

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Washington</b>	
COUNTY: <b>Clark</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**Fort Vancouver**

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
**Fort Vancouver National Historic Site**

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Between East Evergreen Blvd., Highway 14, East Reserve St., & I-5**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Vancouver**

STATE: **Washington**      CODE:      COUNTY: **Clark**      CODE:

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Unit of the National Park Service</u>

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**Department of Interior, National Park Service**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Interior Building**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington**      STATE: **D. C.**      CODE:

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: **Three (3) land transfers between public agencies unrecorded. One Deed of Purchase-recorded Clark County**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**1200 Franklin Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Vancouver**      STATE: **Washington**      CODE:

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**None**

DATE OF SURVEY:       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:      STATE:      CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The present site is a meadow like area of grasslands broken by archeological excavations and interpretive signs. In 1966, the North Wall, North Gate, and a portion of the East Wall were reconstructed upon the exact site after complete archeological excavations. Current archeological work to establish the locations of the remainder of the 22 buildings within the pickets preperty to eventual reconstruction.

At the height of its prosperity, about 1844 to 1846, Fort Vancouver was an extensive establishment and headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company's operations West of the Rockie Mountains. The fort proper measured about 732 feet by 325 feet. It was surrounded by a stockade of upright logs, with a bastion at the northwest corner mounting seven or eight 3 pounder cannon. These defenses were never tested, since the nearby Indians were not hostile and the American settlers never acted upon occasional threats uttered during the period of tension before and after the boundary treaty of 1846.

Within the stockade were about 22 major buildings and several lesser structures. Among the former were four large storehouses, an Indian trade shop, a granary, an impressive residence for the chief factor, dwellings for other Company officers and clerks, and a jail.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**6. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century            |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric            | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry    | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                   | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture           | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian       | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                   | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications         | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation           |   |  | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Fort Vancouver for over two decades served as a headquarters and depot of the Hudson's Bay Company west of the Rocky Mountains and was the social, economic, political and cultural hub of the Pacific Northwest.

As a leader in development of the Northwest, the Hudson's Bay Company developed the following firsts: Agriculture, animal husbandary, lumbering, education, second library, church services, hospital, dairy herds, and international commerce with Russian Alaska, Kingdom of Hawaii, and the Spanish colonies to the south.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Publications of the Hudson's Bay Company Record Society especially:  
 Volumes 4, 6, and 7, McLoughlin's Fort Vancouver Letters

Hussey, John A.: The History of Fort Vancouver and Its Physical Structure

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	45° 37' 43"	122° 39' 42"		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	45° 37' 34"	122° 39' 11"		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	45° 37' 05"	122° 39' 26"		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	45° 37' 13"	122° 40' 00"		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 166

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
n/a			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: *Robert E. S. Clark* Robert E. S. Clark, Supv. Park Ranger  
 ORGANIZATION: Fort Vancouver National Historic Site  
 DATE: May 18, 1972  
 STREET AND NUMBER:  
 CITY OR TOWN: Vancouver STATE: Washington CODE:

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

# Fort Vancouver

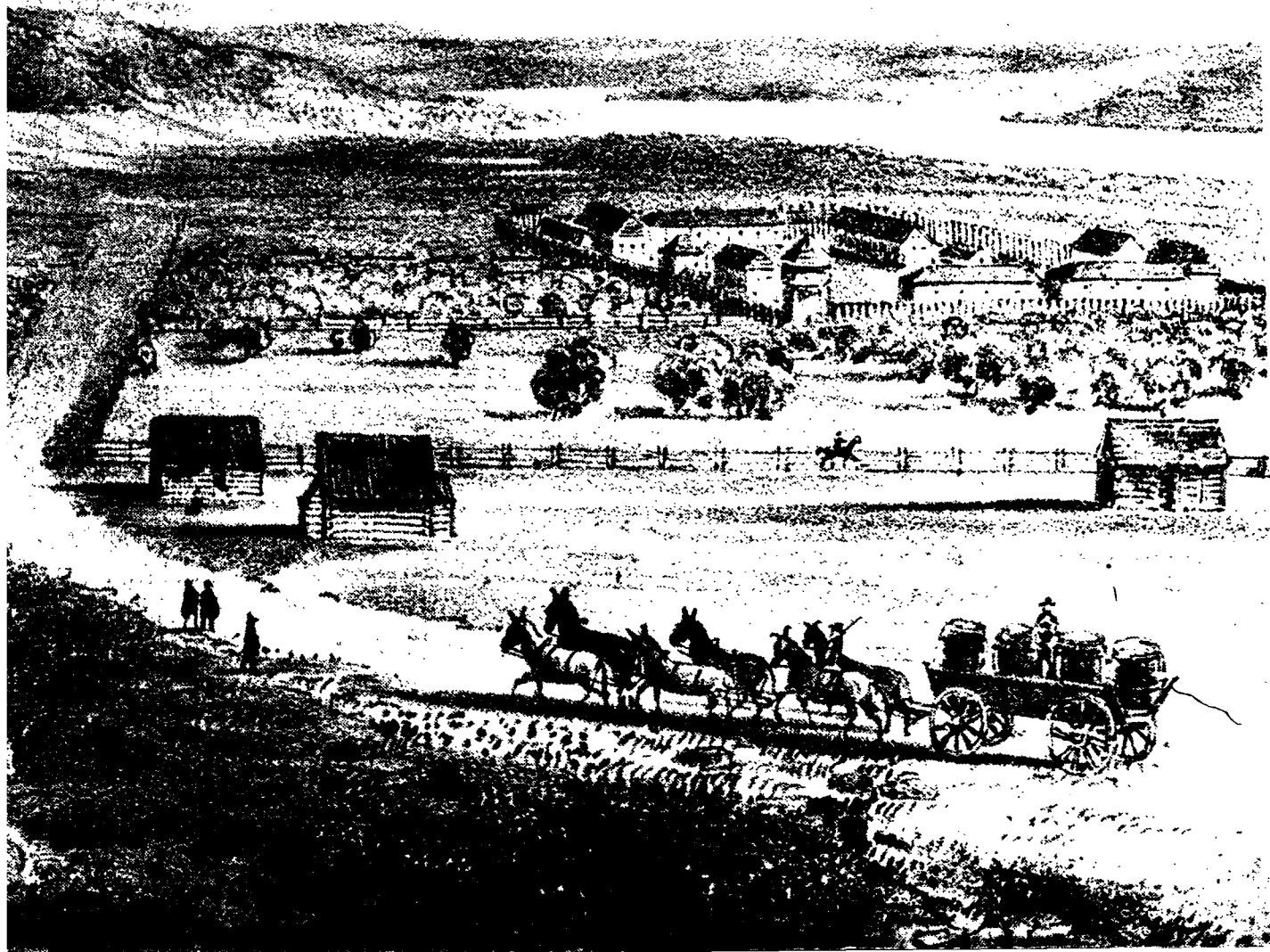


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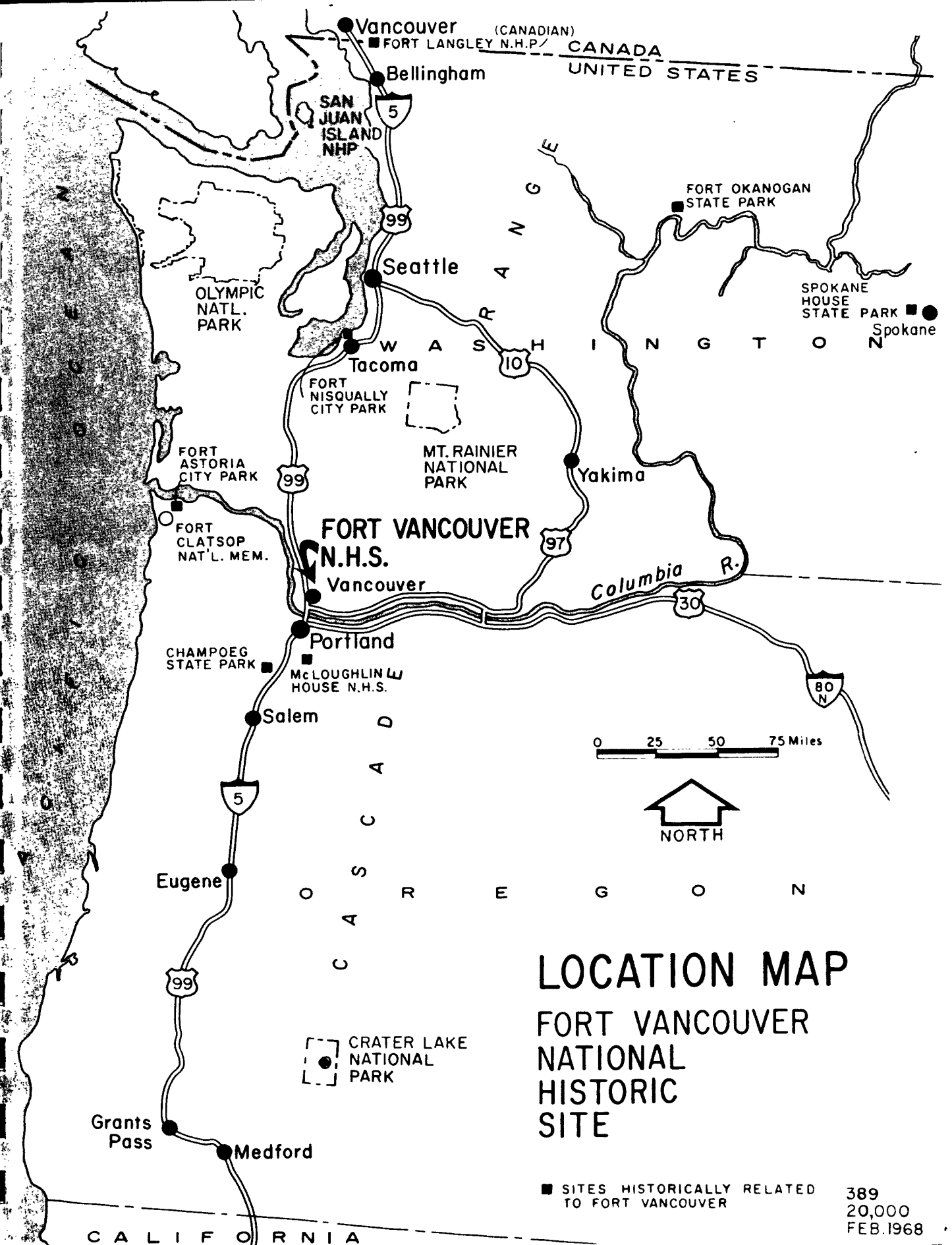
81 General Development

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A MASTER PLAN  
FOR  
FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
WASHINGTON

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

March 1968



# LOCATION MAP

## FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

■ SITES HISTORICALLY RELATED TO FORT VANCOUVER

389  
20,000  
FEB. 1968



## PURPOSE

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site was established, in the words of the authorizing Act (62 Stat. 352) and the Senate Report on that legislation, "to preserve as a national monument the site of the original Hudson's Bay stockade (of Fort Vancouver) and sufficient surrounding land to preserve the historical features of the area" for "the benefit of the people of the United States." The Department of the Interior report on the legislation further stated that the lands so dedicated should fulfill "two essential requirements--the preservation of the historic stockade . . . and the preservation of the historic parade ground of the later United States Army Post." Clearly, then, the purpose of the park is to maintain in perpetuity the site of this primary early center of economic, cultural, and military development in the Pacific Northwest and to make clear to American citizens the important part played in the growth of the nation by the fur trade and other activities centered at Fort Vancouver.

Management Category: Historical

## OBJECTIVES

To fulfill the stated purposes of the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, the National Park Service proposes:

Interpretive Theme: To interpret to the public, as the primary historical theme, the story of the fur trade and the Hudson's Bay Company in the Northwest country and the roles they played in the exploration, settlement, territorial sovereignty, and development of the Pacific Northwest; and to interpret, as the secondary historical theme, the story of Vancouver Barracks and the part played by the United States Army in opening the region to settlement.

Land Acquisition: To acquire for interpretive and preservation purposes as they become available, certain city, State and Federal lands contiguous to the present park boundaries to permit the Service to restore as completely as practicable the historic setting of the Hudson's Bay Company post of Fort Vancouver in the year 1845, and to provide space necessary for appropriate visitor enjoyment.

Restrictive Uses: To eliminate the present Pearson Airpark avigation easement to allow restoration of Fort Vancouver and, as additional lands are acquired, to remove other intrusive or restrictive elements to permit full visitor use and enjoyment of the park.

Restoration: To restore the major fort structures as nearly as possible in the historic setting of the period to be interpreted, together with authentic interior furnishings; to restore attendant features such as roads and fences; and to provide illustrative examples of associated historic uses such as the orchard, garden, and some of the farming and manufacturing activities that were a part of fort operations. This objective includes examples of farm animals that were present during the historic period represented by the restoration.

Related Visitor Services: To develop the park resources to their full potential through the provision of attendant facilities for recreation purposes. The principal objective of these facilities will be to permit school classes, families, and other groups visiting the park at mid-day to enjoy a continuous stay without the necessity of leaving the area for lunch; and to provide for children's play activities as a part of the park visit.

Research: To continue present intensive historical and archeological research programs to produce the basic factual information necessary for the accurate restoration of Fort Vancouver and its setting, and for the interpretation of the site and its story.

Safety and Protection: To protect the historical and recreational resources of the historic site and provide for the safety of the park visitor and Government property.

Visitor Use and Development: In anticipation of heavy visitor use when restoration has been completed, to provide adequate parking facilities and roads which will have a minimum adverse impact upon the historic scene but still provide convenient access to the fort proper and to other major points of interest; and to provide sheltered lunching facilities and a children's play area which will permit uninterrupted visits and afford other types of visitor enjoyment appropriate to the location of the park in an urban setting.

Interpretation and Information: To develop imaginative programs, including interpretive demonstrations, pageants, and the re-creation of a living farm exhibit, to vividly portray the large size of Fort Vancouver and the importance of its activities in the development of the West; and, incidentally, to provide information concerning opportunities offered by other parks for enjoying additional historical and recreational values in the Pacific Northwest.

Museum Collections: To continue protection and use of existing park collections and to assemble and preserve additional artifacts relating to the Fort Vancouver and Vancouver Barracks stories for public display, for refurnishing restored structures, and for study and research purposes; to confine the scope of the collections to items directly related to the park interpretive themes.

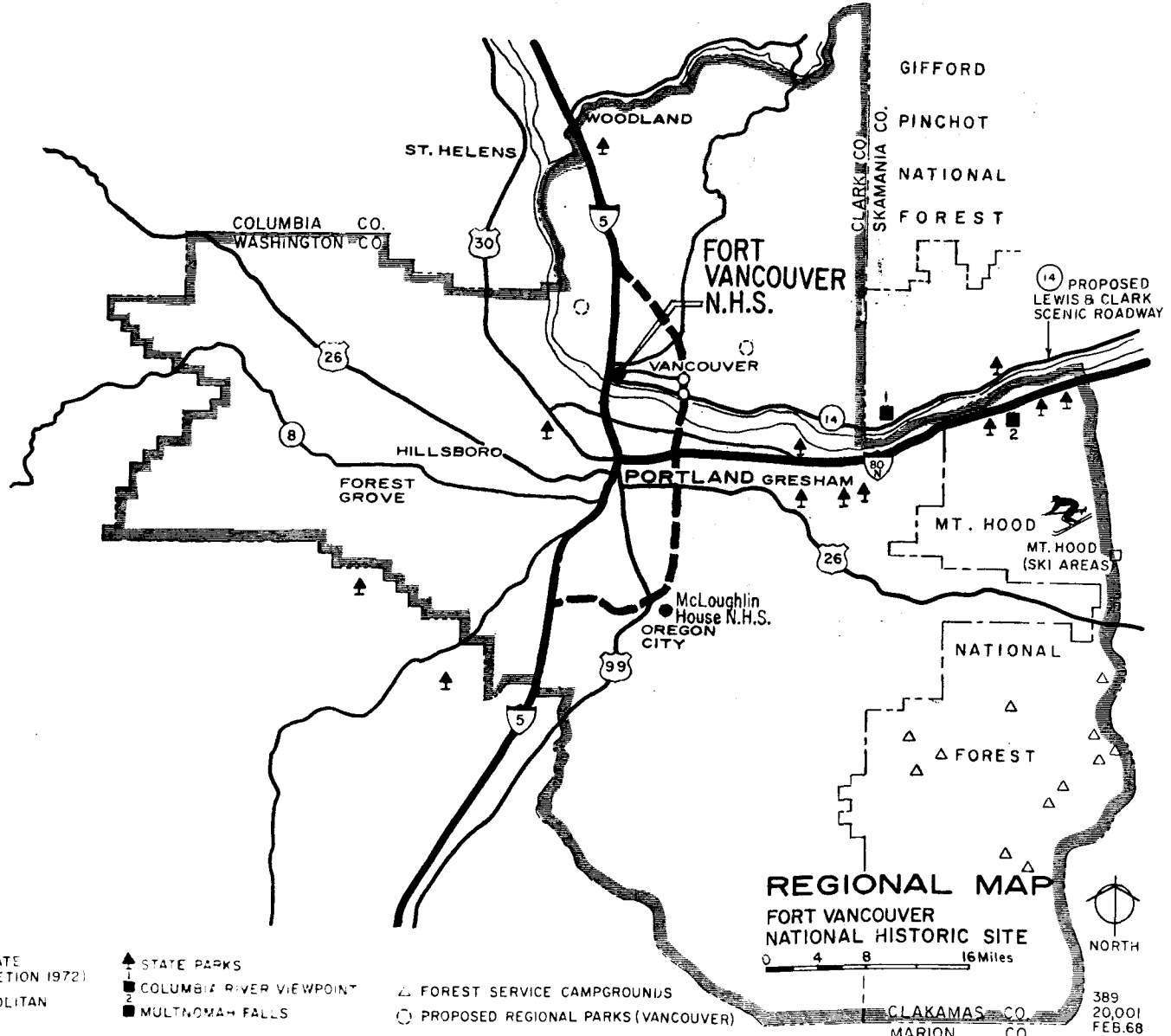
Resource Management: To conserve and manage the historical resources in such a way as to present them to the public as an integrated, three-dimensional, living historical exhibit; and, as a related management objective, to provide such recreational opportunities as are consistent with the primary historical exhibit purposes of the park.


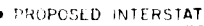


## REGIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND ANALYSIS




Fort Vancouver National Historic Site is on the north bank of the Columbia River, within the corporate limits of the city of Vancouver, Clark County, Washington, and directly opposite the city of Portland.



For master planning purposes, the region within which the park is located is considered as comprising the Portland Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area. The Bureau of the Budget has defined this statistical area as having a population whose activities form an integrated social and economic system. It includes Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington Counties in Oregon, with Portland the major population center, plus several outlying urban communities; and Clark County, Washington, which includes the city of Vancouver.

The principal natural feature within the region is the famed Columbia River waterway and the lower section of the spectacular Columbia River Gorge. Several major mountain peaks are readily visible in the distance and lend a scenic backdrop to what is an otherwise metropolitan setting. These include Mount St. Helens and Mount Adams in Washington and Mount Hood in Oregon.



