marine railway repairs crash boats and other craft used on the waterways.

Approximately 1,800 buildings have been erected, not counting the 2,500 temporary structures. This means that during the three years of chief construction about four temporary or permanent buildings were finished daily. In the extensive housing projects outside the main station are a public school, community center, chapel, postoffice, theatre and stores.

Largest of all structures on the base is the huge Assembly and Repair building. Costing \$5,500,000, this department for aircraft and engine overhauling is considered the largest and most up-to-date assembly and repair shops at any naval establishment either within or outside the United States.

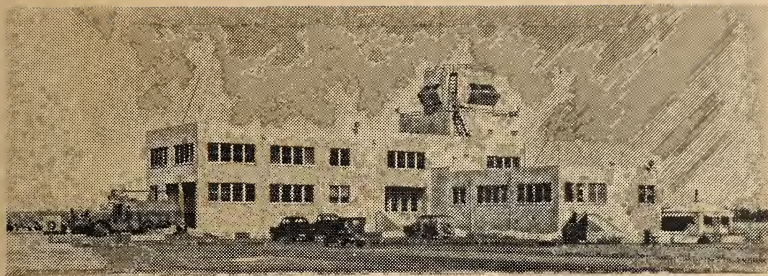


ASSEMBLY AND REPAIR BUILDING AT CHERRY POINT

The aircraft overhaul building, including administrative offices, covers about 340,000 square feet and comprises a large hangar, adjacent shops and an extension. It is of brick construction with structural steel columns and roof trusses. The hangar doors, 45 feet high, were the largest mechanically-operated doors of the type ever fabricated.

Covering an area of 150,000 square feet, the engine overhaul building is of similar construction. It has a unique heating and ventilating system, consisting of individual, self-controlled units located in pent houses over the roof area, whereby each shop or department is heated and ventilated with filtered air from its own plant.

This aircraft assembly and repair division is highly departmentalized in such manner that any plane requiring overhaul may be disassembled to the desired point, the parts sent to various

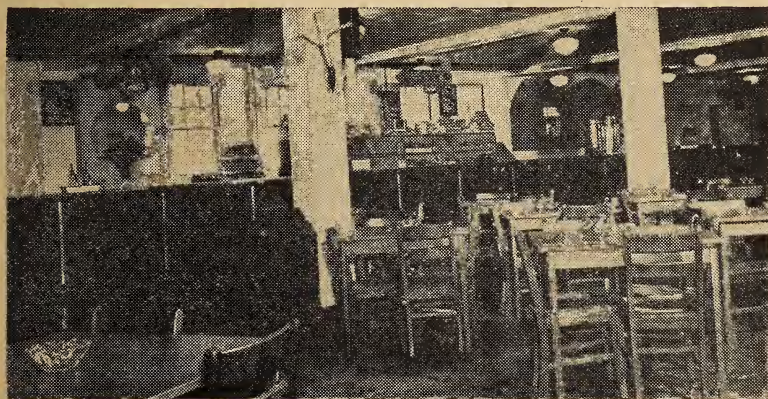


CONTROL TOWER AND OPERATIONS BUILDING

shops for repair on a set schedule and then returned for re-assembly on a production line basis. In addition to overhaul work, new planes are assembled after shipment from the manufacturers. Connected with the shops are modern drafting rooms, a well-equipped chemical department to make all kinds of chemical analyses and metal tests, and an extensive technical library.

The first detachment of Marines landed at Cherry Point for guard duty on Dec. 10, 1941. Since then thousands of Leather-necks have been stationed and trained there. The first women Marines arrived in May, 1943, and their number grew to more than 2,300 at one time.

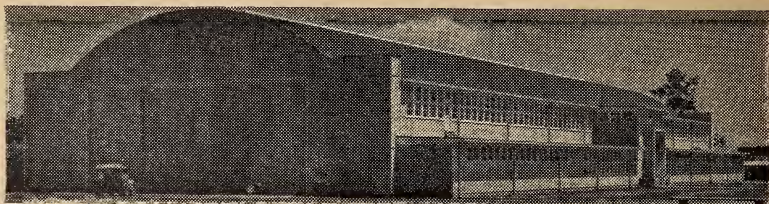
At the end of the war there were more than 20,000 military personnel at the air station, but under the accelerated discharge program at the large separation center there about 1,200 men and women left each week for a number of weeks, to bring the total down to around 12,000 by February, 1946.



NEW SODA FOUNTAIN IN POST EXCHANGE
Largest Soda Fountain at any Marine Corps Base

Tentative plans call for a minimum of 8,800 Marines during peacetime. In addition, a large number of civilian employes will be retained on a permanent basis to maintain the post and assist with its operation and continuing construction.

Before coming to Cherry Point, Marine pilots already have undergone their basic flight training and have received their wings as aviators. This station serves as an advanced school.



MAMMOTH DRILL HALL

Those who are just out of flight school or who have been serving in the States as instructors are assigned to groups in which they learn to fly and fight as combat units. Pilots reporting back from overseas duty are also assigned to these groups, but because of their experience they act as instructors.



INTERIOR OF NEW POST EXCHANGE WING

An interesting feature of the course is the Ground Offense Training Unit, where the "junior birdmen" receive combat conditioning before starting on their advanced aviation instruction. The purpose of this program is to lay the groundwork for close coordination of Marine air and land offensives.

The pilots are taught the use of small arms and hand grenades, how to dig foxholes and to fight with knives, bayonets and bare hands. Their physical training is rigorous. They undergo regular infantry drill. This training, indeed, is a short course in the methods of Marine land fighting, giving the fliers a better understanding of the problems of the land troops with which their aerial activity in combat is coordinated and making them better prepared to take care of themselves in case of emergency.



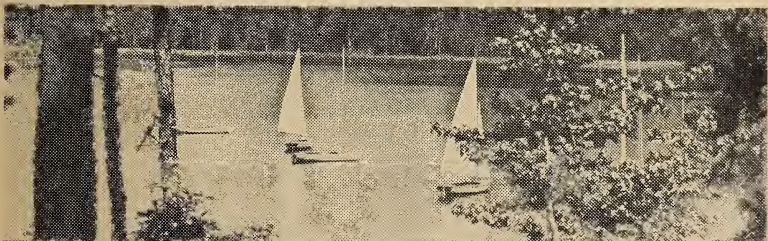
ONE OF TWO LARGE COMBAT TRAINING POOLS

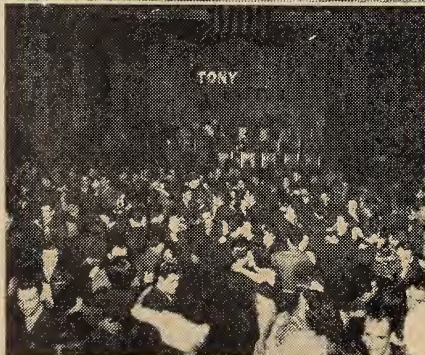
Enlisted men reporting to the station are classified for special training and duty according to their potential skills and their previous civilian experience. Many of them are assigned to basic instruction followed by practical experience with aircraft units in such duties as radar and radio operators, gunners, aerial photographers, navigators and aircraft mechanics. Much of this training is provided at schools on the base, while in other instances the instruction is offered at various naval schools elsewhere as well as in manufacturing plants.

For the thousands of Marines who will be stationed at Cherry Point during peacetime recreational activities are being greatly expanded. Keen athletic competition with other service organizations provides first-rate sports events for spectators, while a continuous schedule of intrastation sports events among the various squadrons gives every man an opportunity to participate in athletics.

USO camp shows and frequent all-star Broadway variety shows supplement first-run movies for theatrical entertainment. Dance music is furnished by enlisted men's bands and orchestras and visiting big-name bands. The station band and the wing band have attained excellent reputations throughout the region.

In addition to nearby beaches, Cherry Point has its own water sports area, where swimming and boating may be enjoyed. The yachting facilities are among the best provided by military establishments anywhere. There is a competent staff of sailing instructors. In 28 months between the last part of 1943 and 1945 more than 2,000 Marines qualified for sailing licenses. There are weekly sailboat races, and huge water regattas at varying intervals. Two large swimming pools for recreational and combat swimming are popular meccas.





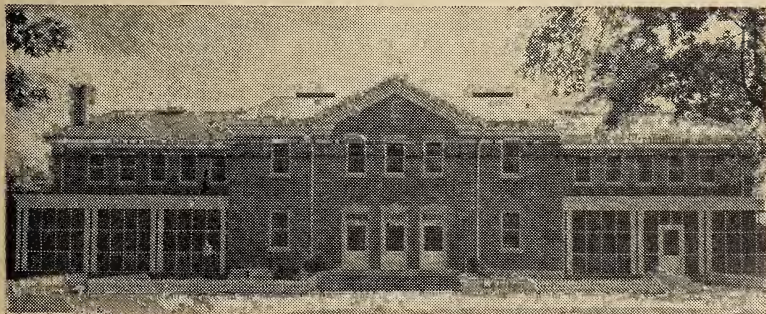
The Flying Leathernecks have attained preeminence in several sports. Their boxing team in 1945, rated by Associated Press sports writers as the finest amateur group in the country, included three national Golden Gloves champions. The 1946 boxing team was invited to represent the Marine Corps at the Boston Amateur Athletic Union Boxing Tournament. Their 1945 baseball club ranked as one of the best service nines in the South. Their football teams have played successfully against some of the nation's outstanding gridiron elevens. Basketball, softball and tennis are also featured with other games and sports.