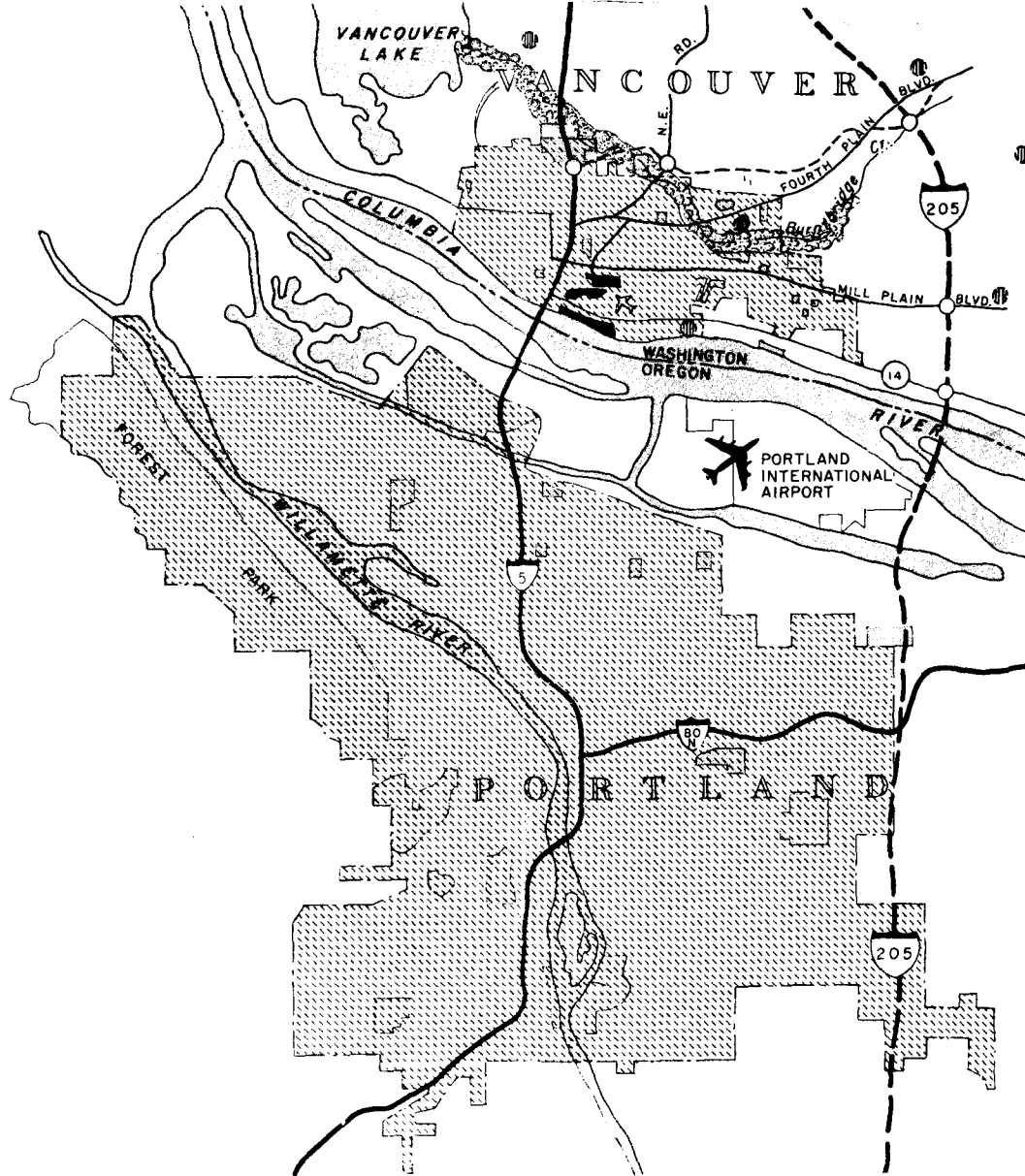
 INTERCHANGE  
 PROPOSED INTERSTATE  
 PROPOSED INTERSTATE BYPASS (COMPLETION 1972)  
 STANDARD METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA

 STATE PARKS  
 COLUMBIA RIVER VIEWPOINT  
 MULTNOMAH FALLS









 FOREST SERVICE CAMPGROUNDS  
 PROPOSED REGIONAL PARKS (VANCOUVER)

**REGIONAL MAP**  
 FORT VANCOUVER  
 NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
 0 4 8 16 Miles





### LEGEND

-  CITY LIMITS
-  CITY PARKS (EXISTING)
-  PROPOSED PARKS (VANCOUVER & CLARK COUNTY)
-  FORT VANCOUVER N.H.S.
-  PROPOSED I-205 BYPASS
-  PROPOSED INTERCHANGE
-  PROPOSED PERMANENT NATURAL AREA
-  PROPOSED 4 LANE LIMITED ACCESS ROAD



## URBAN VICINITY MAP

### FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE





Access and Circulation: The Columbia River waterway served as the principal transportation artery to and from the region during the early days of settlement. Then came the railroads, following the course of the Columbia along both shores, and with major lines extending into the region from the north and south as well. While several trans-continental passenger trains such as those of Northern Pacific and Union Pacific still serve the region, train passenger service is being reduced as it is elsewhere.

Components of the Interstate Highway System, feeding to major cities throughout the United States, serve the region. They include north-south Interstate 5, connecting Seattle, Vancouver, Portland, Los Angeles, and San Diego; and east-west Interstate 80N (formerly U.S. 30) following the length of the Columbia River Gorge and terminating at Portland.

The Portland International Airport is a major point of arrival and departure for both transcontinental and intercontinental air travel. Passenger traffic has more than doubled within the past four years, and exceeded two million in-and-out passengers in 1967. Extensive expansion of facilities is planned, probably at the present location but possibly by relocating somewhat farther south. Expansion will include facilities capable of handling the ultra-modern, super-sonic passenger aircraft.

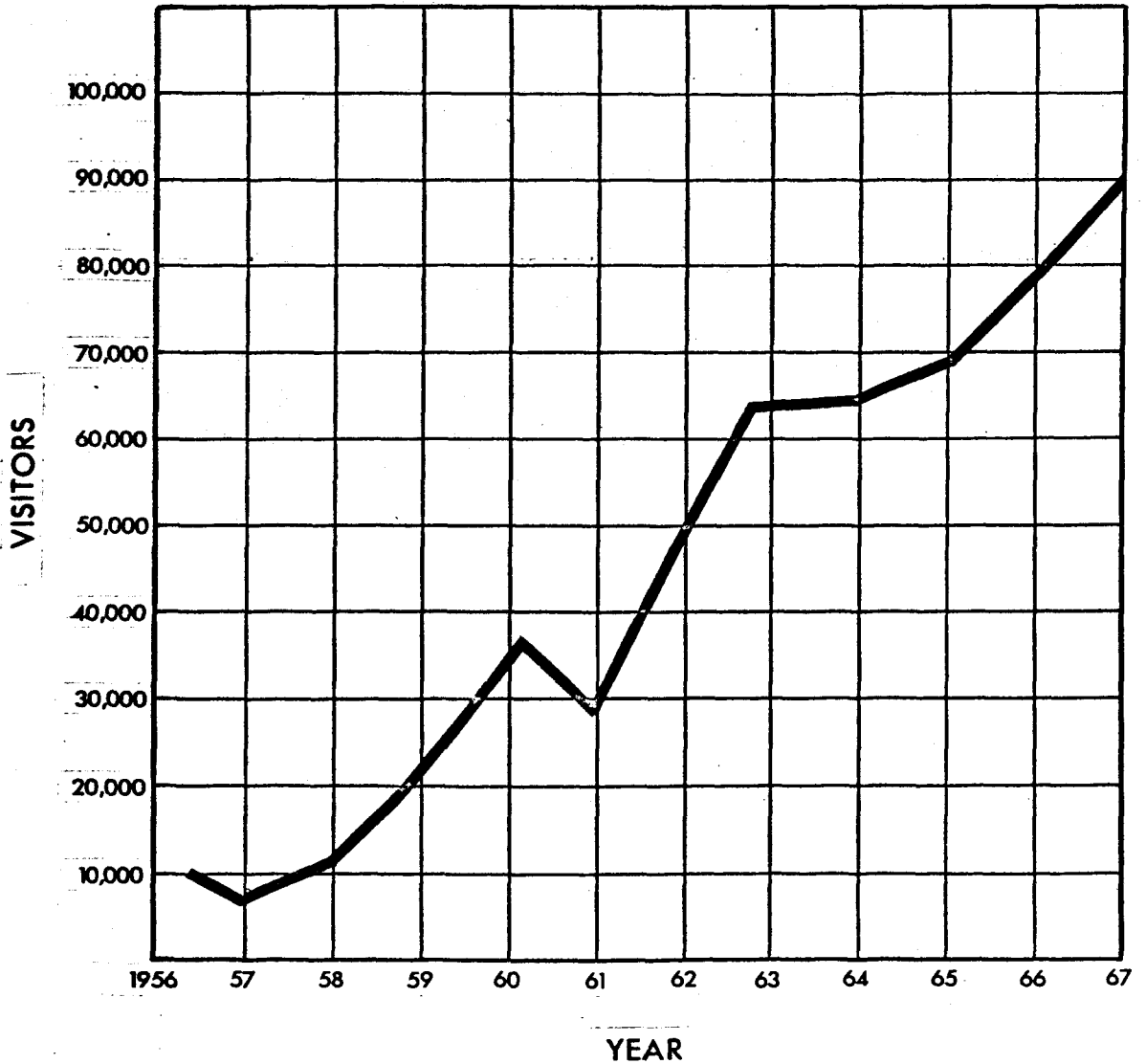
The Pearson Airpark, operated by the City of Vancouver as a municipal airport, lies directly across the Columbia River from Portland International. It adjoins the present park boundary on the east and south. Only light private planes plus those of some Federal agencies use Pearson Airpark on a regular basis.

While present or future use of Portland International Airport will have little effect on park visitation, the noise created by low-flying jets during take-off will make it more difficult for the visitor to recapture the historic mood if airport facilities are expanded at the present location. On the other hand, the Pearson Airpark may then definitely require relocation because of conflicting air traffic patterns with Portland International.

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site is only a few blocks east of Interstate 5, while part of the lands proposed for acquisition adjoin the Interstate right-of-way. Primary access to the park from either north or south is from an interchange at Mill Plain Boulevard, about three blocks northwest. The park can also be reached from a secondary Interstate 5 exit via downtown Vancouver. In either case, however, directional signs are either inconspicuous or lacking, and it is difficult for one unfamiliar with the locality to find his way to the park.

An additional but secondary means of access is available from the east via Washington State 14 along the north shore of the Columbia River. This route serves the industrial section of Vancouver and bisects the park. Pleasure traffic on this route is light at present. However, it is indicated in A Proposed Program for Scenic Roads and Parkways, published in 1966 by the President's Council on Recreation and Natural Beauty, as having been nominated by the State and by Federal agencies for study purposes as a scenic route.

FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
YEARLY VISITATION FIGURES 1956-1957  
(ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST THOUSAND)



SOURCE: MONTHLY PUBLIC USE REPORTS

Access to the park is possible by private plane to Pearson Airpark; by taxi, rental car, or city bus from train and bus terminals in Vancouver and Portland; or by the same means from Portland International Airport. The use of such public transportation facilities, however, is impractical, and city bus service may be discontinued. Virtually all park visitors arrive by private automobile or, in the case of school or other organized groups, by bus service arranged specifically by those groups.

Visitation totaled 90,000 persons in 1967, compared with 63,900 in 1963; 37,600 in 1960; and 9,161 in 1957.

Proposed Interstate 205, to bypass Portland and Vancouver on the east, is scheduled for construction with a completion date of 1972. Interchanges will be provided in the Vancouver vicinity, including one from 205 onto Mill Plain Boulevard. Mill Plain is a four-lane, divided east-west thoroughfare, which carries local traffic. Its western terminus is at a major interchange on Interstate 5. Another interchange on 205 will be provided at its crossing with State 14.

With continued population growth and development of Vancouver, East Evergreen Boulevard, which forms the north boundary of the park, may also be widened to a four-lane street. In any event, East Evergreen will not connect with Interstate 5 and, while it does intersect with State 14, the intersection is a considerable distance to the east. Access to the park would be quite inconvenient by that route, and Mill Plain will continue to provide the principal means of access from both the Interstate routes.

Population Data: Portland, the regional population center, is within 20 minutes driving time from Fort Vancouver via Interstate 5.

Census estimates for mid-1966 placed Portland's population at 384,000 and Vancouver's at 38,300. According to these estimates, the population of Portland has grown by just over 3 percent since 1960, while that of Vancouver has grown by some 18 percent.

Similar estimates place the regional population at 908,000, in comparison with a population of 821,897 in 1960 and 704,829 in 1950. Thus the regional rate of growth since 1960 has been about 10-1/2 percent. This compares with a rate of slightly less than 10 percent for the Seattle-Everrett Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area, the only other such metropolitan area in the Pacific Northwest.

Almost 80 percent of the region's resident population lives within the urbanized area. Like Vancouver, most of the growth in the Portland area has taken place in the urban fringes east of the central city. Favorable factors insure that this trend will continue.

Several State and Federal agencies, private industry, and research groups have made recent population forecasts which apply to the region. Consolidation of the studies to reflect a median forecast indicates that the region's population is expected to be in the range of 1,194,000 by 1980; 1,682,000 by the year 2000; and 2,600,000 by 2020 for a 40-year predicted growth of 118 percent. For Clark County, the same sources would indicate a population of about 146,600 by 1980; 206,600 by the year 2000; and in the range of 322,000 by 2020, a growth of 120 percent.

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site is used predominantly by the local population within the region. Tourist use is primarily by California residents and, secondly, due to their interest in the story of Fort Vancouver, by Canadian residents. This is an interesting comparison with the out-of-state tourist pattern in the Oregon State Parks system, where visitation is predominantly from California, with Washington second.



While regional population growth, of itself, has had no appreciable physical effect on the park, resultant industrial and economic development has altered extensively the surrounding scene, both restricting historical restoration and making it more difficult for the visitor to visualize the historical setting. Intruding elements of this nature are discussed under Surroundings and Existing Use below.

## Park and Recreation Facilities

Existing--No historical parks or sites in the entire Pacific Northwest compare in importance with Fort Vancouver for illustrating the role of the fur trade in the development of the western United States and Canada. There are, however, several parks that contain remains, sites, or reconstructions of lesser and subsidiary trading posts and which thus complement Fort Vancouver in presenting the fur-trade story. Among these are Fort Nisqually in Point Defiance Park, Tacoma, Washington; Fort Langley National Historical Park (Canadian) near Vancouver, B.C.; Spokane House State Park, near Spokane, Washington; and Fort Okanogan State Park, Washington. Champoege State Park, Oregon, about 35 miles south of Fort Vancouver, includes the site of a Hudson's Bay Company granary that was a part of the Fort Vancouver operation. McLoughlin House National Historic Site at Oregon City preserves the retirement home of Chief Factor John McLoughlin, who from 1825 to 1846 was in charge of Fort Vancouver. The museum of the Oregon Historical Society in Portland displays a number of artifacts associated with the Hudson's Bay Company region in the Northwest and with Fort Vancouver. A small city park at Astoria, Oregon, preserves a portion of the

site of Fort Astoria, later Fort George, the predecessor of Fort Vancouver as the fur emporium of the West. The old Covington House north of Vancouver also is related to Fort Vancouver. The structure was built by a retired Hudson's Bay Company employee who took up land in Vancouver. A local landmark near the park is an apple tree which, according to legend, dates from Hudson's Bay Company days.

By stimulating interest in the history of the Pacific Northwest fur trade, these parks encourage visitation to Fort Vancouver, long the key focal point for the industry west of the Rockies. Also they provide at Fort Vancouver the opportunity to direct visitors to other sites where the fur-trade story may be further unfolded.

The region lies almost midway between the Cascade Range and the Oregon coastline, and there is a wealth of opportunities for scenic and recreational enjoyment, both within the region itself and within easy driving distance from the metropolitan area.

There are three wilderness areas, numerous developed recreational sites, and many scenic trails and loop roads in the Gifford Pinchot and Mount Hood National Forests on the west flank of the Cascades. One of the Pacific Northwest's major winter sports area is on Mount Hood.

In Oregon there are more than 30 State parks and at least two dozen county parks within easy driving distance from Portland.

The Portland Park Bureau has a highly developed and comprehensive City park system, ranging from a 3,504-acre natural area to community and neighborhood parks, offering a great variety of recreation facilities.

There are over 50 State, county, or commercial boat launching ramps on the Columbia and Willamette rivers, supplemented by marinas, commercial moorages, and private yacht clubs.

One launching ramp, located on a 6.5-acre tract of Fort Vancouver land, was developed and is managed by the City of Vancouver or Cadboro Park under a special use permit from the Service.

Clark County itself has relatively few non-urban developed recreation facilities. It has one State park, a county park, a botanical area, a privately-owned park, and some of the boating facilities on the shore of the Columbia described above.

The Vancouver city park system comprises approximately 265 acres in about 36 individual parks, including eight community centers. Fifteen parks incorporate sports areas or outdoor play areas. Many of the parks are small, with from less than one to four or five acres each. About eight are undeveloped.

David Douglas, the largest, contains 68 acres.

Located three miles east of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, it is predominantly a natural area.

The 11-acre General George C. Marshall Park is less than one-half mile north of Fort Vancouver, but across the four-lane, major thoroughfare of Mill Plain Boulevard. Present development includes 16 horseshoe courts, a non-regulation ball field, and a community center with indoor swimming pool.

The grounds of Hudson's Bay Senior High School, located across Mill Plain directly opposite Fort Vancouver, now provide an extensive open space area. A portion of the school grounds lies south of Mill Plain and has a football field, track field, and two baseball diamonds. The school also has an indoor swimming pool. Except for the athletic area, expansion of the physical plant will eventually utilize most of the present open space land.

Quarnberg Park is two blocks east of East Reserve Street, the eastern park boundary. It also is on the opposite side of Mill Plain Boulevard. This is a small park of about 1.4 acres with a non-regulation ball diamond.

Esther Short Park is three-fourths mile west of Fort Vancouver across Interstate 5. It is developed for playground activities and picnicking, and serves the southwest section of the city.

Facilities at Cadboro Park, mentioned above as being administered by the City under special use permit from the Service, consists of a concrete boat launching ramp, parking, and minor picnicking facilities.

The only other city-administered park or open space near Fort Vancouver is the William Broughton Park--the 6.5-acre tract of waterfront land the city has under lease permit from the Service, terminating in 1973. The city has developed a parking area and minor picnicking facilities in conjunction with the boat ramp mentioned earlier.

Proposed-- New areas are being added to the Federal, State, and local park and recreation systems in and near the region each year. Emphasis in the State program is being given to acquisition and development of State parks to serve future needs in the northwest Oregon area. State park policy is oriented toward "functional" parks for active recreation.

The counties bordering the Willamette River are to acquire, develop, and maintain areas along the river under the newly-authorized Willamette River Greenway Recreation System, with State financial assistance and coordination. -

The Vancouver Parks and Recreation Department of the Clark County-Vancouver Regional Planning Commission have prepared a comprehensive park and recreation plan for Vancouver and environs. The plan includes two regional parks; six community parks; and about 37 neighborhood parks. These new parks will have the normal city park developments including outdoor play areas and athletic or sports areas.

Some of the present Vancouver city park sites that are too small for useful development are being held as "trading stock" for acquisition of city green-belt lands which also will be developed for general recreation purposes with play areas.

David Douglas Park will remain primarily for passive recreation, but proposed development also includes children's play areas, picnic facilities, and a replica in miniature of Fort Vancouver.

Proposals at Marshall include a totlot with play equipment, screens, benches, and shelters for pre-school and primary school age children, game areas, and a senior citizen's area.



## Surroundings and Existing Use

The location of the park on a former U.S. Army post has proven a fortunate circumstance in preserving a sense of historic integrity and open space in the immediate surroundings.

To date, these former Army lands have not been used for industrial purposes, to which the waterfront and adjacent area lends itself. Rather, they have been used for housing of Government employees, a high school, a community college, Veterans' hospital, library, public utility district headquarters, a city community park and recreation center, an airport, and city street purposes. A small part is still used by the Army. Otherwise, the general environment is that of an almost completely developed urban complex.

To the west, on lands within the proposed ultimate park boundary, is what remains of Vancouver Military Barracks, owned by the U. S. Army. Immediately west of the Army land is Interstate 5, with its easily visible, elevated ramp and major bridge crossing of the Columbia. To the west, just across Interstate 5, is the Vancouver central business district.

# LEGEND

- ① U.S. ARMY
- ② S.P.B.S. (LEASED TO CITY-VANCOUVER MUNICIPAL AIRPORT)
- ③ STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
- ④ HEAVY INDUSTRY
- ⑤ LIGHT INDUSTRY
- ⑥ VANCOUVER SCHOOL DISTRICT
- ⑥A ATHLETIC FIELDS (FOOTBALL, TRACK, 2 BASEBALL FIELDS, SWIMMING POOL)
- ⑦ U.S. VETERANS ADMINISTRATION
- ⑧ COUNTY PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT
- ⑨ STATE LAND
- ⑩ U.S. COAST GUARD
- A CITY LAND (MUNICIPAL AIRPORT)
- A1 CITY PARK (SOFTBALL FIELD, POOL, HORSESHOE COURTS)
- A2 CITY PARK (PICNIC AREA, PLAYGROUND)
- B CITY LAND (LEASED TO BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS)

POTENTIAL APPROACHES TO FORT VANCOUVER AFTER COMPLETION OF I-205:

- ↔ MAJOR APPROACH
- ← MINOR APPROACH

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--- PROPOSED WIDENING TO 4 LANES

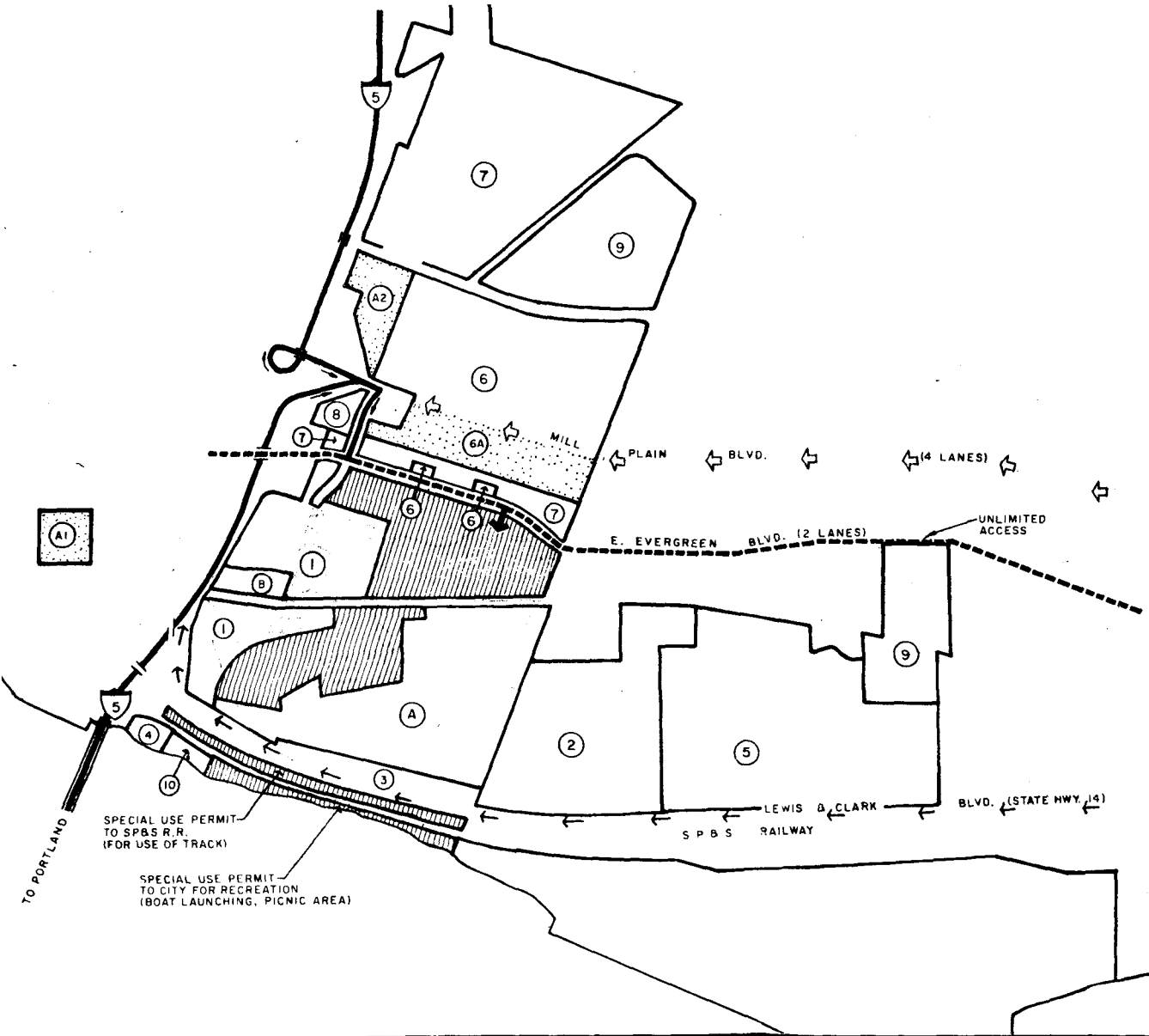
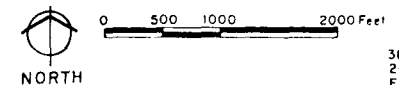
— EXISTING MAIN APPROACH

➔ EXISTING MAIN ENTRANCE

▨ EXISTING NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

## EXISTING LAND USE & CIRCULATION

FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE



The park is bordered on the north by Evergreen Boulevard. Just across Evergreen are old Army residences known as Officer's Row, now occupied by Veterans Administration personnel.

To the east of the park on the opposite side of East Reserve Street are inexpensive, medium density residential developments. Both light and heavy industry is located along the river front to the east and west.

Ownership of Adjoining Land  
(See Existing Land Use and Circulation Map for locations.)

Federal -- U. S. Army--in use by organized reserve corps. U. S. Coast Guard--actively used as Coast Guard headquarters. Veterans Administration--used for major hospital facilities; a substantial portion of the lands, plus a small detached parcel, are maintained as open space.

State-- State of Washington--one parcel is the location of Clark Community College. A second parcel is held by the State Highway Department. It includes the right-of-way for State Route 14 and a larger portion used for the storage of highway construction materials.

Local--Clark County Public Utility District--used as P.U.D. headquarters.

City of Vancouver--Pearson Airpark with hangars and runways; city also owns East Fifth Street through the park and a parcel on East Reserve Street adjoining park headquarters.

Vancouver School District--senior high school buildings and grounds.

Private--Seattle, Portland, and Spokane Railway--not actively used at present, but is under lease to City of Vancouver for airport purposes. Lease is revocable at will by S. P. & S. A 100-foot right of way on which the railroad is located is a part of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, with Congressional grant to the railroad for its operation.

Gilmore Steel Corporation--Former Vancouver Shipyards. In major use for manufacture of steel, wood, and aluminum products.

While the immediate surroundings still retain a feeling of openness, existing land uses have introduced several seriously restrictive and intrusive elements, both physical and legal. These elements disrupt the historical scene or prevent its re-creation.

One of the most intrusive elements in the scene is that of vehicle traffic passing quite close to the fort site on State Highway 14. Just beyond the highway and paralleling it is the high embankment of the S. P. & S. Railroad which blocks any view of the river except for its far side. And beyond the railroad embankment is a paralleling city street serving the riverfront industrial area. Thus the once-intimate relationship between the fort and the river no longer exists today, or at least it is much more difficult to comprehend.

Of particular importance to park development are certain adjoining tracts on which incompatible uses exist. The river front strip owned by the State Highway Department and directly fronting the park demonstrates the type of adverse use and damage to the historical scene which may occur if not in the control of the Service. Except for State Highway 14, this land has so far been used only for the storage of huge piles of construction materials.

The dominant adverse use is posed by Pearson Airpark. The present aviation easement constitutes an adverse legal factor which effectively prevents any further restoration of the Hudson's Bay Company post. Physical facilities in the form of hangars and runways are intrusive elements and, to a lesser degree than the easement, prevent historical restoration.

East Fifth Street occupies the site of the historic Hudson's Bay Company road. In its present form, it separates two important segments of the park and is a safety hazard to visitor traffic.

An important legal factor concerns this street; when parts of the Army post were declared surplus, through streets with significant amounts of traffic like East Fifth were deeded to the city under reversionary clause. The clause provides that title can be recaptured if not used for street purposes by the city.

Potential adverse uses now exist on lands that are essential to park protection and scenic preservation. The U. S. Coast Guard headquarters, located on the river front in direct view from the fort site, may be moved to another location in the Portland area within the next two to three years. The land may then become available to the Service, or open to adverse development if not acquired.

Another potential adverse use is presented by East Reserve Street on the eastern park boundary. Street widening is under consideration and, if the parcel adjoining the park administrative headquarters is not acquired, resultant widening will place street traffic just outside employee residence windows.

# LEGEND

 EXISTING NAT'L. HISTORIC SITE

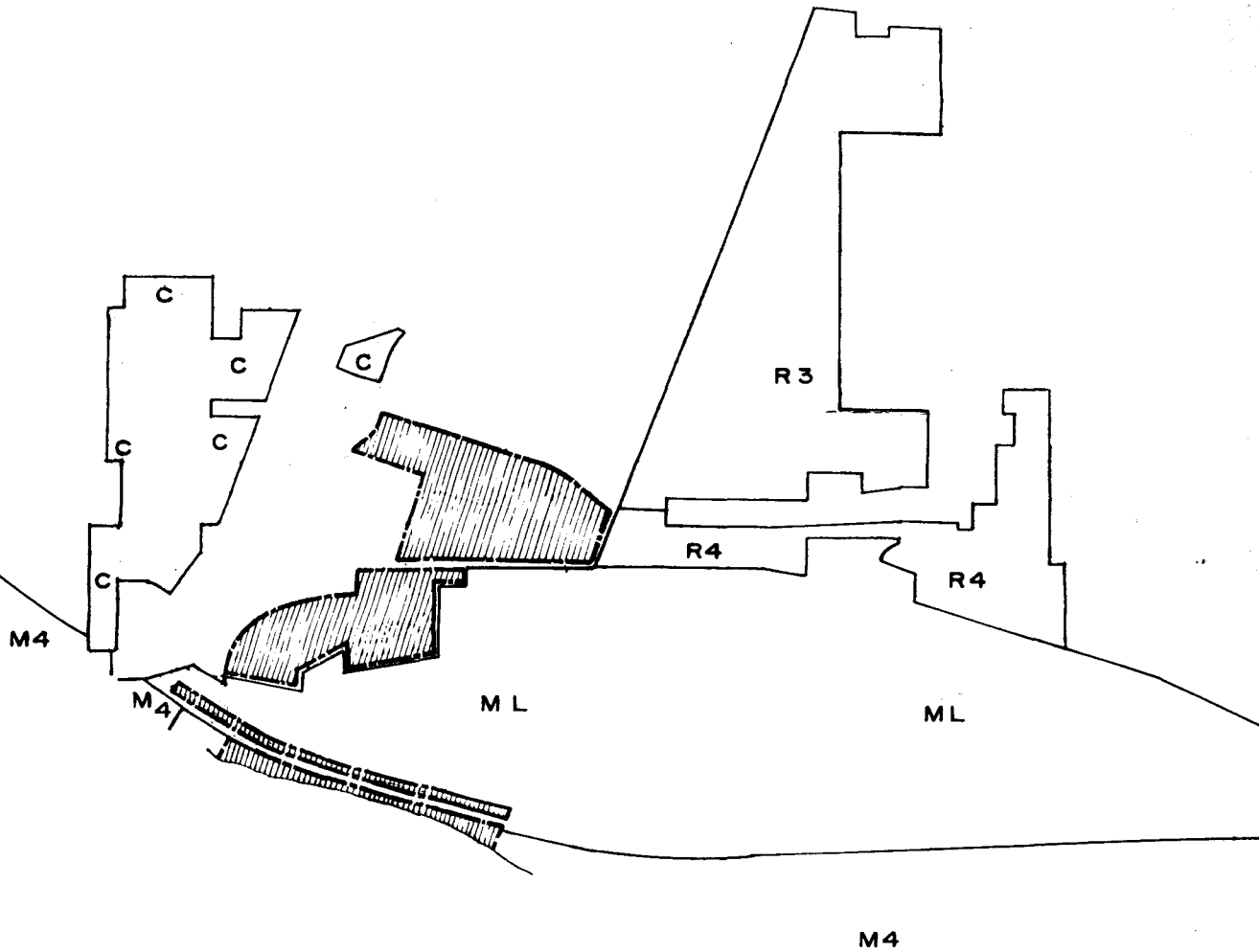
**C** COMMERCIAL

**ML** LIGHT INDUSTRY

**M4** HEAVY INDUSTRY

**R3** SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

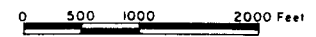
**R4** MULTI-FAMILY MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL



NORTH

## CITY ZONING MAP

FORT VANCOUVER  
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE



M4



Trends in Land Use--The current trend in land use on adjoining properties is a factor that further justifies their early acquisition. The trend, as is graphically shown on the City Zoning Map, is predominately one of increasing industrial development expanding toward or encroaching on the park. To a lesser extent, the trend toward continued commercial development will have a similar effect. With some exceptions, most of the commercial expansion will be physically separated from the park by existing Interstate 5.

#### Regional Analysis

The primary attribute of the park in the land use pattern is that of a large open space in an urban complex of 38,000 population, and it provides for public use and enjoyment in this important setting. Its importance in this role will be further enhanced by improved access, the demands of continued population growth and urbanization, and acquisition of additional adjoining lands.

The tremendous number and diversity of recreational opportunities generally available to the region's residents have little influence on the actual use of the park, since the day-to-day visitors are principally those with historical interests. Such interest is increasing in the region.

Because the park is the largest open space with a waterfront location in the city, it is an ideal site for community gatherings like the annual Fourth of July observances.

## RESOURCE DESCRIPTION

Vegetation: Most of the park area is in grass which is maintained in meadow or lawn condition. The few clumps of oak and Douglas-fir that are scattered throughout the gently sloping grassy areas are all that remain of the original forest setting now largely taken over by exotic species of ornamental trees, flowering shrubs, and herbaceous plants.

A small fruit orchard, a re-creation of an historic feature, is adjacent to the fort site.

History: Fort Vancouver National Historic Site commemorates the enormous influence of the fur trade in the exploration, settlement, and development of the Pacific Slope and in the expansion of the national boundaries to include the present Pacific Northwest. It is classified principally under "The Fur Trade," a subtheme of the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings Theme XV, "Westward Expansion and the Extension of the National Boundaries to the Pacific, 1830-1898." The agricultural phase of the fort's history was considered so important that the site is also classified under Theme XVIIa, "Agriculture and the Farmer's Frontier."

The park also illustrates, as a minor theme, the part played by the United States Army in the opening of the West and in the development of the nation into a world power. These lesser historical values are classified under Theme XIII, "Political and Military Affairs, 1830-1860," and Theme XXI, "Political and Military Affairs after 1865."

Fort Vancouver was the nucleus of the early development of the Pacific Northwest. For two decades, from 1825 to about 1846, this stockaded fur-trading post--headquarters and depot for the Hudson's Bay Company west of the Rocky Mountains--was the economic, political, social, and cultural hub of an area now comprising British Columbia (Canada), Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and western Montana. It was the most important settlement from Mexican California on the south to Russian Alaska on the north.

The fur resources of the Pacific Northwest were discovered by British seamen who visited the northwest coast and obtained valuable pelts in trade with the Indians about the time of the American Revolution. Soon traders from the fledgling United States, Canada, and several European countries were competing on land and sea for the riches thus uncovered.

Stimulated by the reports of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, which had crossed the continent and descended the Columbia River to its mouth in 1804-1806, the New York merchant John Jacob Astor established a series of fur-trading posts in the Columbia basin beginning in 1811. Meanwhile, the North West Company of Montreal had opened posts in the present British Columbia and had expanded into the Columbia drainage area, taking over the Astor interests in 1813. The North West Company reigned supreme in the Pacific Northwest until 1821, when it was absorbed by the Hudson's Bay Company, a British firm whose operations then extended across the continent from Hudson's Bay to the Pacific Ocean.

In 1824 the Hudson's Bay Company decided to move its western headquarters from Fort George, at the mouth of the Columbia River, to a site about 100 miles upstream. This shift was made to strengthen British claims to the territory north of the Columbia River and to be on lands better suited for farming, since one objective of the firm's management was to make its posts as independent as possible of imported foodstuffs. The new post, constructed during the winter of 1824-1825, was named Fort Vancouver in honor of Captain George Vancouver, the British explorer. Five years later, in 1829, the fort was moved about one mile southwest to a more convenient location closer to the Columbia River. This second site, within the present City of Vancouver, Washington, is preserved by Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. The new post grew rapidly in size and importance.

Fort Vancouver was the headquarters of Dr. John McLoughlin, Chief Factor of the Company's Columbia Department from 1824 to 1846. Of towering height and impressive appearance, he maintained a firm control over the Indians of his vast domain as well as over a small army of employees scattered from the Rockies to the Pacific and from Alaska to California. The Columbia department maintained trading outposts on San Francisco Bay and in Honolulu.

Under McLoughlin's energetic leadership, the Hudson's Bay Company won a virtual monopoly of the fur trade in the Oregon Country. Although by international agreement this large area was open to trade and settlement by citizens of both the United States and Great Britain though under the government of neither, the British firm by vigorous trade methods eliminated most of its foreign rivals on land and along the coast. Thus for at least a decade, and longer in certain areas, the history of the Oregon Country and the Hudson's Bay Company activities centering about Fort Vancouver were almost identical.

Fort Vancouver was the nerve center of this vast commercial empire. Its warehouses received the annual shipments of trade goods and supplies from London and then distributed them to the many interior posts, to the fur brigades which ranged as far as present-day Utah and California, and to the vessels and forts which dominated the coastal trade far up the coast of Alaska. Each year the fur returns of the entire western trade were gathered at Fort Vancouver for shipment to England. The key to Vancouver's importance was its strategic position on the great Columbia River, which was navigable to this point by ocean-going vessels and which provided a route of water access to the interior.

The fort was also the center for an important farming and manufacturing community. The company's cultivated fields and pasturelands extended for miles along the north bank of the river. The crops produced by these fields, as well as by the fort's orchard and garden, demonstrated the agricultural possibilities of the Oregon Country and attracted the attention of potential independent farmers. Lumber, axes, flour, pickled



salmon, barrels, boats, and other products of Fort Vancouver's mills, drying sheds, forges, and shops supplied not only the wants of the fur trade but also a brisk commerce with such distant places as the Hawaiian Islands, South America, California, and the Russian settlements in Alaska. These activities marked the beginning of large-scale agricultural and industrial development in the Pacific Northwest.

In addition, much of the cultural and social life of the Oregon Country revolved about Fort Vancouver. Here were established the first school, the first theater, and several of the earliest churches in the Northwest.

Beginning in the early 1830's, as American missionaries and settlers started to flow into the Oregon Country in ever-increasing numbers, British-owned Fort Vancouver was of necessity their immediate goal. Here was the only reliable source of information about the country, here was the only source of emergency shelter and transportation, and here were the only adequate supplies of food, seed, and farm implements in the Northwest. Company policy, directed toward obtaining a Columbia River boundary between Canada and the United States west of the Rockies, did not favor encouragement and assistance of American immigration, but Dr. McLoughlin through humanity and necessity welcomed most settlers. His kind treatment of these pioneers helped foster the growth of an American population in the region. It was not until well into the 1840's that the independent farmers and settlers were sufficiently established to carry on without the economic assistance of the Hudson's Bay Company. Not without justice was McLoughlin later called the "Father of Oregon."

Due to the growth of this American population and because of the increasingly bitter dispute between Great Britain and the United States over the boundary question, the Hudson's Bay Company began to shift some of its depot activities from Fort Vancouver to Fort Victoria, in present British Columbia, as early as 1843-1845. When the Treaty of 1846 established the boundary at the 49th parallel, Fort Vancouver found itself on United States soil, and the administrative shift to Victoria was accelerated. By 1849 the post had been reduced to a subordinate trading and supply center for the region south of the boundary, and in 1860 it was finally abandoned. A few years later a fire destroyed all remaining above-ground evidence of the old fur-trade emporium of the Northwest.

In 1849 the United States Army established its first Pacific Northwest military post on the hill immediately north of Fort Vancouver, and a short time later the old post was encompassed within a military reservation. Vancouver Barracks, as the new installation was known throughout most of its history, developed into the primary military center of the Pacific Northwest. In a day when rivers were the main transportation art-

eries, the same factors which had made Fort Vancouver such a strategic location for the fur trade attracted the attention of the Army.

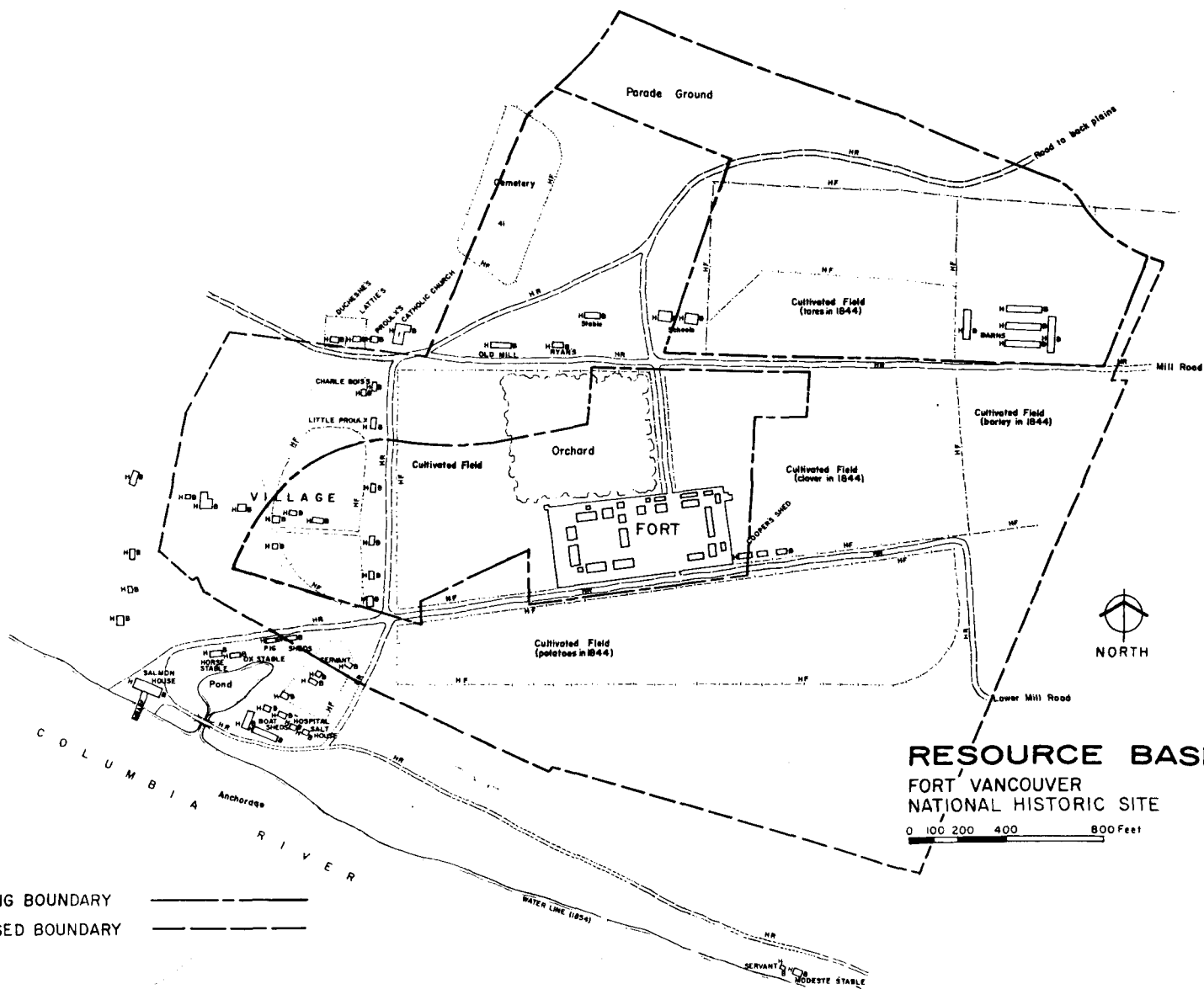
As headquarters for the Columbia Department, Fort Vancouver was the command and supply center for the Pacific Northwest. From here troops were sent to engage in nearly all the Indian Wars of the region. During World War I the post was the site of a spruce lumber mill operated by the Third Spruce Production Division. After serving as a training and staging area during the second World War, the post was deactivated, and in 1946 most of the military reservation was declared surplus.