Some of the recreations for the station personnel are pictured on the opposite page. At the upper left is a scene from the stage play, "All Fouled Up," a musical comedy, which was produced successfully during the last part of 1944 under the direction of Lt. Ray Heatherton, Broadway star; Lt. Tyrone Power, movie star; and Lt. Carl Dozer. One of the participants was Capt. Julius Heuen, Metropolitan opera singer.

At the upper right is a scene from the "Broadway Varieties Show," presented Sept. 24, 1945, by Broadway visitors. In the center is a sailing view near the boat area at Mitchell Park. The island shown is the famed "Money Island," where Blackbeard the pirate is said to have buried treasures.

Tony Pastor's orchestra (lower left) played for a dance Jan. 17, 1946, as one of the big-name bands which provide entertainment frequently at Cherry Point. The Brooklyn Dodger baseball game on July 2, 1945, (lower right) was one of the spectacular attractions which draw huge crowds to Campbell and Cushman Fields.

An officers' club, bachelor officer quarters, junior bachelor officer quarters and women's officer quarters have special programs for their respective personnel, and there are numerous recreational facilities and events for the enlisted men and women. The food at all the messes is considered exceptionally palatable and well-balanced. A naval dispensary looks after the health of the Marines. Liberty privileges are enjoyed at nearby towns.



OFFICERS' CLUBHOUSE ON SCENIC WATERFRONT



NAVAL DISPENSARY AT CHERRY POINT

Indicative of Cherry Point's permanency as the principal training center for Marine aviation on the East Coast is the character of its physical facilities. Most of the barracks, administrative, operational and recreational buildings and mess halls are of durable construction, the prevailing scheme being red brick with white woodwork trim.

Projects recently finished or under way are later phases of a long-range building program which includes a new drill hall accommodating 4,000 persons; a post theatre seating 2,400; ten additional barracks; a chapel costing \$70,000; a new officers' club; and enlargement of the station dispensary, administration building, post exchange and commissary.



VIEW OF MARRIED OFFICERS' QUARTERS ON RIVERFRONT

HISTORY OF AIR STATION

Designed as "the most modern and important Marine air station in the world," the mammoth training center for Marine aviators at Cherry Point was authorized July 9, 1941, with allocation of \$14,990,000 for construction purposes.

The project was started July 28 upon the arrival in New Bern of Lt. Comdr. E. W. C. Nice, USNR, now deceased, as the first resident naval officer in charge of construction. Actual work of clearing the ground on the 8,000-acre reservation was begun August 6. Additional land was incorporated later.

Many months previously the establishment of a Marine ground base and a nearby Marine air base along the vulnerable coast of North Carolina was contemplated by Marine Corps authorities. At first it was proposed to locate the air station on the north side of Neuse River in Pamlico County to work in conjunction with the ground base 30 miles to the southwest on New River in Onslow County.

Following extensive surveys of both sites on Neuse River, it was decided to have the air station on the south side of the river because of its closer proximity to the ground base and to the deep sea port at Morehead City. Railroad and highway connections were also regarded as much more favorable. On the selections committee were Maj. Gen. Ralph J. Mitchell, Brig. Gen. T. J. Cushman and Rear Admiral C. H. Cotter, USN.

A committee of Marine Corps officials earlier had carefully inspected many available sites along the entire South Atlantic and gulf coasts and had chosen Eastern North Carolina as the most suitable place for the center of Marine activities. A major factor in their decision was the long stretch of ocean beach in Onslow County which could be utilized for practice landings of amphibious Leathernecks. On the committee selecting the two sites in general were Maj. Gen. Julian C. Smith, Maj. Gen. Pedro del Valle, and General Cushman.

A temporary office was opened by Lieutenant-Commander Nice in the Queen Anne Hotel at New Bern. Assisting him at the outset were three other Naval Reserve officers: Lt. William F. Merritt, of New York City, who became the first Navy construction officer for the project; Lt. J. K. Flynn, of New York, Navy plans officer; and Lt. William M. Gustafson, of South Dakota, Navy accounting officer.

Remaining on continuous duty at Cherry Point until January, 1946, when he received an honorable discharge from active service with the rank of full commander, Commander Gustafson

served longer with the construction forces there than any other naval officer, becoming chief assistant to the different resident officers in charge. He was succeeded January 15 by Comdr. J. A. Dominy, USN.

Contract for the construction work, valued at \$14,145,000, was awarded to the T. A. Loving Company and Associates: T. A. Loving and Company of Goldsboro, N. C.; Central Engineering and Construction Company, Mecklenburg Construction Company and Nello L. Teer, all of Durham, N. C.; A. H. Guion of Charlotte, N. C.; West Construction Company of Kinston, N. C.; Thompson Electrical Company of Raleigh, N. C.; and Albemarle Plumbing and Heating Company of Albemarle, N. C.

Various phases of their work were soon divided among themselves: Loving company, general building and supervision of the entire project; the three Durham companies, clearing, grading and drainage; Guion, sewerage and water systems; West, paving; Thompson, electrical work; and the Albemarle firm, plumbing and heating.



FIRST NAVAL ENGINEERS ON STATION

New Bern Photo

(Left to right) Lt. Comdr. E. W. C. Nice, Lt. William F. Merritt, Lt. William M. Gustafson and Lt. J. K. Flynn.

Charles Banks McNairy, who had charge of the \$40,000,000 construction program in 1940-41 at Fort Bragg, N. C., for the Loving company, was named project manager. Five assistant project managers were announced August 27, as follows: N. Teer, Jr., A. H. Guion, M. Herrin, M. R. Cowper and D. J. Thompson. The firm of Olsen, Deitrick, Carr and Greiner was named for architectural and engineering work. This firm was composed of William C. Olsen and William H. Deitrick, both of Raleigh; George Watts Carr of Durham; and the J. E. Greiner Company of Baltimore. Their work was started effectively, in record time.

Offices were moved from the Queen Anne Hotel to the Federal Building in New Bern, while work was begun on buildings at the temporary construction area at the base site. In efforts to rush completion of these structures, laborers began to work six days a week, with pay of time and a half for Saturday. On September 2 the offices were transferred there from New Bern, a frame administration building having been erected in record time of eight days.

Temporary electricity was obtained quickly by mobile units and by extension of REA lines from Carteret County. The task of building a Diesel power plant near Jacksonville and a \$1,800,000 steam power plant near Slocumb Creek was pushed as rapidly as possible. Telephone and telegraph lines were extended to the camp, and a new spur line of the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad operated by the Atlantic and East Carolina Railway Company was built there from Havelock, a mile and a half away. Limestone for roads, runways and concrete foundations was rushed from the first machine mine in Eastern North Carolina at Belgrade. A cafeteria was opened at the base by R. W. Smith and L. M. Bryan, of Raleigh, N. C., with capacity for 500 persons.

During the latter part of September the first declaration of the taking of the 82 tracts of land in the original reservation was filed in Federal Court at New Bern. Appraisers fixed a valuation of \$104,869 for the 7,582.2 acres. Other property there was already owned by the government as parts of the Croatan National Forest. An additional 3,000 acres on the west bank of Slocumb Creek was later added. The Farm Security Administration helped the two white families and 40 Negro families residing on the reservation to find homes elsewhere. Extensive drainage and malaria control work was inaugurated by health authorities.

"Don't keep 'em flying," was the seemingly paradoxical slogan then posted on the station. This referred to the millions of mosquitoes found when Navy health authorities began their difficult but successful task of eradicating the malaria mosquitoes.



PRESENT PUBLIC WORKS ADMINISTRATION BUILDING



—Blackstone Studio
REP. GRAHAM A. BARDEN

Representative Graham A. Barden of New Bern, Congressman from the Third District of North Carolina, was one of the most tireless civilian officials in helping plan for Cherry Point and its construction. He is given much credit for his personal advice and cooperation, as well as his legislative influence, in getting under way the mammoth building programs.

Commander Nice set an untiring example of hard work for his associates and assistants. He made a strict rule that any workman taking firearms, weapons, cameras or intoxicants to the base would be discharged immediately. To guard against sabotage, it was necessary for all prospective employes to be American citizens or to have taken out first papers for naturalization and to sign affidavits that they had read or had read to them two important sections of the Espionage Act. Every worker had to be fingerprinted, and his photograph was stamped on his official pass. It was practically impossible for outsiders, except those going on official business, to get into the grounds.

Because of incessant work, following a year of similar strain as resident officer in charge of the new naval air station at Miami, Fla., Commander Nice became ill during October. He received treatment in hospitals at New Bern and Norfolk, Va. While on a ten-day leave in New Bern in November he died of a heart attack.

During his illness, Lieutenant Merritt was placed in temporary charge of construction. Commander Carl H. Cotter, since then promoted to the rank of rear admiral, (CEC), USN, officer in charge of construction for the Public Works Department at the Naval Operating Base at Norfolk, came frequently to supervise.

The week before the death of Commander Nice, then on the Navy's inactive list, Lt. Comdr. Richard de Charms, Jr., CEC-V(S), USNR, afterwards promoted to captain, was appointed resident officer in charge. He reported there November 12.



ONE OF BACHELOR OFFICERS' QUARTERS BUILDINGS

Lt. Col. Thomas J. Cushman, USMC, now a brigadier-general, was the first Marine officer to be assigned to duty at Cherry Point. He arrived in the area in August to act as liaison officer and remained on duty as the first commanding officer of the air station.

Building of airplane runways was begun in November, only 17 days before Pearl Harbor. After this country entered the war, construction work was stepped up considerably by the inauguration of a ten-hour day and seven-day week work plan for several thousand laborers on day and night shifts. Extra precautions were taken against sabotage or possible attack. Construction plans were held in strictest secrecy.

In March Commander de Charms became Public Works officer for the project, and during May he became naval officer in charge, succeeding Captain Cotter, who assumed new duties as superintendent civil engineer for the Navy in the Middle Atlantic Area.



ROW OF BARRACKS FOR SERVICEMEN

The first airplane landing at the new installation was made March 18, 1942, by Lieutenant-Colonel Cushman; and the station was formally commissioned the following May 20, with Lieutenant-Colonel Cushman as the original commanding officer.

By the end of 1942 the essential facilities had been completed, including barracks, mess halls, ammunition magazines, runways, railroad branch and sidings, telephone system, sewage lines, water and fire protection systems, steam distribution, airplane hangars, electric power plant, various shops, garage, aviation operations building, radio transmission building, hospital and recreation building.

For progress made in competition with all other Naval stations in the same class under construction by the Public Works Department, the construction forces received two quarterly certificates of award for top place and one quarterly certificate for second place and also two monthly first-place and one monthly third-place certificates from the Bureau of Yards and Docks.

At the outset the building projects were on a cost-plus-fee basis for T. A. Loving Company and Associates as general contractors. About half of the construction work was accomplished in this manner. Since July 31, 1943, all work has been let on a lump-sum basis, and more than a score of contractors have received contracts awarded under competitive bidding.

Despite the fact that the permanent buildings had to be rushed quickly to completion, a remarkably low percentage of fatalities and accidents occurred. Insurance companies estimate that one man is killed on an average of every \$1,000,000 worth of construction, but at Cherry Point only five were fatally injured under the original contracts totalling \$38,000,000.

During August, 1942, the station was authorized to receive personnel direct from recruit training and to redistribute men for training at specialized schools and other aviation facilities.

The Third Marine Aircraft Wing was formed there in November, 1942, under the command of Lt. Col. Calvin R. Freeman. He was succeeded by Brig. Gen. Claude A. Larkin. Since then Third Wing units have distinguished themselves in aerial combat.



WOMEN MARINES DRILLING IN SUMMER UNIFORMS

So gigantic was the scope of the air station that numerous important projects were not finished until 1943, despite the rapid schedule carried out during the first year. Among these were barracks and a mess hall for members of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve, quartermaster building, postoffice, additional taxiways and warm-up platforms at the airfield, and the huge aircraft Assembly and Repair shop. The latter building was dedicated Dec. 4, 1943, by Ralph A. Bard, assistant Secretary of the Navy.

The first women Marines arrived at Cherry Point during May, 1943, and their number grew gradually to more than 2,300, with the air station the clearing center for all women reserves assigned to aviation. Maj. Katherine D. Lynch was commanding officer of the women Marines here for 22 months, being succeeded in June, 1945, by Maj. Julia Hamblet. Capt. Nancy M. Roberts became the WR Representative during February, 1946.

Capt. I. A. Bickelhaupt, USNR, succeeded Commander de Charms as naval officer in charge of construction and public works officer during the summer of 1943, and the station expand-



REDESIGNED ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

ed materially under his guidance. After a year he left to become district public works officer at Norfolk. He is now out of active service and engaged in professional engineering.

Since July, 1944, Capt. George R. Brooks, USN, has been naval officer in charge of construction and public works officer. The construction office was moved to a new frame building on the station. Special appropriations of about \$11,000,000 were available for new construction projects, under his direction, an air station rarely ever being "completed."

Under this vast expansion program the entire plan of Cherry Point was restudied and much new construction was authorized. The Public Works design section had charge of the overall planning. Olsen and Deitrick redesigned the steam generating and distribution plants and additions for the sewerage and water treatment plants.

The major portion of the new building design was done by the office of James C. MacKenzie, architects and engineers, of New York City. Mr. MacKenzie redesigned the Administration building, to make it more attractive as well as conspicuous. A new colonnaded portico was put on the southeast side, a wing was added to the southern end to balance the existing northerly wing, and another entrance driveway was arranged, with its sweeping front area beautified as a park. A new Barracks building, conforming in general character to the previous ones, contained porches on both floors, which proved to be a great asset.

Other buildings designed by the New York architect included the Family Guest House, bank, fire station, subsistence building, salvage building, bakery and laundry extensions, MCWR Headquarters additions, a new Post Exchange wing, and Bachelor Officers' Quarters No. 1 and 2.



NEW ADDITION TO POST EXCHANGE BUILDING

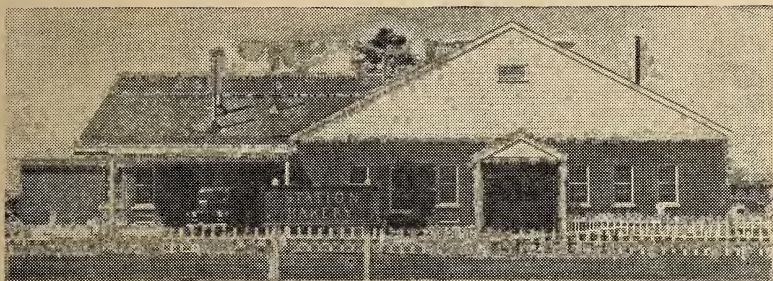


ARCHITECT'S DRAWINGS OF THREE NEW BUILDINGS

These three new buildings were among those designed by Architect James C. MacKenzie of New York City under a mammoth post expansion program. (Top) Family Guest House. (Lower Left) Barracks Building, with double porches. (Lower Right) Bank Building.

With the Third Wing largely in the Pacific, the Ninth Marine Aircraft Wing was organized at Cherry Point in April, 1944, under the command of Col. C. F. Schilt, now a brigadier-general, who had served as commanding officer of the station after the departure of Colonel Cushman during September, 1943.

Brig. Gen. Lewie G. Merritt took command of the Ninth Wing on June 17, with Colonel Schilt becoming its chief of staff. General Merritt assumed additional duties the following September in taking command of the air station and all its auxiliary facilities and outlying fields. Col. P. E. Conratt, who had succeeded Colonel Schilt as station commander during April of 1944, continued to act in this capacity until his transfer overseas in June, 1945.



STATION BAKERY AT CHERRY POINT

General Merritt was followed in January, 1945, by General Schilt as commanding general of the wing, and during March General Schilt was succeeded temporarily by Col. Lawrence T. Burke. In April Brig. Gen. Harold D. Campbell arrived at the base and became commanding officer of the wing, with Colonel Burke as chief of staff. The next month General Campbell relieved General Merritt as commander of the Marine Corps Air Bases Command, and the latter was returned to overseas duty.

During August Maj. Gen. Ralph J. Mitchell, former director of Marine aviation, became the commanding general of the air bases. General Campbell retained command of the wing, and General Cushman of the station, the latter having returned as station commander in June to relieve Colonel Conratt.

Planned decommissioning of the Ninth Wing was announced in March, 1946, after it had made a distinguished record. During the latter half of 1944 an average of 21,000 officers and men were on its roster. Towards the end of its career there were less than 5,000. Its place is being taken by the Second Wing, returning from overseas, with General Campbell assuming command of this outstanding organization he had commanded in the Pacific.

These three generals, strangely enough, were the first Marine officers to serve actively in the area. General Mitchell was on

the committee which selected the site of the air station. General Campbell was commanding officer of the Marine aviation camp opened at the Simmons-Nott airport near New Bern in late July, 1941, for training and maneuvers before construction at Cherry Point had been started. This advance camp was named "Camp Mitchell," in honor of General Mitchell, then director of Marine aviation. General Cushman was the first Marine officer to serve as liaison officer for the Marines and the Navy engineers in charge of construction at Cherry Point and also was the first commanding officer of the station.

During the war attention was necessarily centered on essential construction at Cherry Point. With the end of the conflict, authorities planned improvement of the station's appearance. A nursery was started. Arrangements were made to let seeding and erosion control contracts. These and other projects will help beautify the base.

The Cherry Point Garden Club was organized in October, 1945, with Mrs. R. J. Mitchell as President. Accepted among its primary objectives was a memorial park. The Tar Heel Camp and Hospital Council of the American Red Cross, which met at Cherry Point March 29, 1946, for a second time, donated \$1,500 for the landscaping and planting of the naval dispensary grounds.

Under the supervision of the Eastern Carolina Housing Authority, as agent for the Federal Public Housing Authority, the first Federal Housing Project of 267 units was started near the base in May, 1942, under \$964,000 contracts awarded to H. L. Coble, of Greensboro, N. C. Other housing units were later erected nearby, under supervision of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, to make quite a little city of 867 units for the postoffice, "Havelock."

Housing project residents have shown much civic spirit in undertaking community welfare and improvement. Like the military personnel, the civilian employes of the station and their families cooperated in the war and victory loan drives, the Red Cross, USO and other service campaigns of the war period.



VIEW OF LATEST CHERRY POINT HOUSING PROJECT

HISTORIC SITE

With East Carolina the birthplace of aviation on Dec. 17, 1903, when Orville and Wilbur Wright at Kitty Hawk flew for the first time in a machine heavier than air raised by its own power, it is appropriate that the coastal section of the Tar Heel State should be selected as the home of the Marine Corps' largest and most important air station.

Strangely enough, Cherry Point is indirectly associated with Kitty Hawk, through the late Lt. Col. Alfred A. Cunningham, the first Marine officer to become a naval aviator. The main airfield at Cherry Point was originally named for this pioneer, who first became obsessed with the desire to fly in 1903 when he went up in a balloon in Georgia. Later that year his interest was fired by news of the Wrights' successful flight at Kitty Hawk.