Appearance During Historic Period: At the height of its prosperity and extent--from about 1836 to 1846--the Hudson's Bay Company post at Fort Vancouver was an impressive establishment. The fort proper was situated on an extensive plain about a quarter of a mile north of the Columbia River. Enclosed by a 16-foot-high stockade, it measured about 732 feet by 325 feet, as large as five football fields laid side by side. After the spring of 1845 a bastion stood at the northwest corner of the stockade and mounted six or eight 3-pound cannon.

Within the stockade were 24 major buildings and several lesser structures, nearly all constructed of heavy squared timbers. Among the more important buildings were four large storehouses, an Indian trade shop, a granary, an impressive residence for the chief factor, dwellings for other company officers and clerks, a church, a powder magazine, and a jail. There were also offices, a blacksmith shop, and a bakery, while a cooper shop was located just outside the walls.

The lesser employees at Fort Vancouver--the tradesmen, artisans, boatmen, and laborers--lived mainly in what was known as "the village," on the plain west and southwest of the stockade. This settlement consisted of from 30 to 50 wooden dwellings, some ranged along lanes and others dotted "all over the plain for a mile." Near the village and extending to the river was a lagoon, around which were a number of other Company buildings, with a wharf on the riverbank. The buildings included a large salmon storehouse, boatsheds, and a hospital. Between the lagoon and the village were barns and shelters for pigs, oxen, and horses.

Surrounding the fort and its outbuildings, the riverbank plain, about half a mile deep and several miles long, was a sea of cultivated fields and pastures. Across the plain and up the slope north of it ran several well-defined roads leading to the sawmills and grist mills up the river, to the wharf, and to several large forest openings or "plains" to the northward where the Company maintained additional farms. The fields were neatly fenced, and scattered about over them were barns, sheds, and other farm structures. Capping the sloping hill north of the fort was a dense coniferous forest.



EXISTING BOUNDARY —————  
 PROPOSED BOUNDARY - - - - -

**RESOURCE BASE MAP**  
**FORT VANCOUVER**  
**NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**

0 100 200 400 800 Feet

Historic Physical Remains Today: After fire destroyed all visible vestiges of the fort during the 1860's, the exact location of the stockade gradually became forgotten. However, archeological excavations conducted by the National Park Service uncovered remains of the palisade posts and foundations of most of the buildings within the walls. The exact locations of all four stockade walls, the blockhouse, and the main structures have been marked out on the surface of the ground by asphalt topping. The only fort structure found intact during the excavations was the stone-lined well in the north-east corner. The top of the well has been restored, and the structure has been exposed for visitor observation.

During 1966 the National Park Service reconstructed the north stockade wall, the north gate, and about 32 feet of the east stockade. This work was as accurate a reproduction of the original as was possible on the basis of the historical information available.



The present park boundaries encompass only a small portion of the once-vast agricultural establishment that surrounded the fort. The larger part of the fort orchard site is on park lands, and to the extent that boundaries permit the orchard has been reestablished. The varieties of fruit trees are those mentioned in historical accounts or those varieties known to have been available during the historic period.

Also within existing boundaries is the site of about half of "the village." Here, however, the exact locations of individual structures are known only from rather diagramatic historic maps and have not been determined exactly by archeological investigations.

Northeast of the fort site, on the hillside sloping up from the river plain, the existing boundaries include the sites of a row of cultivated Company fields and the locations of the main fort barns. Archeological excavations have confirmed the general location of the barns, but little was revealed as to the exact sites and sizes of the structures.

The present park also includes the Vancouver Barracks parade ground, thus preserving an important feature of the military post.

Comparison of Scene During Historic Times and at Present: At the present time a visitor standing on the brow of the hill directly north of the Fort Vancouver site can observe a rather significant remnant of the scene familiar to Hudson's Bay Company employees. His eye travels downward across a sodded slope, over paved Fifth Street which occupies the location of an old fort road, past the partly-restored stockade and out over the grass runways and open fields of Pearson Airpark, then across the grassy embankment of the S. P. & S. Railroad, finally resting on a glimpse of the Columbia River and its tree-lined south shore. If the field of view is kept narrow and if a few modern intrusions, such as automobiles on State Highway 14, are overlooked, one can recapture in the mind's eye, if only fleetingly, the fort and its setting as revealed by early paintings and drawings. In particular, the important relationship between the fort and the river is clearly revealed.

On the other hand, if the eye strays only a short distance to the left or right, the scene is irrevocably shattered. To the east are the rows of parked aircraft and three lines of modern hangars of Pearson Airpark. These now extend nearly to the east end of the restored north stockade.

Beyond the airport on the riverbank rise the tall water tank and boxy outline of a new multi-story manufacturing plant. To the west the immediate foreground and the middle distance are occupied by a large number of substantial Vancouver Barracks structures, still being used by various Army reserve units. In the distance, beyond the old military reservation boundaries, rise the ironwork of the highway bridge across the Columbia and the interchange ramps of an elevated freeway, Interstate 5.

In summary, the historic scene at present is narrowly circumscribed and has been severely altered. What remains, beyond the small area within the present park, exists only because a large part of the airport is still open field and because the Army land contains a number of large trees which help to screen out buildings, the freeway, and the bridge. And even this remnant of the original scene is in imminent danger. If the uses of the airport and Army lands should change to industrial, the site of Fort Vancouver would be deprived of the setting which enables the visitor to understand the post's strategic location near the river and its importance as an agricultural establishment.

Archeology: No sites related to aboriginal culture have as yet been discovered within the park boundaries. Archeological excavations for evidence of the Hudson's Bay period were conducted by the National Park Service in 1947, 1948, 1950, 1952, 1961, and 1966. This work resulted in uncovering remains and determining the exact locations (and in most cases the dimensions) of the stockade and the major structures within it; and the general locations of the Company's barns have been confirmed.

A large number of artifacts from the Hudson's Bay period were recovered during these excavations. Such items as locks, hinges, nails, keys, and window glass throw much light upon the physical structure of the Company buildings. Other items, such as bottles, pieces of dinnerware, clay pipes, inkwells, trap parts, axe heads, and buttons illustrate the cultural, social, and industrial life at the fort.

The historical archeological excavations have been well recorded by six reports, copies of which are on file at the park and in the Regional Office. Thousands of the excavated artifacts are stored at the park, where they are now being identified, classified, catalogued, and related to the field notes.

Recreation: The primary recreation resource of the park results from its open, natural character. This resource is well-recognized by Vancouver residents and organizations, who use it for the annual Fourth of July observances, in which large numbers of people participate; "rock-and-roll" jazz sessions; the originating point for civic parades; bicycling, horseback riding, and running.

While these uses have no relationship to the park's historical importance, they are either infrequent or are of little consequence, and have not detracted from the preservation and public enjoyment of the fort.

The second, more limited recreation resource is boating and related activities on the river frontage lands within the park. As pointed out in a previous section, the City of Vancouver has developed this resource to a minor extent.

The park also has a potential for forms of outdoor recreation use that would definitely contribute to visitor appreciation and enjoyment of the historic resources. These potential uses include picnicking and outdoor play, both as adjuncts to historical resource use.

## Resource Evaluation

History-- The primary resource which the park possesses is, of course, historical. Its national significance in illustrating an important segment of American history is recognized and established by reason of its inclusion in the National Park System.

As the center of all Hudson's Bay Company activities west of the Rocky Mountains, as the "cradle of civilization" in the Pacific Northwest, as the western terminus of the Oregon Trail, and finally as the location of the U. S. Army's Pacific Northwest headquarters, Fort Vancouver is the best site to illustrate and interpret such broad themes in American history as the fur trade, expansion of the national boundaries to the Pacific, the western military frontier, and agricultural developments in the Northwest corner of the country. The site was for more than 20 years the home and headquarters of Chief Factor John McLoughlin, the "Father of Oregon," who was nationally significant in the history of the United States. The site, still surrounded by an appreciable amount of open land as it was in historic times and still reasonably open to the Columbia River, possesses integrity.

The significance of the Fort Vancouver site has twice been considered by the Advisory Board and twice found to be of national importance.

Archeology-- The archeological resource of the park is secondary in importance only to history. Actually, it may well be considered to be an integral part of the historical resource, for the knowledge necessary to accurately restore Fort Vancouver and its setting, and for correct interpretation, depends upon continued archeological research.

Recreation--As an area of desirable and useable open space in an urban community, the present park has major local recreational significance.



## FACTORS AFFECTING RESOURCES AND USE

### Legal Factors

Legal and Legislative History-- Fort Vancouver National Historic Site is located on land which was part of the United States military reservation established around Fort Vancouver in October 1850. This reservation, reduced in conformity with a Congressional Act of 1853 to 640 acres, was subject only to the claims of the Hudson's Bay Company as guaranteed by the Treaty of 1846. These claims were extinguished by international negotiation in 1869. The reservation is thus considered as having been created from the public domain. Exclusive Federal jurisdiction over the land was recognized by Section 1, Art. 25 of the Constitution of the State of Washington and an act of the State Legislature approved February 24, 1891.

As early as 1915 the War Department designated the site of the Hudson's Bay Company fort as a "National Monument" under authority of the Antiquities Act, but evidently the recognition was soon withdrawn or allowed to lapse. During the 1920's and 1930's local citizens, historical societies, the City of Vancouver, and other agencies attempted to obtain Congressional authority and appropriations for restoring the fort stockade. Two laws (43 Stat. 1113 in 1925; and 52 Stat. 195 in 1938) authorizing reconstruction were actually passed, but no action resulted, seemingly because no funds were granted.

The opportunity for decisive action did not come until 1946, when a large part of the Vancouver Barracks Military Reservation was declared surplus to the needs of the Army. State and local historical organizations pressed vigorously for legislation to obtain a national monument or historical park to preserve the fort site.

In 1946 officials of the National Park Service studied the area and reported that, in order properly to preserve the historical values, nearly all of the reservation between the Evergreen Highway and the Columbia River would be required for park purposes.

However, the City of Vancouver desired to make a local airport of the former Pearson Field on the reservation, and on March 14, 1947, by a quit-claim deed from the War Assets Administration it acquired a transfer in perpetuity of all of the reservation lands south of the Evergreen Highway not retained by the Army or held by the War Assets Administration for possible transfer to the National Park Service. A reversionary clause in the deed provides that ownership will revert to the Federal Government if the land ceases to be used for airport purposes; but subsequent legislation permits the city to sell all or part of the land if the proceeds are to be used for airport purposes.

The legislative drive to establish a national monument at Fort Vancouver was culminated by the Act of June 19, 1943 (62 Stat. 532), authorizing the establishment of Fort Vancouver National Monument with a total area as established or as enlarged not to exceed 90 acres. Enlargement within the 90 acres was restricted to lands acquired through surplus Federal property procedures or through donation.

However, prior to the enactment of this bill the National Park Service agreed that the City of Vancouver could have an avigation easement over the old fort site proper. This agreement was a necessary prerequisite to the release of the site by the War Assets Administration.

Pursuant to the Act and this agreement, the WAA transferred administration of 53.453 acres of the old military reservation to the Department of the Interior by a letter dated May 19, 1949. This land was in two sections: Parcel 1, 8.156 acres, situated south of Fifth Street and containing most of the site of the Fort Vancouver stockade; and Parcel 3, 45.297 acres, situated between Fifth Street and East Evergreen Boulevard and containing the greater part of the Vancouver Barracks parade ground.

In accepting this transfer on May 24, 1949, the Department of the Interior agreed to the terms of the avigation easement in favor of the City of Vancouver. This easement gave the City the right of free and unobstructed passage of aircraft over the entire 8.156 acres of Parcel 1. In addition, the Service was prohibited from placing any buildings or other structures above ground level, and visitors were specifically forbidden to enter that portion of the monument.

During the Korean War a portion of Parcel 3 containing 2.75 acres of land and several barracks buildings was taken back by the Army, and in 1951 the National Park Service agreed to let the Army use Tract "G" at the western end of the parade ground for organized reserve corps purposes under terms of a revocable use permit. The 2.75 acres have never been returned to the national monument. Thus the combined areas of Parcels 1 and 3 was 50.703 acres.

This arrangement was formalized by a Park Service-Army agreement reached in December 1953, and by a Service letter of April 15, 1954, which permitted the Army continued occupancy and use of Tract "G". However, the Service can terminate the use permit at any time, and hence it constitutes no barrier to park development and use.

As a part of this arrangement, the Department of the Army by a self-executing letter dated December 16, 1953, transferred to the National Park Service a tract of 9.21 acres known as Parcel 2. This land was south of Fifth Street and contained the remainder of the stockade site. The total land under National Park Service administration after this acquisition was 59.917 acres, as then measured.

The principal sites which the park was designed to protect--the fort location and the parade ground--having been acquired, the Secretary of the Interior, by a Departmental Order of June 30, 1954, officially established Fort Vancouver National Monument.

Several years later the General Services Administration desired to dispose of the very narrow riverfront section of the former military reservation lying between the City of Vancouver's Kaiser Access Road (Columbia Way) and the Columbia River. The City of Vancouver wished to obtain this property, but it could not give assurance that structures would not be built on it which would interfere with the historic scene as viewed from the fort site and the monument visitor center. Therefore the Service exercised its prior rights, as a Federal agency, to the surplus property and acquired this river tract of about 6.5 acres by transfer from GSA on December 4, 1957 (accepted by the Department, January 15, 1958). The National Park Service, in turn, issued a permit to the City for use of the property as a public park and boat launching ramp. As extended, this waterfront use permit will continue until 1973.

Along with the river tract, the General Services Administration asked the Service to take over administration of the 100-foot-wide Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway right-of-way which runs across the old military reservation directly north of the Kaiser Access Road. It was felt that as the Federal agency controlling the nearest land to this government-owned strip, the National Park Service was the logical organization to retain custody. The Service saw the desirability of maintaining control over this strategic parcel in order to protect as much as possible the historic scene and to prevent future disposal to an owner unsympathetic to the scenic requirements of an historical park. Also, taking the very long view, it was realized that it would be desirable to acquire the land should the S.P.&S. Railway ever relinquish its rights to use the easement over the parcel. Thus the Service accepted the Railroad Tract of about 8.3 acres on January 15, 1958. These two acquisitions brought the total acreage of the monument to 74.623 acres, as then measured.

From the very first planning at Fort Vancouver, the Service had realized that more land would be necessary to protect the fort setting than the 90 acres to which the monument was limited by the authorizing legislation. In 1954 the Service made definite recommendations for proposed ultimate boundaries, and on January 26, 1955, Secretary McKay approved this proposal "as a general planning objective." Shortly thereafter the Service suggested new legislation to authorize an enlargement to permit eventual accomplishment of these boundary recommendations.

This move was successful, and on June 30, 1961, the President approved an Act of Congress (75 Stat. 196) which permitted the Secretary to revise the boundaries to include not more than 130 "additional acres." Thus a total land area of 220 acres is authorized. The Act also authorized the Secretary to acquire "in such manner as he may consider to be in the public interest" the non-Federal lands within the revised boundaries. This clause removed the earlier prohibition on the purchase of lands. The new law also permitted heads of executive departments involved to transfer surplus lands



needed for the park directly to the Secretary of the Interior. It also changed the name of the area to Fort Vancouver National Historic Site.

With the easing of the area limitations, the Service was able to acquire from the Department of the Army by a self-executing letter of May 14, 1963, a parcel of 14.5 acres lying west and southwest of the Hudson's Bay Company fort site. This area includes about half of the site of "the village" which was associated with the old fort. This tract was subject to several easements, largely for water lines. The only one which seriously restricts Service use of the land is an Army Aircraft Taxiway easement giving unobstructed access over a designated one-acre route from Army property on the north across the tract to Pearson Airpark on the southeast. With the acquisition of this parcel, the total area of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site was--and still is--89.123 acres.

The existence of the aviation easement over all of the Hudson's Bay fort site (Parcel 1) so hampered interpretation of this important historical resource that the National Park Service has attempted for some years to obtain modification. An opportunity came in about 1961 when it was discovered that the June 1959 edition of the FAA regulations for small airports defined aviation easements at the ends of runways in such a manner as would free at least part of the site from the very restrictive provisions hitherto existing. On February 27, 1962, the City of Vancouver and the Secretary of the Interior signed an agreement reducing the easement to the limits of the 1959 regulations.

As a result of this accord the Service was able to rebuild the north and part of the east walls of the old fort stockade in 1966. Also, by fencing the limits of the aviation easement, visitors can be permitted on the north portion of the fort site.

On October 21, 1966, the Western Regional Office submitted a boundary status report recommending that 122.43 acres, in seven separate tracts, be acquired for addition to Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. All available data on boundary descriptions and tract areas have been obtained and submitted to the Washington Office.

Summary of Legal Factors Relating to Planning

Limitations on Land Use--

1. Avigation easement to City of Vancouver prohibits reconstruction of additional stockade sections or of structures within or adjoining the stockade; also prohibits visitor access to most of fort site.
2. Army aircraft taxiway easement on part of old "village" site restricts erection of structures, fences, signs, and other developments in that part of area.
3. S. P. & S. Railroad use permit, extended and confirmed by Secretary of the Interior on December 4, 1954, prevents removal of railroad embankment and opening view from fort site to the Columbia River.
4. The Clark County P.U.D. has an easement to bring utilities to the visitor center, residences, and utility area until 1977.

Limitations on Land Acquisition--The Act of

June 30, 1961, limits the total area of the National Historic Site to 220 acres.

### Other Commitments--

1. A use permit to the City of Vancouver gives the City use of the waterfront strip for park and recreation purposes until 1973.
2. A Service commitment permits the Portland Area Boy Scouts to anchor a barge and boats off the riverfront section if they elect to do so.

Type of Jurisdiction--The Federal Government has exclusive legislative jurisdiction over all lands within present boundaries.

### Climate and Topography

The climate is influenced by Pacific Ocean currents and is quite mild and wet. Temperatures of zero to minus five degrees have occurred, but are exceedingly rare. There are very few days with temperatures over 100 degrees.

Typical summer weather is between 70 and 80 degrees, with usual winter temperatures from about 40 to 55. The area receives some snowfall in December and January, but there have been years with little or none whatever.

Prevailing winds during the summer are from the northwest, averaging 8 to 9 miles per hour.

Prevailing winter winds are from the southeast, with an average velocity of about eight miles per hour. However, high winds do occur, and at least one heavy fall blow from the southwest can usually be expected, which will vary from 60 to as much as 120 miles per hour.

There are long periods of wet weather. Statistics for the 30-year period 1929 through 1958 show that the mean number of days with precipitation of over one-tenth inch was 97, requiring the use of shelters for outdoor facilities. In contrast, the months of July and August are so dry that irrigation is required to maintain lawns and gardens.

The climate, however, does not materially influence total park visitation or its pattern of use. Most visitation is during the spring and fall, while visits by students during the school year are largely independent of weather conditions.

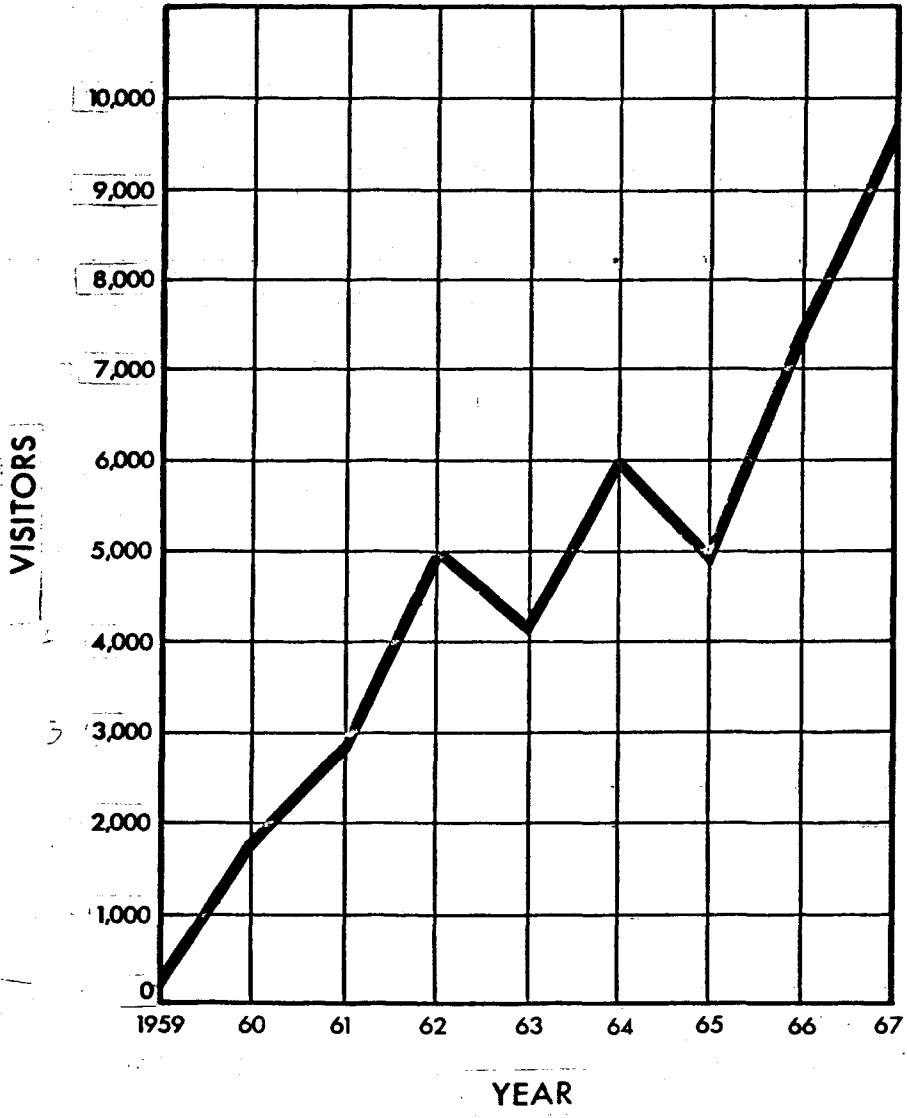
The topography of the park is formed by the flood plain of the Columbia River. The area slopes gently from the north to the river, with elevations from 102 feet m.s.l. at the north to 24 feet m.s.l. at the river.