Marines, as it happened, were on duty in the coastal Carolina region as early as the Summer of 1777, within two years after the establishment of the Marine Corps on Nov. 10, 1775; this forming another reason why it is suitable for the Leathernecks to center their modern war training in the Old North State.

A news item published in the North Carolina Gazette Aug. 8, 1777, at New Bern, copied in the Colonial Records of North Carolina, follows:

"New Bern, August 4, 1777.

"Wanted immediately for the celebrated and well known Brig of War Sturdy Beggar, under command of James Campbell, Esq.; now fitting out at this place for a short Cruize against the Enemies of the Thirteen United States, a few good Seamen and Marines. The Sturdy Beggar is allowed to be the handsomest Vessel ever built in America, is completely furnished with all kinds of warlike Stores, Ammunition, etc., is remarkable for fast sailing, having never chased a Vessel but she soon came up with."

That this call for seamen and "Marines" brought results is evident from a letter written by Col. Joseph Leech of New Bern on Sept. 17, 1777, to Gov. Richard Caswell of North Carolina, as quoted in North Carolina State Records. Reporting on the need for more coastal defenses during the Revolutionary War, Colonel Leech wrote: "If the Sturdy Beggar can be got, she is well manned already."

The early Marines on the Sturdy Beggar were involved in various fights during the Revolution. The North Carolina Gazette reported at New Bern on Sept. 19, 1777, that two English brigs had arrived within the bar and had captured several vessels, apparently intent on taking the sheep from the Carolina banks. The story goes on to say:

"The Sturdy Beggar Privateer of 14 Carriage Guns and 100 Men, the State Brig Pennsylvania Farmer of 16 guns and 80 men, belonging to this Town, are preparing to sail with all Expedition in Quest of the English Pirates."

Honoring the name of the ancient privateer and the Marines who served on it, the 147th Liberty Ship launched by the North Carolina Shipbuilding Company at Wilmington on Feb. 21, 1944, was named "Sturdy Beggar." The New Bern Rotary Club sponsored the launching program and selected Miss Gertrude Carraway of New Bern to christen the vessel. Col. P. E. Conradt, then assistant commanding officer of the Marine Air Station at Cherry Point, was the official representative of the modern Marines at the launching ceremonies in Wilmington.

Marines also fought along the Carolina coast for both the North and the South during the War Between the States. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside and his Federal troops captured Roanoke Island and other parts of the northern Carolina seashore, then sailed to Neuse River with a fleet of 14 gunboats and landed on the south side of the Neuse at the mouth of Slocumb Creek, about 15 miles below New Bern, now a part of the Marine Air Station. New Bern fell to them March 14, 1862.

Amphibious tactics, now so well known as part of the famed Leatherneck technique, were also used by the Confederates during the War Between the States. On Feb. 2, 1864, Capt. John Taylor Wood of the Confederate Navy, with a crew in seven cutters, came down Neuse River from Kinston and boarded the powerful United States gunboat Underwriter, then in the New Bern harbor.

In terrific hand-to-hand fighting, the Southerners captured and burned the gunboat. The Confederates reported six men killed, 22 wounded and two taken prisoners; while the Unionists had nine killed, 18 wounded and 18 taken prisoners.



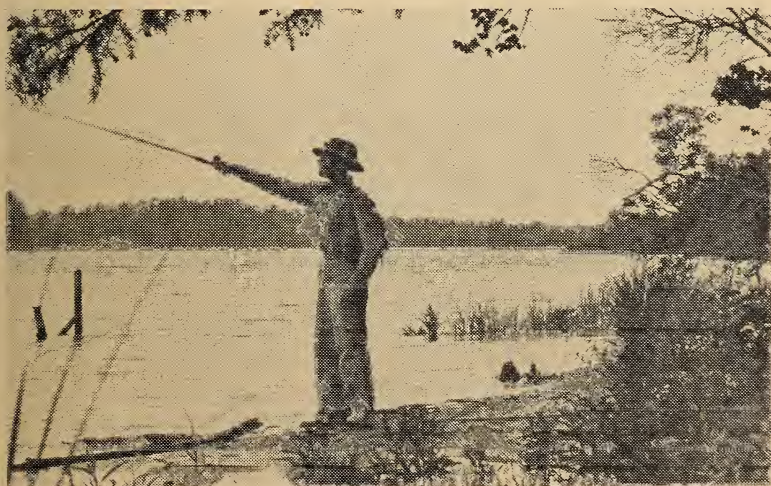
In their desire to obtain old weapons for a museum at Cherry Point, modern Marines dredged Neuse River to find the arms carried on the gunboat. Several old pistols and muskets were recovered from the river mud.

Breastworks of some of the six Confederate forts and ten Federal forts in the vicinity from Cherry Point to New Bern may still be seen, and may be studied by Marine officers and men for example lessons in planning defenses which might hold more successfully against any possible attack or invasion in that vulnerable area of the coast.

The name, "Cherry Point," given to the air station came from a postoffice established in the area for the Blades lumber interests some years ago. This postoffice was closed in 1935. The original "Point" was on the South side of Neuse River east of Hancock Creek, and the word, "Cherry," came from cherry trees which used to grow there. A number of newcomers have the erroneous idea that Cherry Point was named for Governor R. Gregg Cherry, who became chief executive of North Carolina in 1945.

Near Duck Creek is a tiny island called "Money Island," plainly visible from the site of the original Officers' Club at Cherry Point. Still owned by Hugh Dortch, Jr., of Goldsboro, N. C., this island has attained fame because of rumors that Edward Teach, the pirate "Blackbeard," buried treasure there. Many persons have dug in vain all over the small isle.

For years known to the outside world chiefly for the excellent fishing and crabbing which brought numerous vacationists, the site has now become nationally famous as the home of the Marine Corps' largest air station.



THE MARINES' HYMN

From the Halls of Montezuma
To the shores of Tripoli;
We fight our country's battles
In the air, on land, and sea;
First to fight for right and freedom,
And to keep our honor clean;
We are proud to claim the title
OF UNITED STATES MARINE.

Our flag's unfurl'd to every breeze
From dawn to setting sun;
We have fought in every clime and place
Where we could take a gun;
In the snow of far-off Northern lands
And in sunny tropic scenes;
You will find us always on the job—
THE UNITED STATES MARINES.

Here's health to you and to the Corps
Which we are proud to serve;
In many a strife we've fought for life
And never lost our nerve;
If the Army and the Navy
Ever gaze on Heaven's scenes;
They will find the streets are guarded
BY UNITED STATES MARINES.

CHERRY POINT IN WORLD WAR II

Although construction of the Marine Corps Air Station at Cherry Point was not started until four months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and its runways were not begun until 17 days before the sneak attack, the air base played an important role during World War II.

Geographically located in a strategic part of the vulnerable coast of North Carolina, Cherry Point quickly became a vital operations center for American airplanes fanning far and wide over coastal areas in search of enemy submarines, which for some months did considerable damage to Allied ships carrying oil and supplies along the Atlantic sealanes.

In record time, too, the Marine air station became a primary training center for Marine aviators. Fliers by the thousands trained there for the support of ground forces in landing operations and for the provision of aerial defense for advanced bases. Some of the most distinguished pioneers in Marine aviation were assigned there to impart their knowledge and give the benefit of their experience to younger Leathernecks eager to put into practice over Tokyo the lessons studied at Cherry Point, its auxiliary facilities and outlying fields.

Two Marine Aircraft Wings were activated there. The Third Wing was organized during November, 1942, under the command of Lt. Col. C. R. Freeman. With Brig. Gen. Claude A. Larkin as its subsequent commanding general, it left the air station, following diversified training, as a combat unit for overseas assignments. Its varied functions and achievements against the Japanese in the Pacific theatre will go down in history along with outstanding exploits of other great Marine aviation units.

After the Third Wing had been transferred for the most part to the Pacific, the Ninth Marine Aircraft Wing was formed during April, 1944, under the command of Col. C. F. Schilt. This was created as a training wing, in which individuals or groups of individuals were trained to go overseas at intervals as combat replacements instead of moving together as a wing. Brig. Gen. Lewie G. Merritt became its second commanding officer, and was succeeded in turn by Colonel Schilt, promoted to brigadier-general, Col. Lawrence T. Burke and Brig. Gen. Harold D. Campbell.

The first Marine squadron of Mitchell medium bombers to operate in the Pacific was trained at Cherry Point. So was the first Marine night rocket bombing squadron. The first fighter squadron flying the formidable new F7F Grumman twin-engine fighter plane was trained at Eagle Mountain Lake, Texas, one of the auxiliary air stations of Cherry Point.

More than 20,000 military personnel were attached to the main station at times during the war period, with another 15,000 at the auxiliary and outlying fields. About half of all the men in Marine aviation were stationed there in turn during the critical war year of 1943-44. Among these were many of the most decorated aces of World War II.

The construction of the air station and its chain of fields formed one of the most colossal building programs undertaken during the conflict. As many as 8,000 civilians were employed at the peak of construction to rush facilities for the "Flying Soldiers of the Sea."

Marine aviators personify the famed dexterity and versatility of Leathernecks. They must pilot both seaplanes and landplanes. Like Navy fliers, they operate with equal familiarity from the flight deck of carrier ships or in offshore landings, frequently periled by stormy winds.

Drilling repeatedly for the bombing and invading of Japan and Japanese islands, the aviators subjected Coastal Carolina to almost daily "bombing raids," without the inhabitants ever knowing anything about it. Sometimes squadrons from Cherry Point or Greenville would rendezvous above New Bern to "attack" Kinston, while the "defenders" at the latter point would be on the alert for these mock assaults in preparation for real battle in the Far East.

Marine pilots practiced teamwork at Cherry Point. They learned squadron and group tactics as combat teams. More than 50 courses were offered in such advanced subjects as navigation, radio, radar, aerology, parachutes, chemical warfare, celestial navigation, free and fixed gunnery.

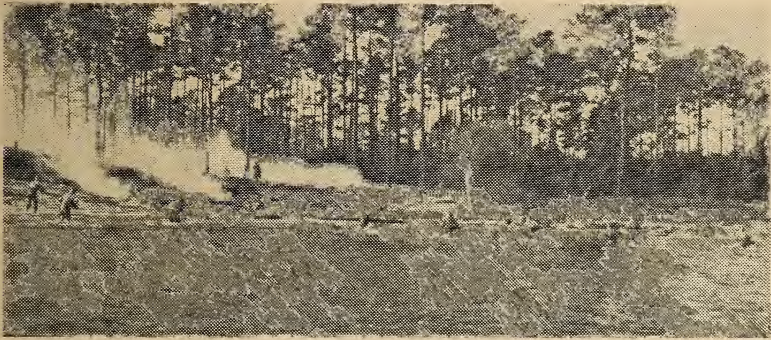
Rehearsed time and again were problems in dive bombing, strafing, fighter technique, carrier landings and anti-submarine patrols. Targets were bombed in many isolated parts of the region. Aerial gunnery ranges, for live ammunition, were established for widely-restricted distances all along the Carolina seashore from Bogue Banks to Hatteras.



"JUNIOR BIRDMAN" STUDYING GROUND DEFENSE

Besides having infantry drill four hours a week, the pilots were required to undergo combat conditioning at a unique camp in the "jungles" along Hancock Creek, where "junior birdmen" were instructed in using small arms, throwing hand grenades, digging foxholes and fighting with knives, bayonets and bare hands.

Officially listed as the Ground Offense Training Unit but familiarly called "Boys' Town," this camp had the primary objective of letting the aviators see the conditions met by ground fighters and thus be better qualified to appreciate the need of air support. A secondary aim was to teach the fliers how to take care of themselves on the ground in case their planes were shot down over enemy territory.



AIRMEN PRACTICE INVASIONS ALONG NEUSE RIVER

In order for the airmen to get a realistic idea of the job of establishing a beachhead on hostile soil, two practice invasions were made by them on Neuse River. Two-thirds of the class assembled in landing boats offshore, while the others dug in to defend the beach with rifles, machine guns and land mines.

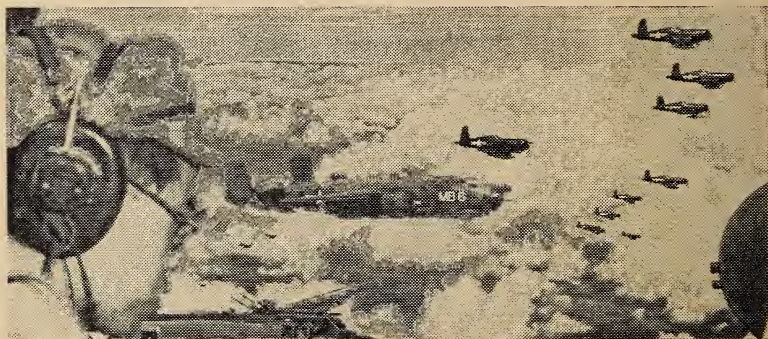
The assault opened with a smoke-screen laid by aircraft, followed by fighter and dive-bomber attacks. Then, as the boats neared the land, "enemy" planes rose for a counter-assault. "Bombs" were planted blocks of dynamite, exploded to shower the invaders with water, sand, dirt, leaves and branches.

That the skymen realized the value of such foot training was evidenced by the fact that, when requested to offer suggestions for improving the course, they called, without exception, for more of the same kind of training in characteristic Marine self-reliance.

Throughout this combat conditioning was stressed the principle that the pilots are Marines first and specialists second. Their dependence upon ground crews was also emphasized. No aviators could keep their planes aloft satisfactorily without the essential aid of mechanics.

Rescue facilities were kept in a constant state of readiness for possible plane accidents. One rare type of crash boat on hand for emergencies was known as a "swamp glider," a small, light craft adapted for the swampy tracts up the rivers and creeks.

Embodying the fundamentals of highly-trained specialization, Marine aviation depends for its striking power on the same compact concentration of mobile units for which the corps has been famed through its colorful history, the instructors taught. That their pupils learned well this lesson is proved by their outstanding accomplishments in Pacific war zones, in supporting the spear-head of invasion waves and in drawing the first bead on assailants in advance of the hard-hitting seaborne forces.



CHERRY POINT PLANES IN THE PACIFIC
Guided to Japanese Targets by a Japanese Lieutenant

Fighting squadrons, scout bombing squadrons (dive-bombers), observation squadrons, photographic squadrons and utility squadrons were maintained at Cherry Point and its auxiliary fields. There were also headquarters squadrons and service squadrons. Every type of plane used by the Marine Corps was flown and repaired there. The Assembly and Repair shops, the largest and most modern at any naval base in the world, worked diligently to "keep 'em flying."

Accordingly, from Cherry Point and its neighboring fields were sent out thousands of trained aviation Marines—pilots, air crewmen and ground crews—to wage in the air the same relentless warfare that Leathernecks have made famous for 170 years on land and sea. The Flying Leathernecks justified their training and work in the recently-revised words of the stirring Marine hymn:

"We fight our country's battles
In the air, on land and sea."

WOMEN MARINES AT CHERRY POINT

In the words of Gen. A. A. Vandegrift, commandant of the Marine Corps, women Marines have made "a most valuable contribution to the corps." Those at Cherry Point rendered especially outstanding service in many diversified fields.

Camp Lejeune gained national fame as the only final place for women reserves to receive boot training and officer training. Cherry Point attained distinction as the clearing center of all the women assigned to Marine aviation from July, 1943, to May, 1944.

Following organization of the women's reserve on Feb. 13, 1943, under the direction of Maj. Ruth Cheney Streeter, later promoted to colonel, the "Lady Leathernecks" made such phenomenal progress, relieving thousands of Devil Dogs for combat service overseas and taking their places ably at home in practically every capacity except flying and fighting, that the tough top-sergeants who at first shook their heads in disapproving skepticism finally nodded in marked approval.

The first contingent of 18 women arrived at Cherry Point during May, 1943. Immediately they set to work in earnest. As they were joined by their sister workers in rapid succession, their number rose to around 2,300.

After classification tests at Cherry Point, the girls assigned to aviation, forming about 40 per cent of the number in the reserve, were either sent to schools or other stations or retained on the base for varied roles ranging from cooks to bus drivers, teletypists to weather observers, aircraft mechanics to control tower assistants, parachute riggers to aerial gunnery instructors.

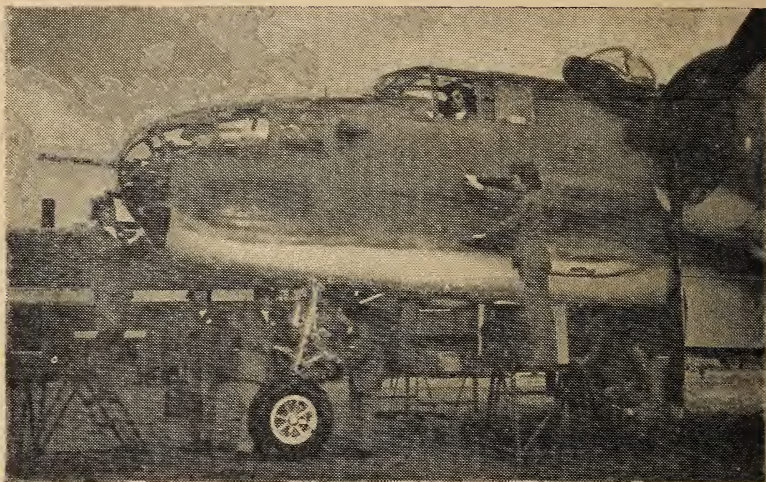
Most of the women preferred jobs which directly relieved men for combat. Work in the control towers was in greatest demand. So far as possible, they were assigned to posts for which they seemed best fitted, by natural aptitude, special training or past experience.

Former librarians, for instance, served at the Assembly and Repair division's technical library. A social worker had charge of a barracks. A lawyer promoted the sale of war bonds. Scores continued their vocations of stenographers, secretaries, messengers, storekeepers, supply clerks and telephone operators.

Others adopted new trades such as carpentry, painting, electricity, welding, motor transport, machine maintenance and ammunition packing. The mess halls of their area were manned almost entirely by women. They tested the quantity and quality of aviation gasoline, and learned to overhaul airplane engines. Thus, literally, as well as figuratively, they worked with everything "from soup to nuts."

Though they did not actually pilot planes themselves, they helped instruct men pilots with link trainers and other synthetic devices by which flying is taught on the ground. They were not permitted to fire guns at the enemy overseas, but they taught the fighting Leathernecks aerial gunnery, aircraft identification, target theory, and celestial navigation.

Ninety per cent of the wartime parachute inspecting, repairing and packing at Cherry Point was done by the fair sex, clad in men's dungarees. Eighty per cent of the work on the landing field control towers was performed by women. They operated blinker lights and radio log stenographic positions, and aided with the microphones.



WOMEN MARINE MECHANICS ON THE FLIGHT LINE

A 24-hour service was maintained by women aerologists, who entered and decoded weather maps, drafted upper air charts and made hourly weather observations. About 40 per cent of the station's aerology tasks was done by the women.

Approximately half of the motor transport work during the war was undertaken by the women reserves, and about half of the radio operators were women. They took over almost all of the photography on the station when men were needed for combat.