The site of Fort Vancouver lies on the first narrow flood plain of the Columbia. The terrain quickly begins a short rise to the second, or Mill Plain. From the rising ground above, the visitor can view the entire scene, including the far side of the Columbia River.

#### Soils

The flood plain and the rising ground behind it consist of a fairly uniform gravelly loam 12 inches or more in depth over alluvial gravel. Surface runoff is quickly absorbed, making irrigation necessary for the maintenance of healthy vegetation.

FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
**YEARLY SCHOOL GROUP VISITATION**  
(ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST THOUSAND)



SOURCE: MONTHLY PUBLIC USE REPORTS



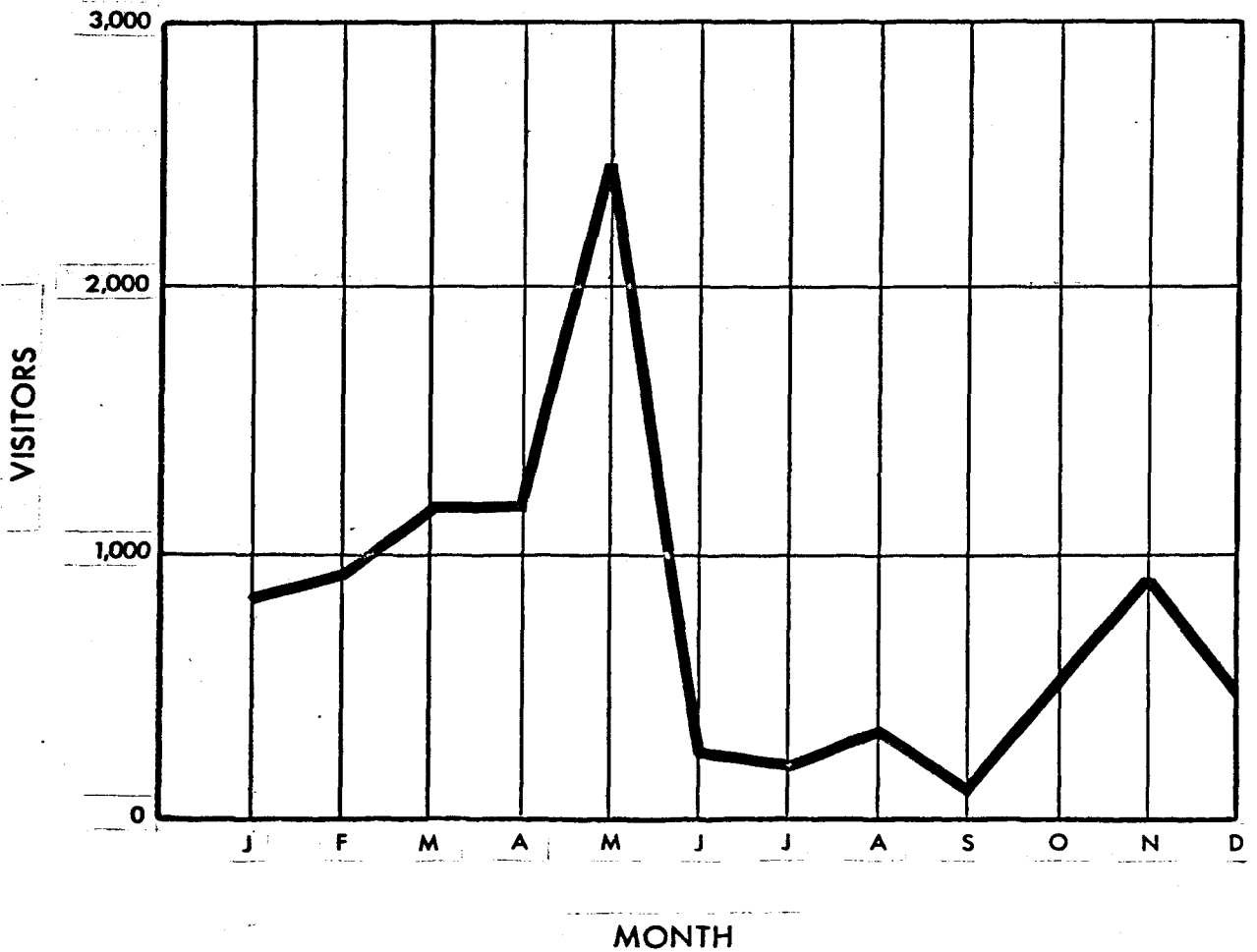
## VISITOR USE OF RESOURCES

Most visitation is on weekends during the spring and fall months. About 80 percent of visitors are family groups. School groups, consisting of students in the fourth grade and up, from within a 50-mile radius of Vancouver, compose about 10 percent of the visitors.

These groups range in size from approximately 30 to 150 students who visit the park during the school year as a part of the school curriculum.

The present pattern of visitor use is quite simple. The focal point for the park visit is the interpretive exhibit in the visitor center. Slide shows are available to the public on weekends, but guided tours are offered to the general visitor at any time. Comparatively few people visit the fort site. At present, the interest there is not sufficient to attract the average visitor.

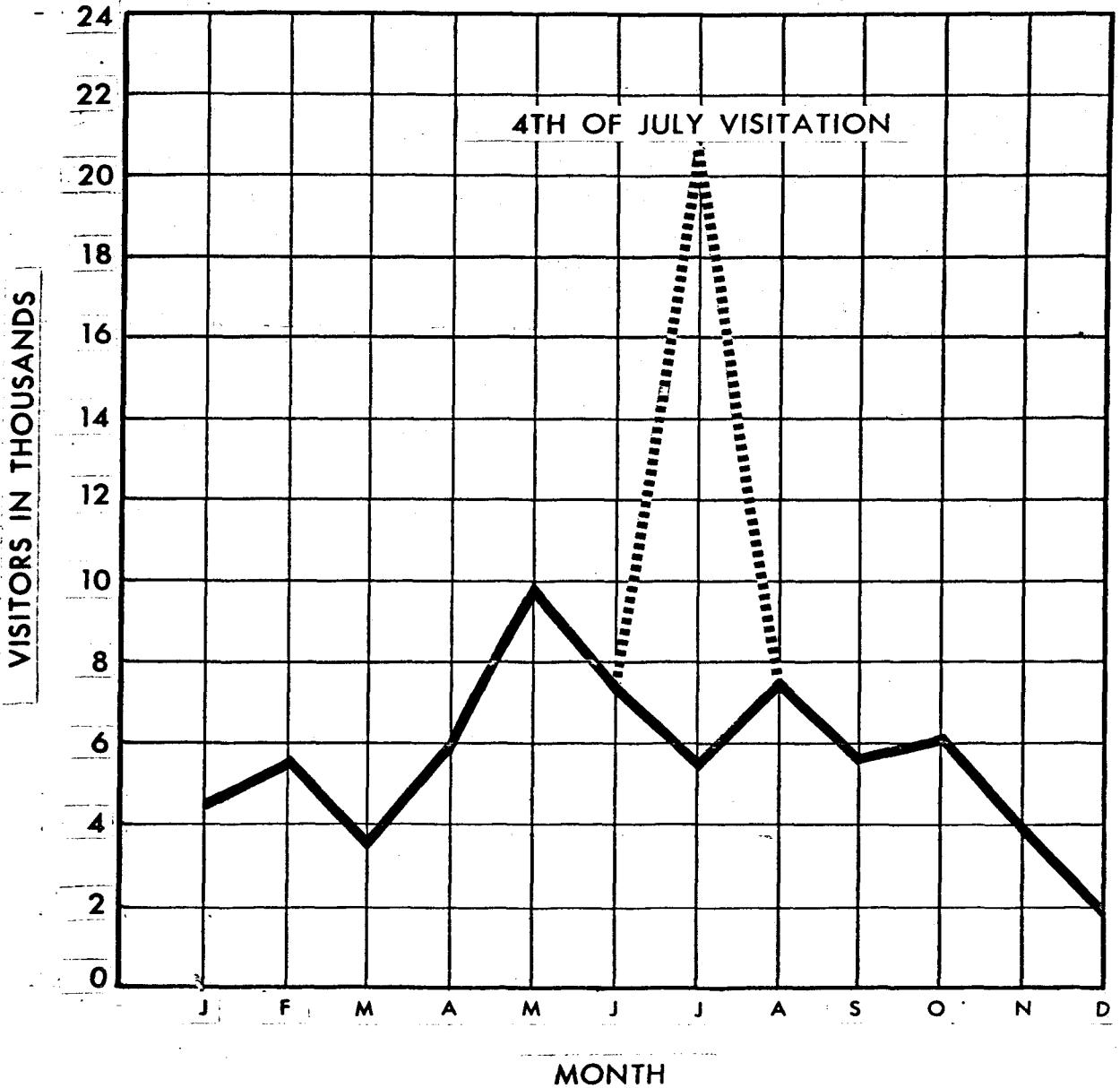
FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
**SCHOOL GROUP VISITATION BY MONTH-1967**  
(ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST THOUSAND)



School groups are given a conducted tour through the public portion of the visitor center. The tour includes a slide show. The average length of stay for school groups is 45 minutes unless they visit the fort site, in which case it is about 1-1/2 hours.

The groups arrive between 9:00 A.M. and 2:30 P.M. Those that have scheduled their visit to include the lunch hour need lunch facilities. They are encouraged to use the city parks for this purpose. There is no existing or proposed sheltered outdoor picnic area within the immediate vicinity, however, and during inclement weather the groups are permitted to lunch in the visitor center lobby or at the sheltered entrance. Of the 283 school groups who visited the park in 1967, 25 groups lunched in the area. A considerably greater number, perhaps a majority, also would have done so had sheltered picnic area space been available. This facility should accommodate up to 150 children.

FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
**TOTAL VISITATION BY MONTH-1967**  
(ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST THOUSAND)



At the present time, the length of stay necessary for the casual visitor to absorb the park story does not require lunching to ensure an uninterrupted visit. If the major fort structures were restored, however, he would almost certainly spend the greater part of the day in the park. In that event, the availability of lunch facilities would greatly enhance his park experience.

The annual Fourth of July observances, staged by local service clubs, attract crowds of up to 20,000. Activities conducted as a part of these annual observances are:

Band concerts, including "rock and roll" bands

Cannon firing

Speakers

Fireworks displays

Water fights by the Vancouver Fire Department

Food concessions (set up on East Fifth Street)

Parades for "Miss Washington" contest, which are made up on the parade grounds.

The park also receives incidental recreation use, both passive and active, by neighborhood residents including walking, sunbathing, practice golfing, horseback riding, and cross country running.

Still other incidental uses include National Guard and Reserve Corps parades and artillery problems; Bureau of Public Roads field survey crew training; and art classes.

According to present forecasts, park use is expected to reach 123,000 persons by 1970. This forecast is based on present development only. With major restoration, a very significant upturn in visitation could logically be expected.

Based on judgment, the carrying capacity of the park with full development and restoration would be about 1,000 persons, exclusive of special events.

## THE PLAN

The historical importance of Fort Vancouver and its location in an urban environment close to a major interstate tourist route presents the opportunity to reveal to a large number of people, through extensive restoration and interpretation, the significant story of early settlement in the Northwest.

Restoration: The General Development Map indicates those elements of the historic area, within the proposed boundary, which should be restored in order to achieve the objective of re-creating a representative and significant segment of the original historic scene.

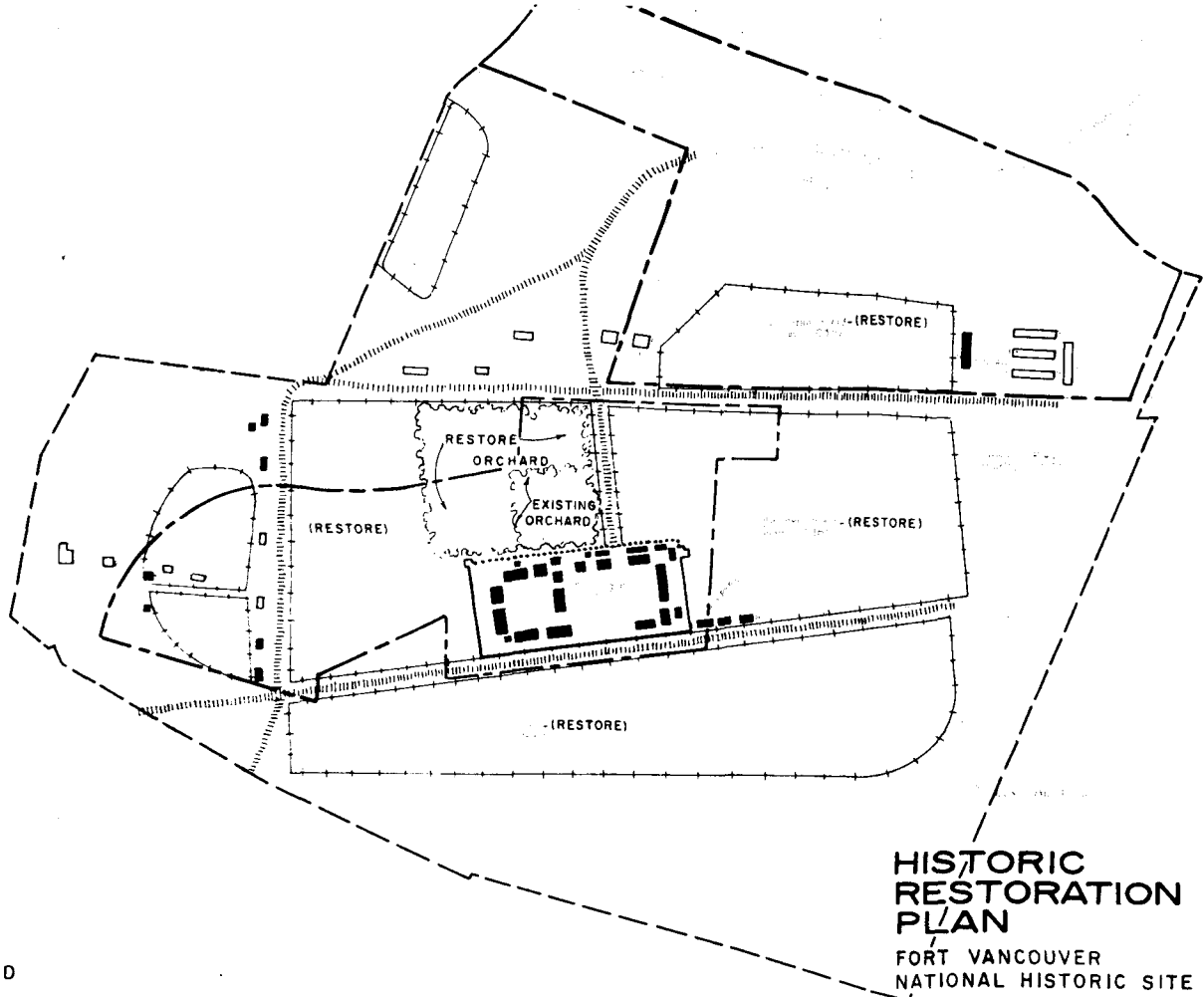
The accomplishment of this objective will require the reconstruction of the remaining three log walls of the stockade, the squared-timber octagonal blockhouse, and about 23 major squared-timber or frame buildings within the stockade. The interiors of certain key fort structures--such as the blockhouse, the Chief Factor's residence, the trade shop, at least one fur warehouse, the Bachelors' Quarters, the office, the bakery, the blacksmith's shop, carpenter's shop, jail, and powder magazine--will be restored in whole or in part, and representative rooms will be refurnished. The interiors of several other structures will be adapted for interpretive uses--exhibits, audio-visual rooms, children's play area, and storage. Others will be used for visitor facilities such as rest rooms and lunch room.



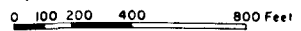
Outside the stockade, several key structures in the village will be reconstructed, as will such auxiliary structures as the cooper's sheds, fences, barns, and sheds. Historic roads, the garden, the orchard, and cultivated fields will be restored.

Related to restoration of the man-made scene will be an approximate re-creation of the original surrounding forest environment which has virtually been eliminated since historic times. This will require restoring native Douglas-fir and maintaining the land in a meadow condition, except those areas used for a specific purpose. The reforestation will preserve significant views into and within the historic area and screen out surrounding land uses.

The historic cultivated fields shown for restoration will be put into crops that require a minimum of cultivation and maintenance. One important element of the historic area has not been shown for restoration--the historic water front development. The possibility of eliminating the existing land uses that impede restoration between the fort and the river is so remote that inclusion of this area in the restoration plan has not been considered at this time. Future changes in land use, especially the railroad, would have to take place before this area could be considered for restoration. The historic link between Fort Vancouver and the river is a very important part of the historic picture, and every advantage should be taken to restore it if the opportunity ever presents itself. Meanwhile, the waterfront strip will be landscaped in keeping with the historic scene to the extent practicable and in keeping with conforming recreation uses.



**HISTORIC  
RESTORATION  
PLAN**  
FORT VANCOUVER  
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE



**LEGEND**

- — EXISTING BOUNDARY
- - - PROPOSED BOUNDARY
- BUILDINGS TO BE RECONSTRUCTED
- BUILDING SITES TO BE MARKED ON THE GROUND
- ⋯ HISTORIC ROADS TO BE RESTORED
- ⋯ HISTORIC FENCES TO BE RESTORED
- ⋯ EXISTING RECONSTRUCTION

Access and Circulation--A two-way road will provide access as far as the reconstructed fort. This road will be routed around the perimeter of the site, thereby leaving the main part of the historic area free of automobiles.

The main approach to the area will continue to be on Fort Vancouver Way, but the main entrance to the site will be moved from East Evergreen Boulevard to McLoughlin Road. This will allow traffic approaching on Fort Vancouver Way to proceed directly through the East Evergreen intersection. This is especially desirable if East Evergreen is widened to four lanes. Entering the site from McLoughlin Road will enable the visitor to have an initial panoramic view of the historic area with the river in the background. A parking overlook will be provided at this point. Since McLoughlin Road is a city street, cooperation with the city will be necessary for modification of a portion of the road as shown on the General Development Plan.

Parking will be provided south of the fort at the end of the access road. In this location, the fort itself will completely screen the parked cars from important vantage points in the historic area, including the overlook.

An interpretive vehicular transit system is proposed from the fort to other features in the historic area. This is necessary due to the distance involved between the various features. It will also enhance the visitor's total experience to see the site from changing angles and perspectives as he moves through the area. The proposed route will form a loop beginning and ending at the south entrance to the fort and will follow the major system of historic roads. The restored system of historic roads will also be used as foot paths for those who wish to walk through the area.

Fifth Street between East Reserve Street and McLoughlin Road will be restored to an historic road.

A picnic area, with shelters and sanitary facilities, should be provided away from the main historic area to accommodate school groups who have scheduled their trips during the lunch hour and as a convenience to other visitors. The best location is in a grove of trees east of the cemetery on land currently used by the Army as a barracks area. If it appears that acquisition of this land should not be feasible soon after reconstruction of the fort, a temporary picnic area should be located near the parking area at the fort.

As a convenience to visitors with small children, it is recommended that a supervised area for youngsters be provided, allowing parents more freedom to explore the area. However, rather than providing a conventional play area, it is proposed that one of the historic buildings in the fort (possibly the schoolhouse) be outfitted with games and craft activities related to the history of the area and that interpretive story sessions be provided specifically oriented to small children as part of the total interpretive program. Linked to this could be a small outdoor play area equipped with play equipment designed to relate to the historic period.

Providing an area in the fort specifically reserved for small children and designed to be compatible with the historic nature of the area would do much to enliven the visitors' experience by re-creating children's activities of the period, still maintaining the historical integrity of the area. As side benefits, it would be more convenient for the visitor, it would offer protection from the elements at a low cost through utilization of a restored building, and it would be easier to maintain and protect than in some other location outside the fort. There is sufficient space within the stockade to accommodate this proposal without interfering with other activities.

Interim Development--There is an immediate need for a sheltered lunch area for school groups and a small parking area close to the fort site.

It is proposed that an open shelter lunch area be attached to the east end of the visitor center where it will be out of sight but close to the facilities of the visitor center, including the comfort station. After completion of the ultimate picnic area, this structure could be walled in and utilized for expansion of the headquarters.

The interim parking area at the fort site should be located along the east boundary adjacent to the airpark hangars. With additional screening along Fifth Street, this would be the least intrusive location to maintain the present view from the visitor center to the fort site.

Also, a program of clean-up, grading, and planting is needed along the river front.

Community Relations--Incidental and special uses by the local community not specifically related to the history of the area will continue to be allowed as long as they are compatible with the primary purpose of preservation and maintenance of the historic scene.

Portable staging and seating will be provided at the fort for local groups who may want to utilize the background of the fort for production of plays and pageants. Also, consideration should be given to hiring local theater groups to provide historic dramatization as part of the interpretive program.

Use of the area for Fourth of July celebrations (except fireworks which would endanger the restored fort) and for assembly of civic parades will continue to be allowed. However, more cooperation should be sought from the local community for cleanup and traffic control.



No special facilities, either temporary or permanent, should be provided for these activities. The parade ground will continue to be made available for parking for these special yearly events only, but the condition of the turf should be improved.

Local residents will have free access throughout the area for activities such as walking, bicycling, and horseback riding.

Interpretive Facilities--After reconstruction of the fort, it is anticipated that visitors will tend to bypass the existing visitor center or, if not, they will have made an extra unnecessary stop because of the distance between the visitor center and the fort; therefore, it is proposed that the main interpretive facilities be moved from the existing visitor center to the fort and incorporated into the reconstructed buildings. The existing visitor center would then be strictly for administration and storage of the area's large archeological collections.

Along the tour route will be a number of interpretive stops where visitors can explore the various features in more detail. Stops will include the farm buildings, the orchard, and the garden, where historic methods of farming will be demonstrated

and such long-disappeared features as oxen and Red River carts may be observed. Other stops will be at marked and interpreted historic sites such as the village, the mill, and the school houses.

It is proposed that a living farm exhibit composed of various farm animals of the period be located in the reconstructed barns and farm yard, with the restored fenced fields used for grazing.

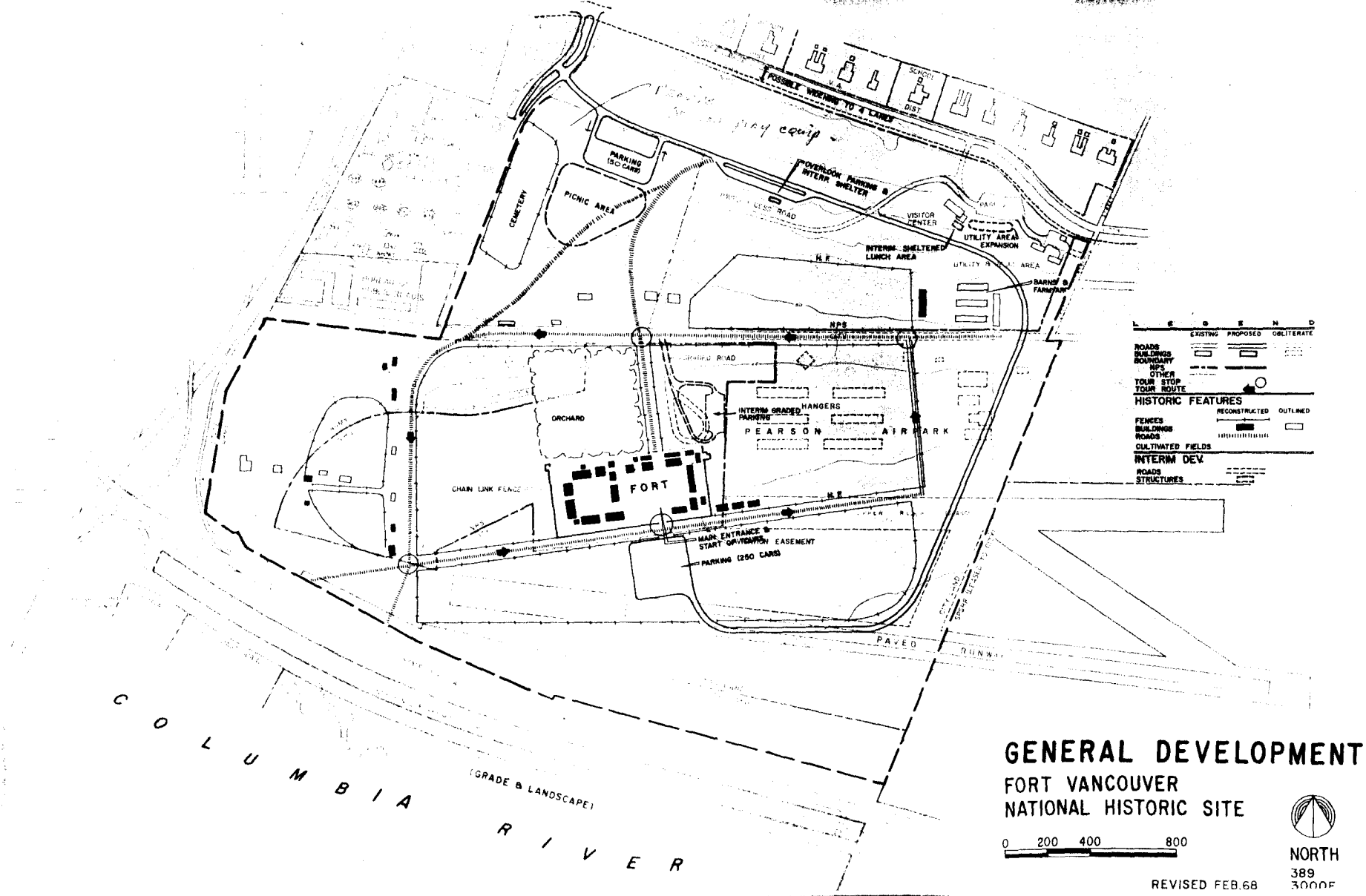
To further enhance the historic character of the area, it is proposed that certain manufacturing activities such as blacksmithing, baking, and cask making be revived as live demonstrations of the daily activities of the period, with the products made available for purchase.

Fee Collection--A fee will be collected for entrance into the fort, and would include use of the special tour vehicle. Visitors will have free access to the remainder of the site.

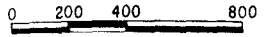
Concession--With the number of activities proposed, it would be well to consider a concession operation. The location of Fort Vancouver in a large urban area suggests that this could be economically feasible. The concessioner could operate the special manufacturing demonstrations and sell the products along with other items in one of the historic stores in the fort. In addition, he could have a small lunch area in one of the restored buildings, and could operate the special transportation system. Special care would have to be taken with concession contracts and their implementation to insure that historical and aesthetic integrity is maintained.

Land Acquisition--Acquisition of additional land is needed for restoration, development of visitor facilities, and to provide a proper setting and buffer between the restored area and existing and potential adverse surrounding land uses.

The land acquisition map shows the recommended boundary and the individual parcels that would have to be acquired and the priority of acquisition. The total acreage, including land within the existing boundary, is within the maximum of 220 acres allowable under current legislation.



**GENERAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**FORT VANCOUVER**  
**NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**



**NORTH**  
 389  
 3000P

REVISED FEB.68

Elimination of the existing upper runway aviation easement could precede acquisition of the airpark, allowing reconstruction of the fort to begin. However, early acquisition of the airpark land, (Parcel 1), is the most critical need in terms of restoration of the historic scene and development of visitor facilities.

Parcel 3 is needed to allow restoration of Fifth Street to an historic road and to eliminate an existing hazard to visitors. This street has received very little use between McLoughlin Road and East Reserve since it was blocked off at the expressway.

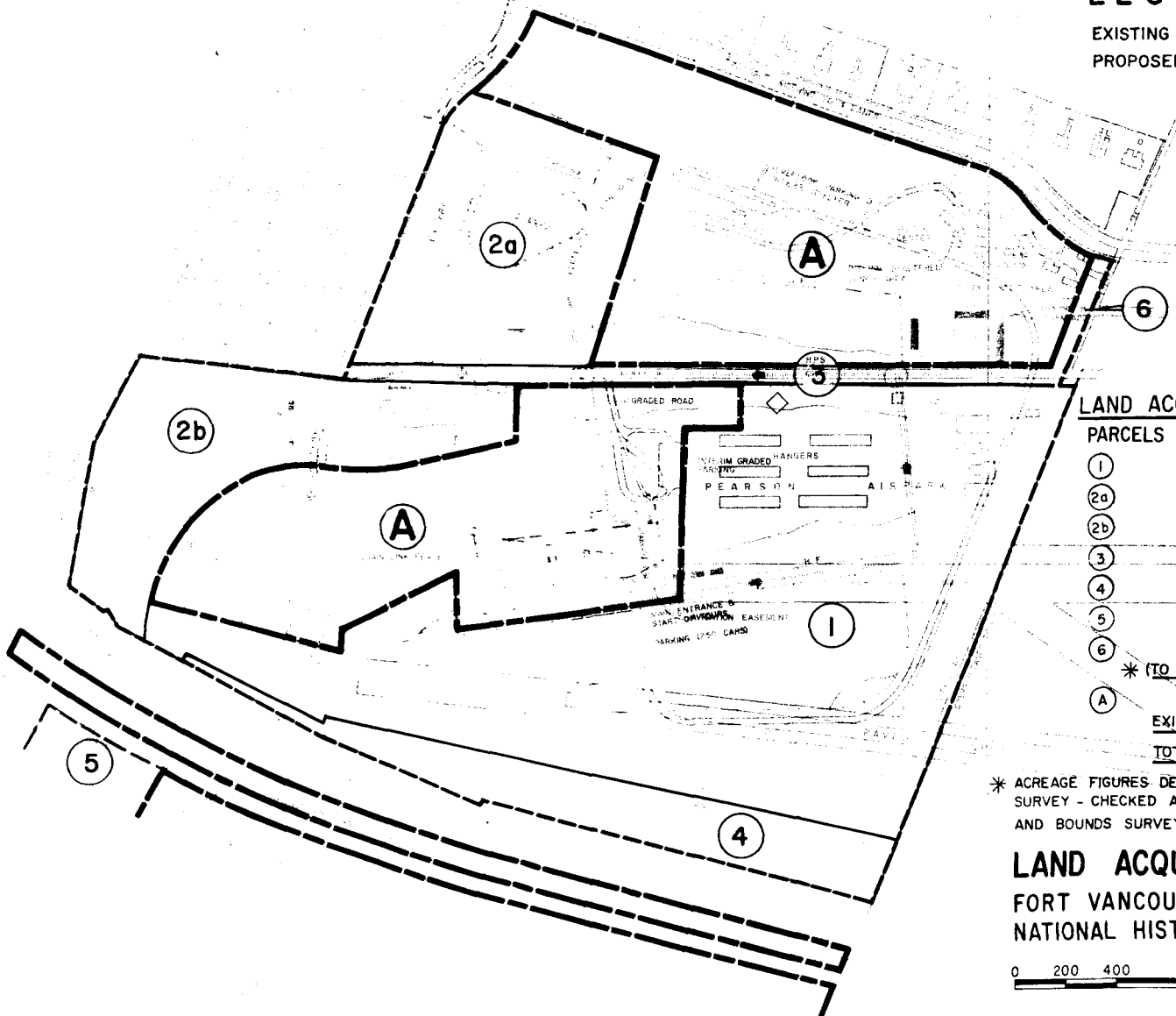
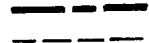
Parcel 2a is needed for restoration of the historic scene by eliminating existing Army buildings for development of a picnic area and for preservation of the site of the fur-trade cemetery and the sites of several Hudson's Bay Company structures.

Parcel 2b is needed for restoration of a portion of the historic village area and for further restoration of the historic setting through elimination of existing structures and control of the land use.

# LEGEND

EXISTING BOUNDARY

PROPOSED BOUNDARY

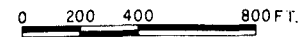


## LAND ACQUISITION PRIORITIES

PARCELS	OWNERSHIP	ACREAGE
①	CITY	72.57
②a	ARMY	19.09
②b	ARMY	17.73
③	CITY	2.94
④	STATE	4.22
⑤	COASTGUARD	2.76
⑥	CITY	0.72
* (TO BE ACQUIRED) ACRES		120.03
A	FORT VANCOUVER N.H.S.	
EXISTING ACREAGE		89.123
TOTAL ACREAGE		209.126

\* ACREAGE FIGURES DERIVED FROM PLANIMETRIC SURVEY - CHECKED AND VERIFIED WITH MEETS AND BOUNDS SURVEY.

## LAND ACQUISITION FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE



NORTH

Parcel 4 is needed to control the land use between the fort and the highway right-of-way. Currently this area is used for fill dirt storage by the Highway Department.

Parcel 5, an important segment of the riverfront, is required to prevent the construction of any high-rise or otherwise incompatible developments in the historic scene; also, should future land use changes permit historic restoration along the riverfront, this parcel contains the sites of several key features and would be urgently required for interpretive purposes.

Parcel 6 is needed to provide land use control adjacent to the existing Park Service residential area.

This program would complete the historic setting to the extent possible under current legislation.

Control over all the land down to the river would be desirable, allowing full restoration of the historic area between Fort Vancouver and the river. However, the intervening land uses are so firmly established that it is unrealistic to plan on acquiring them at this time.

Management Facilities: Implementation of the plan will require additional staffing and maintenance facilities.

No additional staff housing is proposed beyond that which currently exists because of Fort Vancouver's proximity to adequate housing in the community.

It is proposed that as many of the maintenance functions as possible be contracted. However, expansion of the park maintenance program can be expected. Additional maintenance facilities will be located between the headquarters and the existing residential area.



Priority of Needs: The important projects proposed in the objectives and the plan will be carried out in the following order of priority:

1. Construct interim sheltered lunch area and for site parking.
2. Conduct further archeological research at fort site if airport land is acquired.
3. Restore major fort structures.
4. Construct access road to fort; construct permanent picnic area or temporary one at fort site.
5. Further restore historic features surrounding fort.
6. Inaugurate tour system.

**Historical Overview of Pearson Airfield**

**A Report Prepared by**

**Von Hardesty, Ph.D.**

**Submitted To**

**National Park Service  
Pacific Northwest Region  
83 South King Street  
Seattle, Washington 98104-2887**

**Date: March 15, 1992**

## OUTLINE

- I. Statement of Purpose
- II. Scope of Inquiry
- III. Sources and Methodology
- IV. Pearson Airpark in Historical Perspective
  - A. Early flight
  - B. World War I
  - C. Golden Age of Flight
  - D. U.S. Army Air Corps
  - E. International Flights
  - F. World War II to Present
- V. Summary statement
- VI. Eligibility of Pearson for National Historical Register
- VII. Notes
- VIII. Bibliography
- IX. Appendix

## I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The following Report, "Historical Overview of Pearson Airpark," has been prepared for the Vancouver Historical Study Commission, the National Park Service.

The objectives for the Report are as follows:

- A. Provide an independent overview of Pearson Airpark with reference to relevant materials located in the National Archives, the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Military History Institute at Carlisle, Pennsylvania.
- B. Assess the national significance of Pearson Airpark with reference to Pearson's historic role in aviation, civil and military.
- C. Evaluate existing histories materials on Pearson Airpark.
- D. Comment on the eligibility of Pearson Airpark (historic core) for the National Historical Register with reference to established criteria.

**II. SCOPE OF INQUIRY**

The primary focus of the report, "Historical Overview of Pearson Airpark," is the historic period, i.e. the years 1905-1941. This time frame covers nearly four decades from the flight by Lincoln Beachey in 1905 to the closing of the reserve training program in 1941.

During World War II the site was not used as an operational airfield or air reserve training facility. The Army Air Forces never reactivated Pearson as a military airfield. The year 1941 then is a logical dividing line between the historic and contemporary periods. In 1949, the War Assets Administration transferred the Pearson airfield to the city of Vancouver. At the time, the city merged the military airfield with the existing municipal airfield, creating Pearson Airpark. Since that time Pearson Airpark has operated as a municipal airport.

In recent decades, the City of Vancouver and the National Park Service have advanced alternative plans for the development of all or part of the historic core of the airfield (adjacent to Fort Vancouver). An analysis of this controversy over land use and historic preservation is not within the scope of this report.

### III. SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

Selected archival repositories and libraries have been consulted: the National Archives; the National Air and Space Museum Library and Archive; the Library of Congress; the Center for Air Force History (formerly Office of Air Force History) at Bolling Air Force Base; the Center for Military History, U.S. Army, Washington, D.C.; and the Military History Institute (Archives and Library) at Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. These repositories contain primary materials and aeronautical collections on the history of flight, covering both civilian and military spheres.

For this report, the National Park Service submitted a packet of materials for review. Jon Walker's history of Pearson Airpark, prepared for the Pearson Airpark Historical Society (PAHS) in 1990, provided a useful point of departure. Other relevant documents included in the packet: 1) "Pearson Airpark and its Relationship to Fort Vancouver National Historical Site"; 2) Roberta Wright, "National Park Service and Pearson Airpark"; 3) Registration Form, submitted to the National Register of Historic Places (1990 application); and 4) Flight Plan, Washington State Department of Transportation, Aeronautics Division, Volume 14, No. 1 (Spring 1991). These documents represent local and regional studies on important aspects of the history of Pearson Airpark.

Newspapers and aeronautical magazines provide important coverage: The New York Herald Tribune, The New York Times, the Oregonian (Portland) and the Columbian (Vancouver). Aeronautical periodicals were surveyed for aviation reporting from the early period to World War II: Aero and Hydro (ca. 1912); Aero Club of America Bulletin (for pre-World War I era), later Aerial Age; Aviation (ca. 1920s-1930s); Air Service Newsletter (after 1926, Air Corps Newsletter); and The Aircraft Year Book (ca. 1921-1941).

Pearson Airpark is associated with the Soviet transpolar flight of Valery Chkalov (1937). Russian language materials on this flight are extensive, including both periodicals and books. The bibliography (see below) contains a selected list of Russian language materials consulted for this report.

#### IV. PEARSON AIRPARK IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Vancouver Barracks, Fort Vancouver, and the Pearson Airpark share a common territory, one linked intimately with the heritage of the Pacific Northwest. These three historic sites do not operate under a single jurisdiction, despite a shared history and overlapping boundaries.

Pearson Airpark (hereafter Pearson Airfield for purposes of historical analysis) is the newest constituent part of this multi-layered historic area. The 1990 PAHS study on the history of the airfield (hereafter PAHS History) provides the first systematic attempt to collect relevant materials on Pearson's history. This PAHS History follows a chronological approach and contains important historical data drawn largely from local and regional sources. Critics of the PAHS History find aspects of the reconstructed history of Pearson Airfield false or, at a minimum, lacking documentation. Some have challenged the assumption that Pearson Airfield has operated continuously as an aeronautical center since the first flights at the Vancouver Barracks. A related question: Was or is Pearson the oldest operating airfield in America? If not true, does this fact undermine Pearson Airfield's claim to historical significance?

To evaluate these issues (and others), this overview of the history of Pearson Airfield has been divided into the following



historical periods: 1) Early Flight; 2) World War I; 3) The Golden Age of Flight; 4) the U.S. Army Air Corps; 5) the International flights; and 5) World War II to Present. Each historical period in turn includes a brief historical summary (based in part on the PAHS History) and commentary section.

The goal of this report is not to write a comprehensive history of Pearson, but to analyze important historical themes that measure the national significance of Pearson Airpark.

#### A. EARLY FLIGHT

##### Historical Summary

The first recorded aeronautical event on the territory of Vancouver Barracks was Lincoln Beachey's dirigible flight in 1905. Beachey made 23 flights in and around Portland, Oregon that year, as part of the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition. One flight by the young aeronaut involved a short hop over the Columbia River (a first) to the Vancouver Barracks, landing on the polo grounds (adjacent to the present-day airstrip).<sup>1</sup>

Five years passed before the first heavier-than-air flight took place in the Portland area. In 1910 Charles Hamilton flew a Curtiss aircraft at Portland.<sup>2</sup> The following year Charles Walsh and Silas Christofferson, two local aviators, began flying on the polo grounds at the Vancouver Barracks.<sup>3</sup> Local promoters of

flying, e.g. Fred Bennett, were active as patrons and their enthusiasm suggests a growing airmindedness in the Vancouver community. Louis T. Barin is noted in the PAHS History as the last pioneer aviator actively flying out at the Vancouver Barracks prior to World War I. These isolated flights mark the genesis of aviation in the Portland-Vancouver region.

### Commentary

Lincoln Beachey's flight to Vancouver Barracks in 1905 established an aviation milestone for the Pacific Northwest, the first man to fly across the Columbia River. Beachey, an associate of Thomas Baldwin and Roy Knabenshue, eventually abandoned dirigibles for airplanes. Beachey ranks as one of the most talented early aviators. He would die in 1915 when his airplane crashed in San Francisco Bay.

The dirigible flights of 1905 at Portland took place at a time when balloons and dirigibles, part of a lighter-than-air technology that first arose in the eighteenth century, dominated aeronautics. The airplane, already a reality in 1905, would quickly gained ascendancy over its lighter-than-air rivals. Beachey's defection to airplanes mirrored this important shift.

In retrospect, Lincoln Beachey's trek over the Columbia was an isolated flight, an event more linked to the past than the future. Five years lapsed before flying resumed in the Portland-

Vancouver area. Charles Hamilton's appearance at Portland, as with Beachey's visit five years before, involved an outsider coming to the region to perform a demonstration flight. The Hamilton flight was a benchmark, i.e. the first recorded airplane flight in the region, and the event generated public interest. Within a short period of time local aviators appeared.

Air enthusiasts took up flying at Vancouver, not Portland. One reason for the shift to the Vancouver Barracks was obvious: the Army installation provided an expansive open field, the polo grounds, where Lincoln Beachey has first landed in 1905. The large polo field was ideal for flying. Charles Walsh and Silas Christofferson are cited as first pioneers to begin flying at Vancouver. The character of their flying was typical for the era of early flight. They performed aerial stunts and showcased the new heavier-than-air flying machines. Flying at Vancouver in 1911-1912 follows the script of flying elsewhere at the time: Isolated, highly motivated air enthusiasts building and flying their own airplanes.