Numerous teachers in civilian life followed their profession in the Marine Corps, though in many cases their subjects were far different. One home economics teacher instructed Leathernecks in chemical warfare. Another trained men in free gunnery. "I wanted a change," she observed, with a smile, "and I got it."

Some of the women changed their previous pursuits even more drastically. A former sheep herder became a radio operator. An accountant made lifeboat containers. An art museum assistant



DIVERSIFIED ACTIVITIES OF WOMEN MARINES AT CHERRY POINT



WOMEN MARINE AIRCRAFT MECHANICS

was a synthetic training film librarian. A professional basketball player worked in a recreation office. A professional swimmer used her muscles in packing parachutes. A beauty operator became a specialist in aircraft instruments. A lion tamer was assigned as a barracks wing leader. A model from an exclusive dress shop cleaned spark plugs. A concert musician drove a bus. A champion ski jumper served as a chauffeur. A professional skater worked in a uniform supply house. An artist's model lectured on fixed gunnery.

"A pretty girl holds the men's attention far better than male educators can, especially on Monday mornings," one of the men instructors commented.

Capt. Katherine D. Lynch, promoted at Cherry Point to major, served as the commanding officer of the women at that air station for 22 months, until succeeded in June, 1945, by Maj. Julia Hamblet. When the latter returned to civilian life, Capt. Nancy M. Roberts, in February, 1946, became WR Representative.

Capt. E. Louise Stewart, from its beginning officer in charge of the Women's Reserve section of the Public Relations Division at Marine Corps Headquarters in Washington, served for more than three months in 1945 as station public relations officer.

Their World War II work was a far cry from that of Lucy Brewer, the first woman Marine, who served in masculine attire as a Devil Dog during the War of 1812. Indeed, it was vastly different from the service of the Marinettes who acted in limited capacities during World War I.

From all walks of life, from all parts of the country, the women came to Cherry Point and proved themselves worthy of the name, "Marine." That they succeeded admirably, through their ability, ambition and hard work, is now admitted proudly by the men.



RECREATION BUILDING FOR WOMEN MARINES

MARINE CORPS AVIATION

Marine Corps Aviation dates back to May 22, 1912, when First Lt. Alfred Austell Cunningham entered the Navy's aviation camp at Annapolis, Md., to become the first Marine aviator.

The Flying Leathernecks, however, follow in general with modern adaptations the historic traditions of the Marine Corps which have proved so successful in all the wars and campaigns in which this oldest branch of military service has been engaged since creation by Act of Continental Congress Nov. 10, 1775.

Even in the early days Marine fliers made history. In 1916 Cunningham piloted the first plane to be catapulted from a moving warship, the USS North Carolina. Early the next year Francis T. Evans looped a seaplane for the first time in history.

At the opening of World War I five officers and 30 enlisted men were in Marine Aviation. By the time the conflict ended there were 282 officers and 2,180 enlisted men. They flew British and French planes to make 57 raids and drop 52,000 pounds of bombs.

Between 1927 and 1932 Marine fliers in Nicaragua carried out extensive experiments in aerial warfare. For the first time they tried bombing and strafing targets designated by infantrymen. C. F. Schilt was first to evacuate wounded by air.

In later years Flying Leathernecks pioneered in other fields, transporting troops by air in Haiti, making reconnaissance flights in China, going on mercy missions with medical supplies in San Domingo and Nicaragua, and flying from aircraft carriers.

During World War II they have added notable chapters to their illustrious record. With only four patched Grumman Wildcats on Wake Island, they took on as many as 41 enemy planes at a time, shooting down six and sinking an enemy cruiser and submarine.

At Midway Marines spearheaded aerial defense. On Guadalcanal a Marine pilot was first to land his plane on captured territory. A Marine became the first pilot in the war to shoot down five planes. Another Leatherneck was the first American airman to tie the World War I record of 26 planes. For the first time in history Marine fighter planes sank a capital ship.

From Bougainville, the Marshalls, the Philippines, Iwo Jima and Okinawa to the heart of Japan the flying Marines carried out hazardous missions with the same fine marksmanship, versatility, courage and esprit de corps which have long made the corps famed as one of the finest military organizations in the world.

With a total of less than 15,000 at the time of the Guadalcanal invasion, Marine Aviation expanded to more than 118,000, with four separate Air Wings, at the time of the Japanese surrender. It has won an important place in the corps for the future.



INTERESTING PERSONAGES

Many distinguished and interesting personages have been stationed at Cherry Point or have visited there. Aces and heroes galore have been sent there for duty, and ribbons and decorations are numerous. During February, 1946, there were 14 Marine Aces assigned to the station, headed by Capt. W. J. Thomas, of Eldorado, Kan., who on 115 combat missions in his Corsair bagged 18 Jap planes in the air and destroyed 14 others on the ground.

One of the first winners of the Congressional Medal of Honor for World War II heroism "above and beyond the call of duty" to be ordered to Cherry Point was Lt.Col. John Lucian Smith, of Lexington, Okla., (pictured lower right on opposite page.) Commanding officer of a Marine fighting squadron in the Solomons, he shot down 19 enemy planes. During the Summer of 1941 he was at Camp Mitchell near New Bern with the first group of aviators trained in the area.

Col. Walter L. J. Bayler, of Lebanon, Pa., "The Last Man Off Wake Island," (upper right on opposite page), was stationed at Cherry Point for some time during 1943-1944. He was the only person in all three of the first engagements involving the Marines in the Pacific war zone—Wake, Midway and the Solomons.

Too numerous to mention are the scores of other heroes who have been on duty at Cherry Point.

Among the visitors have been not only the top-ranking Marine generals and Navy officials but also such Leatherneck leaders as Sgt. Albert A. Schmid, of Philadelphia, "The Pride of the Marines," who was blinded while manning a strategic machine gun at Tenaru River on Guadalcanal, killing or wounding 200 Japs; and Capt. Kenneth A. Walsh, of Brooklyn, N. Y., who won the Congressional medal for extraordinary heroism in shooting down 20 enemy planes. As a master technical sergeant, Walsh trained at Camp Mitchell in 1941.

So far as the civilian public was concerned, most interest in the Marine personnel at Cherry Point centered in First Lt. Tyrone Power, popular movie star, (upper left, opposite page) who served as a transport pilot there for the last six months of 1944.

Another movie favorite, Sonja Henie, (Hollywood photo in center of opposite page,) lived at the Married Enlisted Men's quarters at Cherry Point for more than two weeks during the early part of 1943, while First Lt. Dan Topping, millionaire sportsman, then her husband, was stationed there.

Many other persons prominent in various fields have come to Cherry Point, as Joe Louis, (lower left, opposite page) who starred there in boxing bouts during September, 1945.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

BRIG. GEN. THOMAS J. CUSHMAN



As a lieutenant-colonel, closely identified with Marine Aviation ever since 1918, Thomas Jackson Cushman was the first Marine officer to be stationed at Cherry Point.

In August, 1941, he arrived in the area to supervise construction of the Marine Air Station as liaison officer between the Marine Corps and the Navy Engineers. Previously he had served as a member of the two boards which selected the sites for establishment of Marine bases at Camp Lejeune and Cherry Point.

When the Marine Air Station was formally commissioned May 20, 1942, Colonel Cushman became its first commanding officer. He held this post until ordered overseas during August, 1943. Following distinguished service of 21 months in the Pacific, he returned to the same position May 30, 1945.

A native of Missouri, moving at an early age to the State of Washington, he attended the University of Washington until 1917 when in his senior year he entered the Marine Corps. His first assignment was at the Navy Yard, Mare Island, Cal.

Commissioned a second lieutenant Oct. 22, 1918, after finishing training at Naval Aviation Detachment, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass., he received his primary flight training at the Marine Flying Field at Miami and remained at that station until it was disbanded in 1919.

For two years, 1922-24, he was attached to Marine Scouting Squadron One at Guam, then assigned duty at Brown Field, Quantico, Va. Other assignments include duty as flight instructor at Naval air stations and tours of duty with Marine aviation units in Nicaragua and Haiti and two years' duty in the Bureau of Aeronautics.

A graduate of the Marine Corps School at Quantico, Army Air Corps Technical Schools and Army Air Corps Tactical School, he has commanded observation, scouting and fighting squadrons of the Marine Corps aeronautical organization. His rank as brigadier-general dates from Dec. 7, 1943.

His recent tour in the Pacific area included duty as Chief of Staff to the Commanding General, Marine Aircraft Wings, Pacific; command of the Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing; and Commanding General of the Air Defense Command, Marianas.

As the first commanding officer of the Marine Air Station, General Cushman supervised the main construction of the base and with his present service there has been on duty at Cherry Point longer than any other high-ranking Marine officer.

BRIG. GEN. C. F. SCHILT

Brig. Gen. Christian Frank Schilt, then a colonel, first came to duty at Cherry Point in September, 1943, as the air station's second commanding officer. He succeeded Col. T. J. Cushman, following a short interim during which Lt. Col. R. W. Conroy, executive officer, had been in temporary charge.

The following April Colonel Schilt became organizer and first commanding officer of the Ninth Marine Aircraft Wing at Cherry Point. In June, when Brig. Gen. Lewie G. Merritt assumed command of the wing, Colonel Schilt became the wing's chief of staff. The next January he was promoted to brigadier-general and named as commanding officer of the wing. During March General Schilt returned to overseas duties.

A native of Olney, Ill., General Schilt has a brilliant aerial record which dates back to the "crates" of World War I. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in June, 1917, and was a gunnery sergeant in Marine aviation before the end of that conflict. Since then he has seen foreign service in Santo Domingo, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, the Virgin Islands, London and the Pacific.