Flying machines, mostly biplane types, were constructed of bicycle parts, piano wire, wood, and fabric. Craftsmanship varied. Most designers, often with only a rudimentary grasp of aerodynamics, modeled their handcrafted airplanes on successful Wright and Curtiss machines. Typically, the pilot sat in the leading edge of the lower wing of these fragile machines,

surrounded by a tangle of wires and braces. There were few instruments. Engines, by necessity, had to be lightweight, which meant small powerplants rarely exceeding 100 horsepower.

Cruising speeds averaged between 30-40 miles per hour. Twenty minutes of flying time, on the average, lapsed between engine shutdowns. Only the brave ventured aloft in such flying machines. A clear indicator of airplane performance was Glenn Curtiss's speed record of 1910 of 50 mph. By comparison, Barney Oldfield racing a Benz automobile that same year set a record of over 131 mph; an airplane equalled this record only in 1919.

There was no effective government regulation or safety rules. Training was haphazard. Pilots were often self-taught or took flying lessons from experienced aviators. Sportsmen, many already involved in automobile racing, were drawn to aviation. Slowly, the military displayed an interest in aviation, beginning in 1909 when the U. S. Army purchased its first airplane for testing.<sup>4</sup>

Caution should be exercised when using the term "airfield" or "airport" for Vancouver [Pearson] during these formative years. Because airplanes were lightweight they required only minimal space for take-offs and landings. This meant that pilots could operate out of pastures and open fields, as the Wrights had done in 1905 and 1909 at Huffman prairie near Dayton.<sup>5</sup> Parade grounds at military installations were also favorite locales for

flying.

These primitive "airfields" were not viewed necessarily as dedicated spaces for flying. The airplane, not the field selected for take-offs and landings, was central factor. These improvised "aerodromes" often lacked any permanent structures. Sometimes a pilot co-opted a nearby barn or woodshed to serve as a "hangar." For more remote fields, pilots erected tents for shelter and storage. Because flying was occasional, there was no need for elaborate facilities. In time, of course, the situation changed. As the aeronautical community grew and flying became more commonplace, there was a move to erect permanent hangars and to establish real aerodromes. It is interesting to note that the first regular use of the word "airport" (a term suggesting permanence and sophistication) occurred in Atlantic City, New Jersey in 1919.<sup>6</sup>

One flight in 1911 embodies the character of early aviation in a dramatic way - the transcontinental flight of Cal Rogers. Flying the Vin Fiz, a Wright-designed biplane, Cal Rogers made the journey in 49 days from New York to Southern California. The Vin Fiz was highly unreliable with Rogers surviving 12 major crashes and countless emergency landings. The indomitable Rogers had to select open fields as landing sites frequently, often with minimal time to find the optimal "airstrip." Repair of his airplane was usually simple, if time consuming.

for the development of an "air force," which took shape in the years before America entered World War I in 1917. Flying exhibitions at military bases, the Vancouver Barracks being no exception, were common. Air enthusiasts promoted the airplane as the technological marvel of the age. But military planners did not create a distinct air force (U.S. Army Air Service) until World War I, at a time airplanes were performing important operational tasks such as ground attack, air observation and photography.

World War I became the crucible for many technological breakthroughs. The airplane quickly evolved from the slow, fragile machines of the pre-war years into fast, reliable, and powerfully armed pursuit and bomber aircraft. Military flyers such as Eddie Rickenbacker and Billy Mitchell emerged as popular heroes and outspoken proponents of aviation. Many theocrats, civilian and military, argued that the airplane would play a decisive role in the next war.

### Commentary

The Vancouver Barracks played an important role in the development air power during World War I, but in a way unrelated to actual combat flying. The Vancouver Barracks did not house a major air base or train pilots for the war. By contrast, Vancouver became the locale for one of the major experiments in

wartime mobilization: the construction of the spruce mill by the U.S. Army Signal Corps (Spruce Production Division) for the massed production wood components for the manufacture of aircraft. Along with the nearby Standifer Shipyards, the Spruce Production Division facility made an enormous contribution to the war effort. Constructed in 90 days, the spruce mill would eventually employ 30,000 workers. It is estimated that the U.S. manufactured over 14,000 aircraft between 1917 and 1918. The spruce mill's lumber production sustained this manufacturing enterprise. It is interesting to note that only one-third of the mill's production was assigned to American aircraft plants, the other two-thirds being shipped to the Allies.<sup>9</sup>

The spruce mill, except for one surviving building moved to Pearson Airfield, has passed into history. The story of the mill is important to the historic site (considered here in the larger sense) and the history of the Pacific Northwest. World War I saw the transition of aircraft manufacturing from small workshops, operated by one or a few craftsmen, to large aircraft plants. For example, Tom Sopwith, the famed English designer/pilot, hired six people to build airplanes on the eve of World War I. By the end of the war, Sopwith employed 3,500 workers (1,000 women). The wartime emphasis on the massed production of airplanes dictated labor specialization and ready access to raw materials. The spruce mill played a crucial role in this expansion and modernization of American's aircraft production.

The spruce mill has received only modest coverage in the histories of aviation at Vancouver. Any detailed history of Pearson Airfield should approach this topic as something more than a footnote. The spruce mill was an early experiment in a government-run factory. The economic impact of the mill on the region and the social dimensions of the wartime facility (e.g. I.W.W. in conflict with the plant-sponsored labor unions) are compelling topics and part of any complete history of aviation in the Pacific Northwest. This same experiment gives the Vancouver Barracks historical importance as part of the wartime mobilization. There is more to the story of aviation at Vancouver than pilots and record-breaking flights.

The spruce mill is not tied organically to the history of the airfield; in fact, the facility was located outside the territory of the airfield and existed outside the is to be considered. While the spruce mill evolved as a distinct facility, it was part of the U. S. Army. The post-war years saw the development of an army air base at Pearson. For this reason, the spruce mill and Pearson Airfield share a common institutional affiliation. Seeing the spruce mill episode as part of a larger history of aviation at Vancouver is legitimate.

The war demonstrated the usefulness of the airplane in manifold ways, allowing military aviation to play an important, but not decisive role in the conflict. The airplane improved



dramatically in terms of durability and performance. The DH-4s and JN-4 Jennies at Vancouver in the post-war years represented a quantum leap in technology. Engines were more powerful and reliable. Airplanes could be flown to high altitudes and across vast distances. While most airplanes remained biplanes with external bracing and open cockpits, they were relatively fast by the standards of the day; for example the T-2, piloted by Oakley Kelly, made a trans-continental flight in less than 27 hours.

The U.S. Army Air Service emerged in World War I as important new military branch. The Vancouver Barracks, as with many other army facilities, would welcome the assignment of an aviation to the base in the post-war years. Vancouver's involvement in aviation had been episodic. In the 1920s, however, aviation - civilian and military - would soon acquire a firm footing.

### C. GOLDEN AGE OF FLIGHT

#### Historical Summary

Once World War I ended, the United States Army quickly demobilized. The spruce mill closed, having made an enormous contribution to the Allied war effort. The U.S. Air Service, as with other branches of the military, entered the 1920s reduced in strength and seeking to define its place in the peacetime

military.

The next two decades are commonly viewed as the "Golden Age" of flight: it would be a period of rapid growth for aviation, a time of record breaking flights, air races, and the development of commercial aviation.

One consequence of the peace was the sudden glut of surplus military aircraft and parts. Late model DH-4s and JN-4s suddenly became available for purchase at minimal cost. Surplus military aircraft soon found their way into traveling air shows, giving rise to the era of the barnstormer. Recreational flying became a reality for many Americans. At the same time, techniques were perfected for aerial photography and mapping, crop dusting, and forest patrols.

The National Defense Act of 1920 shaped the course of Army Aviation in the 1920s. U.S. Army Air Service statutory definition, as part of a larger scheme to establish a peacetime military structure. At the height of the Great War over 190,000 men had been assigned to aviation duty. A year after the Armistice the force level had been reduced to 1,200 officers and 22,000 enlisted personnel.

The Vancouver Barracks, one of the U.S. Army's oldest bases, became a part of the Air Service program in 1923. That year the

Army established new airfields at Fort Benjamin Harrison (Indiana), Fort Douglas (Utah), and Vancouver Barracks. The purpose of the airfields was to expand air reserve training. The so-called Organized Reserves supplemented operations by the regular Air Service at established bases such as Bolling, Kelly, Langley, Carlston, March, Mitchel and Post airfields.<sup>10</sup> The Organized Reserves with the National Guard provided an additional pool of trained personnel for the Air Service in case of a national emergency.

The Air Service assigned the 321st Observation Squadron to the Vancouver Barracks in 1923. Lt. Oakley Kelly led the squadron. The arrival of the 321st signalled a new phase in military aviation for Pearson. The 321st, a reserve unit, would remain at Pearson to 1941, when the squadron was activated by the U.S. Army Air Corps. During this time period Pearson operated as an intermediate field within the larger framework of Air Corps bases.<sup>11</sup>

Lt. Oakley Kelly's years at Pearson Airfield (1924-1928), attracted national attention and his energetic leadership style made an impact on the region. At the time, Kelly was a major figure in the U.S. Army Air Service, one of the best-known military pilots in the pre-Lindbergh era. His enduring contribution was the first successful non-stop trans-continental flight. Kelly argued that such a flight was possible as early as

1921 when he was stationed at McCook field in Ohio (the Air Service's technical and engineering center). Joined by Lt. John A. Macready, Kelly made the epic flight in April 1923, flying a Fokker transport (T-2). Kelly set several records, including distance (2,516.55 miles) and endurance (36 hours, 4 minutes, 34 seconds).

During Kelly's assignment at Vancouver the Army modernized the field, building of a new hangar and making other improvements. Kelly actively promoted record-breaking flights and the expansion of civilian involvement in aviation at Vancouver. Also, Kelly moved to rename the airfield after Alexander Pearson in 1925. Lt. Pearson had grown up in Vancouver. His career as an Army aviator was exemplary, if brief; he died an untimely death in 1924.<sup>12</sup> Kelly's presence at Pearson focused public attention (local and national) on aviation in the Pacific Northwest.

Lt. Oakley Kelly, as noted in the PAHS History, actively promoted aviation in the Pacific Northwest. Some of his promotional work revealed a keen sense of history: He invited 94-year-old Ezra Meeker (a veteran of the overland trail) to join him for a flight to the East Coast in 1924, a flight that made a powerful impression on the local community. Kelly also mobilized his squadron for crop dusting duty in Oregon when apple orchards were faced with an infestation of scab and codling moths.<sup>13</sup>

The U.S. Army Air Service sponsored an around-the-world flight in 1924. For the flight, the Army flyers used four single-engine Douglas aircraft, named Douglas World Cruisers (DWC). While this flight is dimly remembered today, it captivated public attention in 1924. Three years later, of course, Charles Lindbergh made his epic flight across the Atlantic, and this feat quickly overshadowed the achievement of the Douglas World Cruisers. The DWC team took 175 days to fly around the world, an aerial trek that included one dramatic stop at Vancouver (see appendix).

The flight of the Douglas World Cruisers (two out of the four made the complete flight) represented an important milestone for military aviation. The flight demonstrated the range of military aircraft. By implication, bombers fly across vast distances and, in the course of a future war, bomb major urban centers. The 1920s and 1930s saw a vigorous debate on the nature of air power, and the world flight of 1924 allowed advocates of air power to promote Army aviation. Long distance flights, along with air races and other aerial spectacles, gave military pilots heroic stature. For the small military airfield at Vancouver, participation in the 1924 DWC flight brought publicity and prestige.

The PAHS History also covers the theme of commercial aviation at Pearson. Civil and military aviation were

intertwined in many ways. The Vancouver Chamber of Commerce worked with Kelly to establish a commercial flying field in 1925. This expansion allowed a home for general aviation, for Pearson to bid for an airmail route, and for embryonic airlines to make use of the airfield. Local businessmen such as Vernon C. Gorst did much to promote airline development by organizing Pacific Air Transport.

As airlines took shape in the 1930s, there was a need for larger aircraft, capable of accommodating 10-14 passengers. Fokker and Ford tri-motors first dominated the market, but proved to be slow, noisy and inefficient. The Boeing 247, a sleek twin-engine monoplane, appeared, only to be replaced by the Douglas DC-3 as the modern airliner. The DC-3 of the mid-1930s could carry up to 21 passengers. For the first time, airlines could operate profitably without airmail subsidies.

### Commentary

Lt. Oakley Kelly left Pearson Airfield in 1928. During his four years had left an enduring legacy. His leadership gave Pearson identity (with national recognition) as an Army airfield. While Pearson could not compare in size with major Air Corps bases such as Bolling, McCook, or Langley, it possessed a solid reputation as reserve field with an enviable record of public service. Pearson's active involvement in the Golden Age only

added to its earlier accomplishments in aviation.

Pearson Airfield, if relatively small, had played a significant role in Army aviation. The flights of Kelly, outlined in some detail in the PAHS History, did much to promote military aviation on a regional and national level. It is worthy of note that the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum exhibits Oakley Kelly's Fokker T-2 aircraft and the Douglas World Cruiser (the Chicago) in the Pioneers of Flight Gallery.

The establishment of civilian field at Pearson in 1925 inaugurated a basis for general aviation which endures to the present. The existence of the civilian field incorporated the City of Vancouver into <sup>w</sup>life of the airfield in a formal way. General aviation is an important aspect of Pearson's history, not just for the historic period, but in the contemporary period as well.

Varney and Pacific Air Transport airlines used the Pearson Airfield in the 1920s. For a brief interlude, Pearson was linked with these two embryonic airlines. The rapid advance in the design of airliners, however, necessitated larger fields and, for obvious reasons, Pearson lacked the size to operate as a modern municipal airport. Lindbergh's 1927 flight to Paris prompted a dramatic and sustained interest in aviation. During the so-

called "Lindbergh Boom" cities, large and small, built new airports. This sudden development in large municipal airports expressed the near universal enthusiasm for aviation and, correspondingly, a growing confidence in commercial aviation. Portland's interest in developing its own airport (Swan Island) mirrored the times.<sup>14</sup> In this context, Pearson lacked the size, facilities, and proximity to Portland, the region's major urban center, to sustain commercial airline operations.

## E. U.S. ARMY AIR CORPS

### Historical Summary

The Air Corps Act of 1926 marked a new era for the Army aviation. The legislation provided for a new Assistant Secretary of War for Air (F. Trubee Davison) and a five year plan for expansion. The mission of the Air Corps was now more offensive, as opposed to the Air Service days when air reconnaissance and support activities were the primary tasks of Army aviators. For the next fifteen years Pearson Airfield would be an vital part of this new structure.

The Air Corps faced many problems in the 1930s. Congress displayed conducted numerous hearings on the military, but displayed minimal financial largess to support the armed forces.



Air Corps budgets were relatively small, even with the initial expansion program, a financial base that barely sustained the minuscule air arm authorized by the National Defense Act of 1920.<sup>15</sup>

Reserve training operated on a skeletal budget and in a general context of neglect. There were shortages in officers, morale problems, and confusion over doctrine. In 1937, Oscar Westover, Chief of the U.S. Army Air Corps, reported a total authorized strength of 1,650 officers. This figure is only slightly larger than the figures for 1926, when the Air Corps was reorganized.<sup>16</sup>

In 1935, there were Congressional hearings on air defense matters. Congressman Wesley Brown of Washington testified about the vulnerability of the Pacific Northwest. He feared an enemy air force could set forest fires in the region. Echoing the views of other congressmen concerned about coastal defense on the Atlantic and Pacific, Wesley Brown noted that his region was without "protection" except for two torpedo bases in Puget Sound (the logical entry point for the unnamed enemy air force). He wanted a "suitable and sufficient airplane base." These hearings say nothing directly about Pearson, at the time one of the Air Corps' reserve training facilities, but the testimony revealed the plight of military aviation in the 1930s.<sup>17</sup>

Budgetary constraints made an impact on Pearson Airfield. In 1925, there were a total of 12 pilots stationed at Vancouver (9 regular, 3 organized reserves).<sup>18</sup> In the 1930s the figures would fluctuate, but still remain small. As in the previous decade Pearson was the locale for summer maneuvers. During the Air Mail Crisis of 1934 (a time when Army pilots were mobilized to fly the mails) Pearson played only a peripheral role providing support for the air mail center at nearby Swan Island Airport.

### Commentary

Pearson Airfield operated as an intermediate field with an air reserve squadron during the period 1923-1941.<sup>19</sup> Pearson was not as large as March Field or central to the mission of the Air Corps as Bolling or McCook fields, but it was a representative Army installation with small reserve training program. In many respects it was typical for the time.

Pearson Airfield's association with the U.S. Army Air Corps, 1923-1941, constitutes a distinct and historically significant period. No other time frame possesses the same unity of purpose and identity. Even today Pearson still possesses much of the ambience of those years. The original grass field, the surviving military structures, and the restored backdrop of Officers Row provide a unique setting, one which preserves much of the interwar context. No other dimension of Pearson's past equals

the Air Corps phase in importance.

## F. INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

### Historical Summary

In 1929, S.A. Shestakov, lead pilot for the "Land of the Soviets," made a brief stop at Pearson Airfield on his way to New York. The Soviet flyers had flown from Siberia, across the North Pacific, to Seattle. The Shestakov flight, as it turned out, became a harbinger for several more spectacular flights by the Soviets in the 1930s. Pearson would play a major role in one of these epic flights.

When Shestakov made his long-distance flight to North America, the Soviet Union had already committed itself to become a first rank air power. By the mid-1930s, Stalin decided to compete for international records, in particular in the long-distance categories. The Soviet Union's talented aircraft designer Andrei N. Tupolev produced a series of long-range aircraft, including the ANT-25 which had established a number of benchmarks in long duration flights within the Soviet Union. Parallel to these breakthroughs in aircraft technology the Soviets began a systematic exploration of the Arctic with the goal of establishing a permanent scientific station at the North

Pole.<sup>20</sup>

There was a logical desire to adapt aviation for the Soviet Union's exploration of the Arctic. Soviet techniques for cold weather flying had been pioneered in the 1920s, which allowed year-round air operations. By 1934, Soviet aircraft had landed on ice floes in the Arctic Ocean to rescue the crew of an ice-bound ship. Two years later, Stalin ordered aircraft, equipped with skis, to land at the North Pole where Soviet scientists had established an outpost. Having landed at North Pole, the Soviet media hinted in 1936 of an even more dramatic aerial trek--a non-stop flight from Moscow to North America over the North Pole.

The Soviet transpolar flights, three in number, followed in the summer of 1937. The first flight by Valery Chkalov (pilot), Georgiy Baidukov (co-pilot), and Alexander Belyakov (navigator) took place in June 1937.<sup>21</sup> Flying an ANT-25 Stalinskii marshrut ("Stalin Route"), Chkalov successfully flew over the North Pole. He landed at Pearson Airfield after a 62-hour flight. Chkalov fell short of the existing long-distance record by 350 miles (Codos and Rossi, 5,657 mile record). The first transpolar flight prompted intense public interest. Radio stations and newspapers monitored Chkalov's flight closely, despite Soviet secrecy and sporadic radio contact with the Soviet airmen. Two additional Soviet transpolar flights followed: M. M. Gromov broke the world record in July by making a non-stop flight to San

Jacinto, California; and Sigismund Levanevsky attempted a third flight in August, only to disappear without a trace.<sup>22</sup>

Valery Chkalov received a hero's welcome at Pearson and during his post-flight tour of the United States. Both Chkalov and Gromov met President Franklin D. Roosevelt on their visits to Washington, D.C. It is interesting to note that the Soviet transpolar flights took place at the same time Amelia Earhart made her ill-fated attempt to fly across the Pacific. American press and radio coverage of the Soviets rivaled stories on Amelia Earhart.

The Chkalov flight made a profound impression on the Vancouver-Portland area. Many residents followed the spotty radio coverage, and a huge crowd had gathered at Portland's Swan Island Airport in anticipation of the Soviets landing on Sunday morning, June 19, 1937. For reasons that became apparent later, Chkalov only buzzed Swan Island, and then landed at Pearson Army Airfield. At Pearson, he was greeted by Brig. General George Marshall, then post commander.

Chkalov and his crew were joined by Soviet diplomats and a large contingent of reporters. The whole event attracted national attention. The City of Portland feted the Soviet airmen with a parade. Before Chkalov departed for San Francisco and his American goodwill tour he received greetings from Joseph Stalin,

who quickly ordered Soviet propaganda organs to portray the flight as a triumph of socialism.

The U.S. Army Air Corps cooperated with the Soviets during all three flights. When Levanevsky disappeared, the Air Corps deployed numerous aircraft to search for the lost Soviet aircraft. While cordial outwardly, the Air Corps harbored many suspicions about the Soviets and their motives. General Westover took a keen interest in the ANT-25 aircraft, ordering Army technicians at Pearson provide information on Soviet long-distance aircraft.

For the city of Vancouver, the military personnel at the Vancouver Barracks, and Army aviators at Pearson there was real excitement over the unexpected visit by Valery Chkalov. For the Columbian the Chkalov flight provided an occasion for civic pride. Initially, at least, Portland took second place to the smaller city across the Columbia River. Vancouver's pride in the Chkalov flight endured over the decades, prompting a group of citizens to build a monument to Chkalov in 1977.

### Commentary

Valery Chkalov, by virtue of this 1937 transpolar flight, became the Soviet equivalent of Charles Lindbergh. Chkalov's exalted status in Soviet public life was only enhanced by his

untimely death in December 1938. Chkalov's life became the subject of countless films, book, and memorials. His birthplace, not to mention numerous streets, was renamed in his honor. Even today, Chkalov remains a main figure--perhaps symbol--of Soviet aviation.