The Congressional Medal of Honor was awarded him for his skill and daring in Nicaragua during January, 1928. Then a first lieutenant, he accomplished the feat of rescuing eighteen wounded men and delivering supplies to a Marine unit surrounded by an overwhelming number of rebels in an isolated Nicaraguan mountain village. Within three days he landed ten times in the face of machine gun and rifle fire on a cleared "field" which was nothing more than a small street 750 feet long and 30 yards wide, with a cliff at the end. He also received the Nicaraguan Cross of Valor, with diploma, and the Nicaraguan Medal of Merit.

For outstanding leadership in the South Pacific, General Schilt was decorated at Cherry Point with the Legion of Merit. His first duty in the Solomon Islands was during September, 1942, when he served on the wing staff at Guadalcanal. From April to July, 1943, he acted as commanding officer of the Strike Command and Search and Patrol Command in the Solomons.

A successful racer, General Schilt finished second with a Marine sea-plane in the 1926 International Schneider cup races. The previous year he ended third in the Army Air Service machine gun competition and second in the bombing competition. He performed aerial rescue work during the Mississippi River flood of 1927 and has done much aerial photographic work in the West Indies and elsewhere.



COL. PIERSON E. CONRADT

Col. Pierson E. Conradt, third commanding officer of the Marine air station at Cherry Point, arrived there for active duty during December, 1943, as deputy station commander under Col. C. F. Schilt, then station commander.

As it happened, Colonel Conradt was one of the first Marine aviators ever to fly above the section and to report for special duty at the airport owned by New Bern and Craven County, later taken over as an outlying field of Cherry Point.

Then a lieutenant, Conradt piloted one of the six observation landplanes from Quantico assigned to New Bern for demonstrations during a four-day airshow Feb. 20-23, 1931, the

first public program ever staged at that new airport.

Again the following Fall, Lieutenant Conradt returned to the airfield from Quantico, in charge of a unit of six fighting landplanes, a transport and a large utility landplane. He flew the utility ship. These Marine planes, together with an Army plane and a Coast Guard plane, participated in aerial programs for the dedication of the airport November 22, 1931, during a three-day air show Nov. 21-23, under the auspices of the New Bern Airport Association.

The dedicatory exercises were curtailed November 22, because one of the Marine Reserve pilots, Lt. Joel Benedict Nott, of New York City, was killed when his plane crashed during formation flying before a huge crowd

of spectators. Shortly afterwards the airport was named the Simmons-Nott Field, in honor of United States Senator Furnifold M. Simmons of New Bern, now deceased, and Lieutenant Nott.

Colonel Conradt's career in the Marine Corps began when he enlisted in April, 1917, after graduation from the high school in Portland, Ore. In 1922 he was graduated from the Naval Academy at Annapolis, and reentered the Marine Corps as a second lieutenant.

Three years were spent in the line before he started his preliminary training in aviation. During that period he was at Quantico and subsequently in Haiti, spending every Summer with the rifle team. A celebrated rifleman, he was on the Marine Corps teams in 1923, 1925 and 1930. In 1923 he won the President's Match.

Finishing his flight training at Pensacola in 1926, he went to San Diego where he remained until his transfer to China. Following several months in Guam, he returned to the United States for two years as an instructor at Pensacola. After a tour of duty at Quantico, he went to Nicaragua in May, 1932, for eight months. Later he served in Puerto Rico.

In 1940 he completed the senior course in the Marine Corps Schools and remained at Quantico as executive officer of the air station until March, 1942, when he was ordered to the South Pacific. Upon his assignment to Cherry Point, he was deputy air station commander for four months, then succeeded Colonel Schilt as station commander, a post he held for 14 months, again going overseas in June, 1945, for duty in Hawaii.



MAJ.GEN. CLAUDE A. LARKIN

The first general to be assigned to duty at Cherry Point was Claude A. Larkin, who arrived early in 1943 as commanding officer of the Third Marine Aircraft Wing. Although called "Colonel" until June, his rank as brigadier-general was made effective as of Oct. 5, 1942. Later he was promoted to major-general.

His mission at Cherry Point was to prepare the new wing for battle. This he did, and led it overseas as a combat unit during the early part of 1944. Following outstanding service in the Pacific, he retired from active service during the last part of 1945, to reside in private life at Portland, Ore.

General Larkin rose to his high grade from the ranks. Born June 21, 1891, at Garfield, Wash., he left his father's farm in the western part of the State of Washington to enlist in the Marine Corps as a private prior to World War I. Selected for entrance in the Marine Corps Officers' School in 1917, he came out a second lieutenant later that year.

After a colorful career of diversified service, he was sent in October, 1941, as a lieutenant-colonel, with a Marine air group completing a new airfield on the Island of Oahu, the most important part of the Hawaiian Islands. The next month he assumed command there.

In this capacity he was responsible for detaching units of his command for assignments in various part of the Pacific. It was he who sent a squadron of Marine aviators to Wake Island. Shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor he was in command of Marine aviation in the Pacific war zone. He sent Marine planes to Midway Island, and later some of the planes from his command went to Guadalcanal. Additional Marine units were organized under his command, and their training was greatly accelerated to meet war conditions.

As Senior Naval Aviator for Marine Aviation in the Hawaiian area in 1941-42, he was decorated with the Legion of Merit by Lt. Gen. Thomas Holcomb, then Commandant of the Marine Corps, in a ceremony at Marine Corps Headquarters in Washington during July, 1943, while he was on duty at Cherry Point.

At the same time he accepted a Presidential Unit citation for Marine Aircraft Group 22, of which he was commanding officer, for conspicuous courage and heroism at Midway during June, 1942. Outnumbered five to one, this group boldly intercepted a heavily-escorted enemy bombing force, disrupting their attack and preventing serious damage to island installations. Although half of their dive-bombers were obsolete and in poor mechanical condition which necessitated vulnerable glide bombing tactics, they succeeded in inflicting heavy damage on Japanese surface units of a large enemy task force.

After his busy year in the Pacific, he was detached from his Hawaiian command early in December, 1942, and ordered to Cherry Point to train other Marine aviators for combat. For this important assignment, he had had not only practical experience but had inspected many aviation units and air installations around the world.

Before having gone to Hawaii, he was assistant Naval Attache for aviation at London during the early part of 1941. He made official visits to Singapore, Thailand, India, Egypt, Libya and other parts of Asia and Africa. During the Syrian campaign he accompanied the Royal Air Force, observing British air technique. Later in 1941 he studied the work of the RAF on the British Isles. He also visited Iceland and many other aviation centers, thus accumulating much diversified knowledge of aerial tactics which served him in excellent stead for his training command at Cherry Point and later again in combat in the Pacific.



BRIG.GEN. LEWIE G. MERRITT

Brig. Gen. Lewie Griffith Merritt took command of the Ninth Marine Aircraft Wing at Cherry Point June 17, 1944, following service in the Pacific. He relieved Col. C. F. Schilt, who became the wing's chief of staff.

The next September General Merritt also took over the top command of the air station and all its auxiliary and outlying fields, in a reorganization plan. In January, 1945, he was succeeded by Brigadier-General Schilt as commanding general of the wing. During May General Merritt was detached from Cherry Point to return to overseas duty.

Born at Ridge Spring, S. C., June 26, 1897, General Merritt was graduated from The Citadel at Charleston before being appointed a

lieutenant in the Marine Corps at the beginning of World War I on April 17, 1917.

When a captain in 1923, he was named as a student Naval aviator at Pensacola and became a pioneer flying officer the next year. As a field officer he served in France and Santo Domingo, and as an aviation officer he has been in Haiti, Hawaii, the Mediterranean and the Pacific.

While attached to the office of the Judge Advocate General of the Navy, he studied law at George Washington University in Washington and was awarded a Bachelor of Law degree in 1928. The following month he was admitted to the bar of the State of South Carolina.

Before the United States became involved in World War II, General Merritt served at the air station at Ewa near Honolulu as its first commandant. At the outbreak of war he was in Arabia. For some time he was an official observer with the Royal Air Force during the North African campaigns. He organized Marine Fleet Air, West Coast, at San Diego, and then became commanding officer of the Fourth Marine Air Wing in the Marshall Islands. He has received many letters of commendation and numerous citations and medals. His rank as brigadier-general dates from Oct. 5, 1942.



BRIG.GEN. H. D. CAMPBELL

At almost exactly the same time that preliminary work on construction plans for Cherry Point was started by Navy engineers at New Bern, a camp for Marine aviators to train and to participate in coastal maneuvers was opened at New Bern's airport, under the command of Lt. Col. Harold Denny Campbell, now a brigadier-general in charge of the Ninth Marine Aircraft Wing at Cherry Point.

Colonel Campbell arrived at the Simmons-Nott field on Aug. 2, 1941; along with Lt. Col. Louis E. Woods, now a major-general, who was senior Marine officer present at the prewar camp; and Lt. Col. Vernon Guymon, the camp's executive officer.

Many of the Marine aviators and parachutists who practiced at the airport took part later in the early campaigns against the enemy in the Pacific; their combat training in Craven County helping materially in their preparation for their distinguished overseas record.

The camp was named Camp Mitchell in honor of Col. Ralph J. Mitchell, now a major-general at Cherry Point, who was then director of Marine Aviation. Colonels Woods, Campbell and Guymon left August 11 to return to Quantico, but the camp remained open until after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor when the Marines and their planes were hurriedly transferred to more strategic locations.

Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, group and camp commander at Camp Mitchell during the ten-day Army, Navy and Marine maneuvers in this area, was then attached to the First Marine Aircraft Wing, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Woods. At the outbreak of war, he was assigned as an air officer of the Fleet Marine Force at San Diego as commanding officer of Marine Air Group 11.

Early in 1942 he was sent to the European theatre, as American adviser to Lord Louis Mountbatten, who was then in England forming plans for combined operations by sea, land and air; somewhat comparable to Marine Corps tactics in amphibious operations, which played such a large part in winning the war in the Pacific.

For a year he remained in England, undergoing some of the most disastrous bombing raids by the Nazis over that country. While in the European theatre, he also served with General Eisenhower, Admiral Stark and the colorful General Patton. For this duty he was awarded the Legion of Merit.

Following distinguished service with Marine Aviation units in the Pacific, he came to Cherry Point as a brigadier-general during April, 1945, to assume command of the Ninth Marine Aircraft Wing. When Brig. Gen. Lewie G. Merritt went overseas the next month, General Campbell became also commanding general of the air bases command until the arrival of Maj. Gen. Ralph J. Mitchell in August. He retained his post as the wing's commanding general.

Since 1917 General Campbell has been in the Marine Corps. Following graduation from Norwich University in Vermont, he was appointed a second lieutenant April 7, 1917, when America entered World War I. On May 19 he reported to Parris Island, S. C.

With the first Marines sent to France he went overseas and participated in every action against the Germans in which the famed Second U. S. Division had a part. As commanding officer of a machine gun company, he was wounded at Blanc Mont. He returned to America with the last Marines from Europe, by then holding the rank of Captain and decorated with the Purple Heart.

During 1920 he transferred to Marine Aviation and was trained at Pensacola, where he was graduated the next year. After serving in Haiti and San Domingo, he later became operations officer for the first aviation

unit sent to Nicaragua, where he won the Navy-Marine Corps Medal and a special citation from the Secretary of the Navy for singlehandedly breaking up a bandit attack.

From 1929 to 1931 he had command of Marine Aviation at Guam. In 1930 he visited Japan. Following this, he was on duty with the War Plans Office at Washington, then took charge of the aviation section of the Marine Corps Schools at Quantico. He was a group commander of the First Marine Aircraft Wing there in 1941.

In 1926 he was awarded the Schiff Trophy by President Coolidge for having flown his plane 1,000 hours without an accident in a single year, a world's record for service aircraft at that time. General Campbell has always taken a keen interest in promoting safety of flight. Since his arrival at Cherry Point that station has attained an enviable record in this respect. Through his efforts and the cooperation of his staff, casualties and accidents have been reduced to a minimum and have been the subject of much favorable comment throughout aviation circles.

MAJ.GEN. RALPH J. MITCHELL

Maj. Gen. Ralph Johnson Mitchell became commanding general of the Marine Corps Air Bases, Cherry Point, during August, 1945, after a distinguished record in the Marine Corps.

The highest-ranking officer ever to be stationed at Cherry Point on official duty, General Mitchell did not come to the area as a stranger. As a member of the special committee, he helped select the site in Eastern North Carolina for the location of the Marine Corps Air Station.

Mitchell Field across Trent River from New Bern was named in his honor while he was director of Marine Aviation in 1941. From time to time he visited the section to inspect Marine training and camp construction.

A native of New Britain, Conn., where he was born Sept. 25, 1891, he was graduated from the Naval Academy at Annapolis in 1915 and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps. Although he requested service in France, his first World War I duty was at Guam. Commissioned a first lieutenant in March, 1917, he became a captain that October and was temporarily promoted to major the next year.

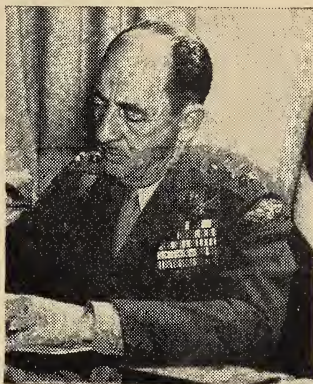
After the conflict ended, his grade reverted to captain but in 1928 he was again advanced to major. In 1934 he became a lieutenant-colonel, in 1939 a colonel, in 1942 a brigadier-general, and in September, 1942, a major-general.

At his request in 1920 he was transferred from ground duty to aviation. The Distinguished Flying Cross was awarded him for services against hostile bandits during duty in Nicaragua from December, 1929, to July, 1931. He also received the Nicaraguan Presidential Medal of Merit.

After his assignment as director of Marine Aviation, he replaced Maj. Gen. Nathan F. Twining, USA, as the air commander in the Solomon Islands area on Nov. 20, 1943, in line with the standing policy of rotating front-line senior commanders.

General Mitchell sent his First Wing fliers into the Philippines to blast an invasion path for Army Infantry from Leyte to Manila. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for the "skillful planning and execution of coordinated air attacks against the Japanese stronghold of Rabaul in New Britain."

Later he received the Legion of Merit for outstanding service as general of the First Marine Aircraft Wing and as commander of all Army, Navy and Marine aircraft units in the Northern Solomons area.



His first official act at Cherry Point as commanding general of the Marine air bases was the welcoming of a distinguished inspection party including Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Air John Sullivan, Gen. A. A. Vandegrift, Commandant of the Marine Corps, and Maj. Gen. Field Harris, director of Marine Aviation.

It became his duty to convert Cherry Point and its auxiliary and outlying fields from training during war to training during the postwar period. This he undertook zealously, recommending numerous improvements in the bases and directing diversified training programs for Flying Leathernecks to retain their preparedness for any possible emergency call under their proud heritage of being "First to Fight."

General Mitchell holds the following awards: the Army Distinguished Service Medal, the Navy Distinguished Service Medal, the Army Legion of Merit, the Navy Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, two Air Medals, World War I Victory Medal, World War II Victory Medal, American Defense Medal, American Campaign Medal World War II, Pacific Campaign Medal World War II, Second Nicaraguan Campaign Medal, Philippine Liberation Ribbon, and Nicaraguan Presidential Medal of Merit.

MARINE CORPS COMANDANT



GEN. A. A. VANDEGRIFT

Gen. Alexander Archer Vandegrift, now Commandant of the Marine Corps, was on duty at New River, N. C., for six months before leading the First Marine Division overseas to effect brilliant landings in August, 1942, on the Solomon Islands as the first successful American offensive action in the Pacific war zone of World War II.

During December, 1941, he was serving as assistant to the Commandant of the Marine Corps at Washington, that office then being held by Maj.Gen. Thomas Holcomb, shortly afterwards made a lieutenant-general. He was sent to the Marine Barracks on New River, now Camp Lejeune, as assistant division commander of the First Marine Division, in charge of training, with the rank of brigadier-general.

Upon transfer of Maj.Gen. Philip H. Torrey, division commander, to Quantico, Va., General Vandegrift assumed command of the division in April, 1942, and became a major-general. His record in the Solomon Islands area is now a glowing page in military history.

A native of Charlottesville, Va., General Vandegrift joined the Marine Corps as a second lieutenant in 1909, after graduating from the University of Virginia.

In World War I he served in Haiti. Other Marine Corps duties have taken him to China, Mexico, Cuba, Nicaragua and Panama. His assignments include those as member on the staff of the Chief Coordinator at Washington; operations officer of the First Brigade at Tientsin, China; commanding officer of the Embassy Guard at Peking, China; and staff officer for the Fleet Marine Force at Quantico.

On Jan. 1, 1944, he became Commandant of the Marine Corps, with the rank of lieutenant-general. Since March 21, 1945, he has been a full general.

During the first part of 1946 General Vandegrift was given permanent four-star rank in the regular Marine Corps, thus becoming the first full general on active duty in the corps. General Holcomb was previously retired as the first and only four-star general on the retired list in the history of the corps.

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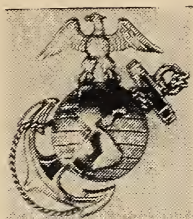
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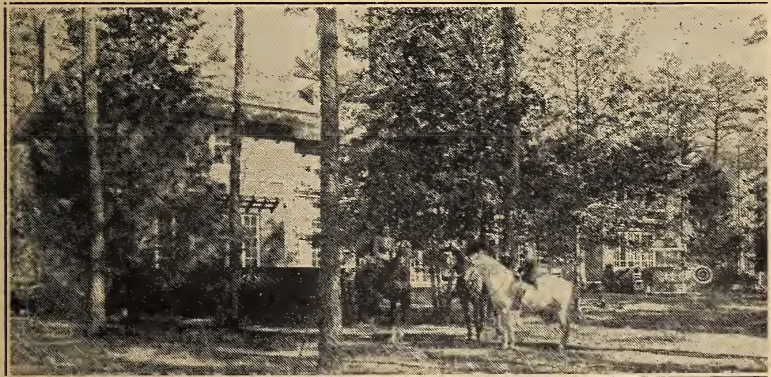
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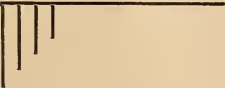
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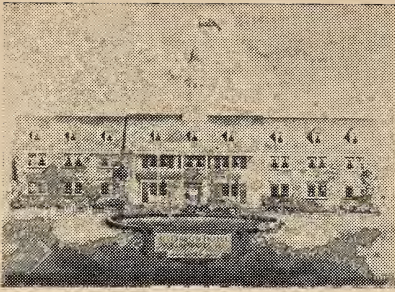
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EXCLUSIVE BUT POPULAR PRICED

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THAT AT ALL TIMES YOU WILL FIND
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Marines and Their Families Always Have a Cordial Welcome
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