By contrast, Chkalov's fame was intense, but shortlived in the United States, except perhaps for the Pacific Northwest. This fact does not diminish the significance of Chkalov's flight in the history of aviation. Many other aviators--even Americans--from the Golden Age of flight have suffered the same fate with the passing of time; we remember Charles Lindbergh and Amelia Earhart, but not necessarily Jimmie Mattern, Wiley Post, Roscoe Turner, or Pearson's own Oakley Kelly. Time has nearly erased in the public consciousness the names of early astronauts and cosmonauts.

Did the Soviets land at Pearson by accident? It is true that Pearson was not their scheduled destination, and when they reached the Columbia River they considered landing at Eugene or Swan Island, rejecting both. Why, then, Pearson Airfield? It would not be accurate to say the landing at Pearson was accidental; non-scheduled, for certain, but not accidental. Chkalov's decision to land at Pearson was not necessarily impulsive, a sudden move which unwittingly gave Vancouver a publicity windfall. The Soviets had landed at Pearson in 1929.

Chkalov and his crew knew about Pearson Airfield in advance and, as an Army installation, considered it a preferred landing spot in an emergency. Being military flyers, Chkalov and his crew naturally chose the secure environs of Pearson over Swan Island with its milling crowds.<sup>23</sup>

The Chkalov transpolar flight of 1937 remains today as an important milestone in aviation. For Pearson Airfield, the landing of Valery Chkalov in 1937 is one of the most important events associated with the history of the airfield. The national and international importance of this event is apparent, even with our fading collective memory of the Golden Age of flight.

## 7. World War II to Present

### Historical Summary

When the 321st Observation Squadron was activated in 1941, Pearson ceased to be an active Army Air Corps base. During World War II, of course, there was some military flying in and out of the airfield. But 1941 did mark the end of an era. Few airfields of Pearson's size during the interwar years could boast such a diverse involvement in aviation. Since the 1940s, of course, general aviation became the arena for flying at Pearson. General aviation has garnered considerable local support.



Pearson Airfield was declared surplus in the late 1940s and the City of Vancouver assumed responsibility for Pearson. Over the next four decades the relationship of Pearson to the City and to the National Park Service has been complex, involving a shifting pattern of land use agreements.

The work of the National Park Service to replicate old Fort Vancouver (completed in 1972) brought the development of the Fort into conflict with the local initiative to preserve Pearson Airpark (now understood to combine the historic core of the old Army airfield and the commercial airfield). At the heart of the debate is a 30 acre parcel of land scheduled to be returned to the National Park Service in 2002.

This brief summary admittedly does not cover fully the history of Pearson Airpark in the post-war years or the complicated issues behind the current debate over the future of Pearson.

### Commentary

The scope of this report precludes any recommendations on how to resolve the controversy over Pearson. The summary statement (see below) addresses certain historical aspects of Pearson. While this commentary is focused narrowly on the

historical significance of Pearson Airpark, it may shape and condition the on-going debate.

#### V. SUMMARY STATEMENT

The year 2003 will mark the centennial of the first flight of the Wright brothers. The next century will allow us to evaluate more clearly the impact of aviation on the twentieth century. The passage of 100 years will also allow us to see with greater clarity how airfields such as Pearson contributed to the development of aviation. For those who debate the merits of Pearson Airfield's legacy - local and national - it is important to remember 2003 as much as 2002, the date the Western parcel reverts to the National Park Service. Since 2002 arrives first, there is an urgency to make some preliminary judgement now on Pearson's national significance; the summary statement which follows endeavors to contribute toward that end.

1. The genesis of aviation in the Vancouver-Portland area, and, in particular Pearson airfield, is subject to debate. The 1905 Lincoln Beachey flight (Portland to Vancouver Barracks) is an important antecedent to the story, but not a convincing point of departure. Charles Hamilton's 1910 flight is arguably the inaugural flight for the region (a flight that took place in

Portland, not Vancouver!) because Hamilton's aerial demonstration had an impact on both cities. Subsequent history, of course, unfolded in a way that linked the two cities, e.g. air mail flights and early commercial airlines. Yet, it is important to answer this question in a more precise fashion, to pinpoint as best we can, when the first flight took place at the Vancouver Barracks (a further iteration would be to narrow the first flight to the existing Pearson field and exclude flights from the old polo grounds). Here there is ample evidence that the first flight probably took place in June 1911 on the old polo grounds.<sup>24</sup>

2. A related problem is how to fit Pearson's early flights into the chronology of aviation. Is Pearson the oldest airfield in the United States? In the West? Claims such as these are perceived by some as essential to any argument on historical merit. Most historians, however, would define such questions as essentially peripheral, and in no way a key criterion for the measurement of Pearson's historical legacy. Most aviation historians, including specialists on early flight, would nominate College Park, Maryland as the oldest operating field in the United States. Much of Pearson's early flying was improvised and intermittent, typical for the era. As noted above, most "aerodromes" and "airfields" in this formative period had an indeterminate character. If the question is restated to ask if Pearson has a long tradition of flying, civil and military, the

answer is in the affirmative.

3. What is the national significance of Pearson Airfield?

U. S. Army Air Service (after 1926, the Army Air Corps) involvement at Pearson, from 1923-1941, constitutes a distinct and significant period, one that in many ways gave Pearson Airfield a national identity. Many events, personalities, and programs at Pearson in the interwar years were tied to the larger national aeronautical community. Personalities such as Oakley Kelly, Valery Chkalov, and George Marshall, to name a few, played diverse roles in the life of Pearson Airfield. Douglas World Cruisers and the Soviet ANT-25 transpolar airplane landed at Pearson. For its size, Pearson played an impressive role in aviation during those years.

Any future reconstruction of Pearson should aim to recreate the historical setting and ambience of Army Air Corps aviation, circa 1930. Pearson still has many of its old buildings and much of the original aspect of the airfield could be reconstructed. It is worth noting that Bolling Field (Washington, D.C.) could not be reconstructed today; the old runways are gone and the base is now a crowded support facility.

Possible aircraft loans from the Smithsonian and the Museum of Flight in Seattle could provide artifacts for any future restoration. The Pearson Airpark Historical Society has made a

concerted drive to establish a museum at the field. This idea is advanced as a logical way to clarify and preserve Pearson's identity.

4. Pearson Airfield has an important connection to international aviation. The Chkalov monument of 1977 was an important local initiative to build ties with the aeronautical community of the then Soviet Union. Valery Chkalov remains a national hero in Russia. Chkalov is also a major figure in the history of flight. This connection with Russia and the international aviation community is an important link to the outside for Pearson. Few aviation centers or museums in the United States possess such a valued connection.

#### **VI ELIGIBILITY OF PEARSON FOR NATIONAL HISTORICAL REGISTER**

A review of the Registration Form, National Historical Register, for Pearson Airfield prompts several brief remarks on the question of eligibility.

The nomination form proposes the historic core of the field for the National Register (this would exclude the civilian field at the eastern edge of the site). A cluster of original buildings survive and would be part of the historic complex: 1) the 1921 hangar (Building # 189, on accompanying map); 2) the

Pearson Office Building (Building #194, once part of the Spruce Production Division); and 3) Air Corps Storehouse (Building # 102, built in 1904 and moved to the field in 1925 according to the form). There would be the option as well of moving the Chkalov Monument to the proposed site.

The justification for the nomination includes a comprehensive essay on the history of Pearson. This overview provides considerable information on the Army Air Corps period, ca. 1923-1941. The association of Pearson with the Air Corps is strong and this theme could be the core identity for the historic site.

As suggested above, no Army Air Corps field survives today in its near original aspect. Most Army airfields of the interwar years have disappeared or have been so radically altered that old ambience could not be recovered. March Field, for example, began as Pearson, but quickly expanded into a large air base. Bolling, Wright, Kelly and other airfields have gone through similar transformations. Pearson Airfield, in fact, may be the last opportunity to preserve an Army airfield of the pre-World War II period. An expanded museum with artifacts and antique aircraft (as part of a collection or on loan) could create enhance the historic site.

Pearson has a strong case for inclusion in the National Register, based on the setting, structures, and historical character. Any review of Pearson's future must await a resolution of the land use controversy with the City of Vancouver and coordination of local and national jurisdictions.

1. For a definitive history of ballooning, see Tom D. Crouch, Eagle Aloft, Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1983. See also, Richard Harris, "The Coming of the Birdman: The Aviator's Image in Oregon, 1905-1915, Masters Degree thesis, Portland State University, 1981, as Quoted in Jon Walker, PAHS History, 1990.
2. Charles Hamilton flew with the Curtiss demonstration team which made frequent flights to promote aviation.
3. Charles Walsh and Silas Christofferson are cited by the PAHS History, based on information found in the Columbian, June 1911.
4. Louis Casey, Curtiss: The Hammondsport Era, 1907-1915, New York: Crown Publishers, 1981 provides an interesting portrait of early aviation. See also James Fahey, U. S. Army Aircraft, 1908-1946, New York: Ships and Aircraft, 1946. One of the most readable and authoritative new books is Tom D. Crouch's The Bishops Boys, A life of Wilbur and Orville Wright, New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1989. Crouch's biography recreates the context of the early years in a dramatic fashion.
5. See Crouch, The Bishops Boys, A life of Wilbur and Orville Wright, pp. 280-286 for a discussion of Huffman Praire. Jerold E. Brown, Where Eagles Land, Planning and Development of U. S. Army Airfields 1910-1941, New York: Greenwood Press, 1990, p.2 states that early airfields were makeshift, typically pasture lands, polo fields, and parade grounds. Brown clearly indicates that the size of airports changed slowly with the increasing size and speed of aircraft: for example, a military airfield in the 1920s required around 200 acres; by the 1940s a modern airfield necessitated 3,000-4,000 acres.
6. Interview with Deborah Douglas, Guggenheim Fellow, National Air and Space Museum, March 1992. Douglas is conducting research on early airport development.
7. See "Pearson Airpark: A Brief History," Flight Plan, Washington State Department of Transportation, Volume 14, No.1 (Spring 1991), p. 3. Region newspaper articles echoing this claim are cited in Roberta Wright, "National Park Service and Pearson Airpark," (unpublished), 1990, p.3.



8. Consultation with several aviation historians at the National Air and Space Museum during March 1992 confirmed this fact. No one, to date, has made this question a matter of serious historical inquiry, i.e. examining carefully extant records for all the major fields. Early flight has many obscure aspects. In the 1980s, an effort was made to substantiate Gustav Whitehead as the first inventor of the airplane. No compelling evidence, however, was advanced. Pearson Airfield's pioneer involvement in aviation is fully recorded.

9. United States Spruce Production Corporation, A History of the Spruce Production Division, the United States Army and United States Spruce Production Corporation, Portland, Oregon, n.d., and Report on Audit of the United States Spruce Production Corporation, H. Doc. 235, 80th Congress, 1st Session, 1947, as quoted in Maurer Maurer, p.535.

10. These airfields were established in 1920. See also Louis H. Bash, "Happy Landings: The Development of Army Flying Fields," Quartermaster Review, January/February, 1933.

11. National Archives , Record Group 18, .686, Landing Fields, General, 1913-1938, Boxes 1211-1215, contain the surviving records on Pearson Army Air Corps Field. A related archival holding in Record Group 18 is Project Files, Series 2, Pearson Field (1923-1938), Boxes 2317-2319. The National Archive also has holdings dealing with the U. S. Army, Record Group 393, which covers the larger history of Vancouver Barracks. The specific Pearson Field archives are cited here for the first time. They are crucial for any future history of the Pearson Field.

12. Maurer Maurer, Aviation in the U. S. Army 1919-1939, Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force, 1987, pp. 32, 34, 172, 177 covers aspects of Lt. Alexander Pearson's career.

13. Maurer Maurer, p. 142.

14. John W. Andrews, "Portland's Island Airport," Aviation, Volume XXIV, No. 12, March 19, 1928, p.709. Andrews wrote about the newly opened Swan Island Airport. One reference to Pearson mentioned that the airmail service would be transferred to Portland, p. 720.

15. The War Department gave periodic reports on the state of the military. One representative example showing an overview of military aviation by the War Department is Final Report of the

War Department Special Committee on Army Air Corps, July 18, 1934, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1934.

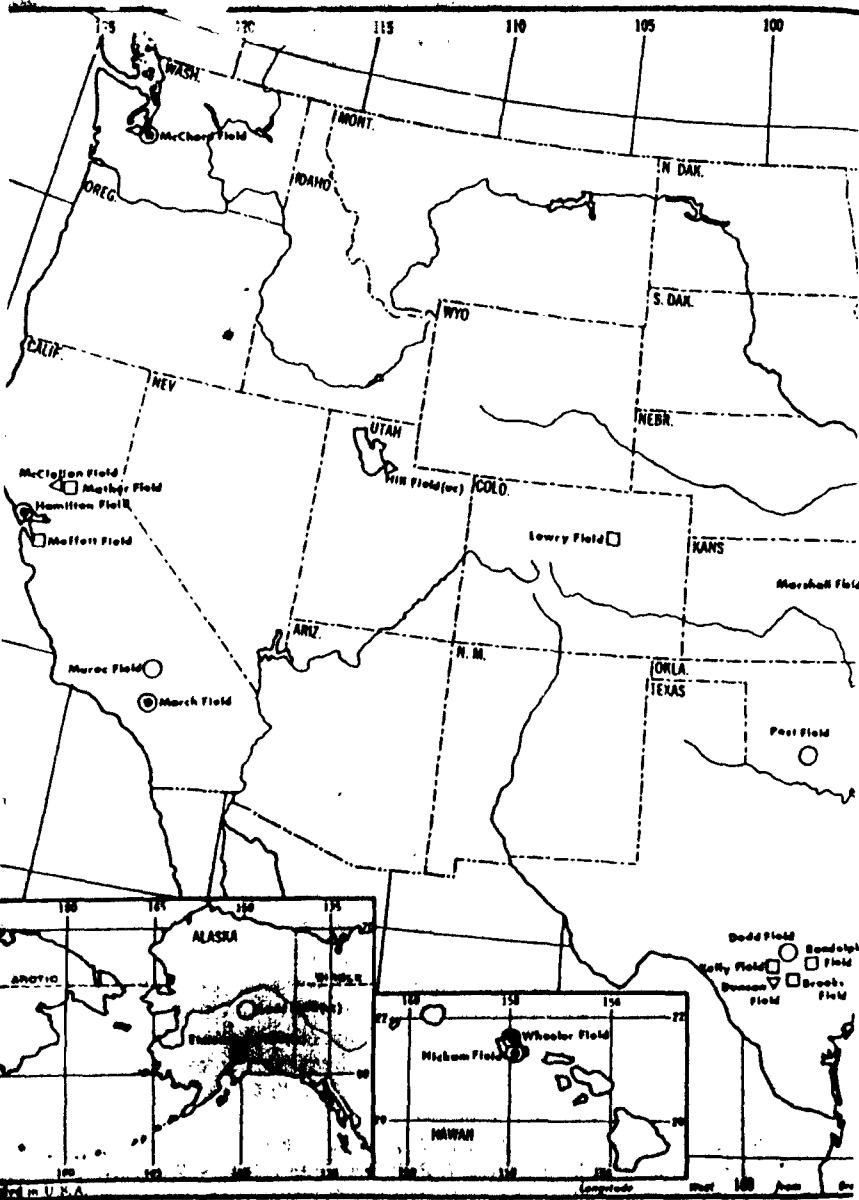
16. See Annual Report of Chief of the Air Corps, 1937.
17. See Hearings, Committee on Military Affairs, House of Representatives, 74th Congress, First Session, on H.R. 6621 and H.R. 4130, February 11-13, 1935, p. 24.
18. Brown, Where Eagles Land, p. 67.
19. See Maurer Maurer, p. 87f.
20. Shestakov flew an ANT-4, an early model long distance aircraft. For an excellent review of the Soviet Union's record-breaking flights, see K. E. Bailes, "Technological and Legitimacy: Soviet Aviation and Stalinism in the 1930s," Technology and Culture, Volume 17, No. 2, (April 1976), pp. 55-81.
21. Georgiy Baidukov, Chkalov's co-pilot, has written a biography of Valery Chkalov and numerous articles on other aspects of polar flying. His Russian language biography, Chkalov, appeared in 1975. The most recent English translation of this biography is Russian Lindbergh, The life of Valery Chkalov, translated by Peter Belov and edited by Von Hardesty, Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991. See also the recent article by Baidukov on the transpolar flight "Nash polet v Ameriku cherez Severnyy polyus" [Our Flight to America through the North Pole], Nauka v SSSR, 1987, No. 3, pp. 116-127. The Russian language literature on Chkalov and the transpolar flight is enormous and cannot be summarized here. Nikolai Bobrov's Chkalov was translated into English by Cynthia Rosenberger and published by Raduza, Moscow 1987.
22. See U. S. Army Air Corps Newsletter, Volume XX, No. 15 (August 1, 1937), p. 3, and Volume XX, No. 15 (September 1, 1937), pp. 14-15. The Newsletter gave random coverage to the Soviet flights, covering the M. M. Gromov landing near March Field and some analysis of the ANT-25 aircraft. This minimal coverage contrasted with the sustained news reporting by the New York Times and many other newspapers on Chkalov and Gromov. The disappearance of Levanevsky prompted widespread public interest, at a time when the nation was concerned over the fate of Amelia Earhart. See also, Von Hardesty, "Soviets Blaze Sky Trial Over Top of the World," Air and Space Magazine/Smithsonian, December 1987-January 1988, pp. 48-54.

23. This attitude on the part of Chkalov and his crew is evident in the various writings on the transpolar flights.

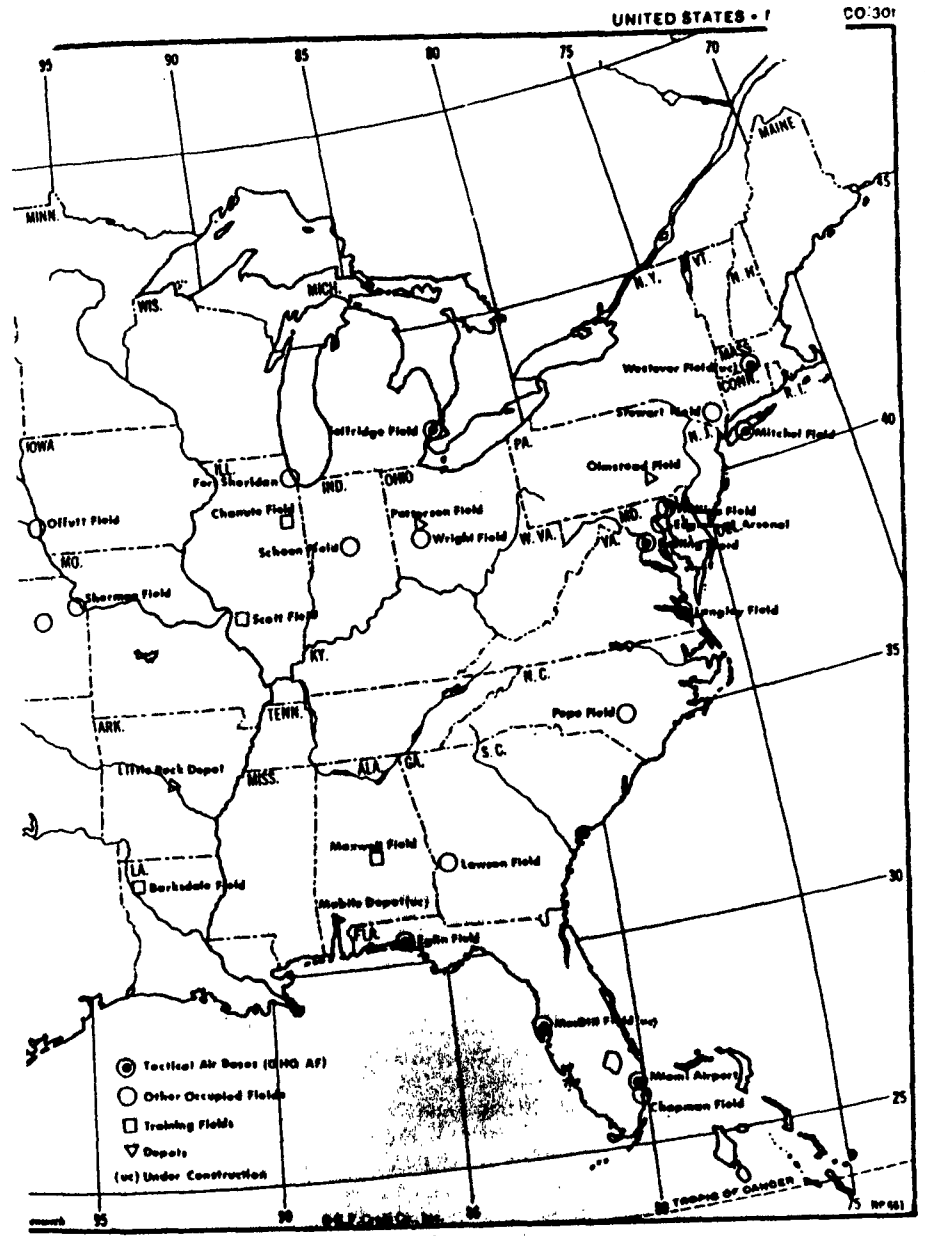
24. See PAHS History; and Carl Landerholm, Vancouver Area Chronology, 1784-1958, published by the Fort Vancouver Historical Society, 1959 and Roy F. Jones, Editor, Clark Count History, published by the Fort Vancouver Historical Society, as quoted in Roberta Wright, "National Park Service and Pearson Airpark" (unpublished).

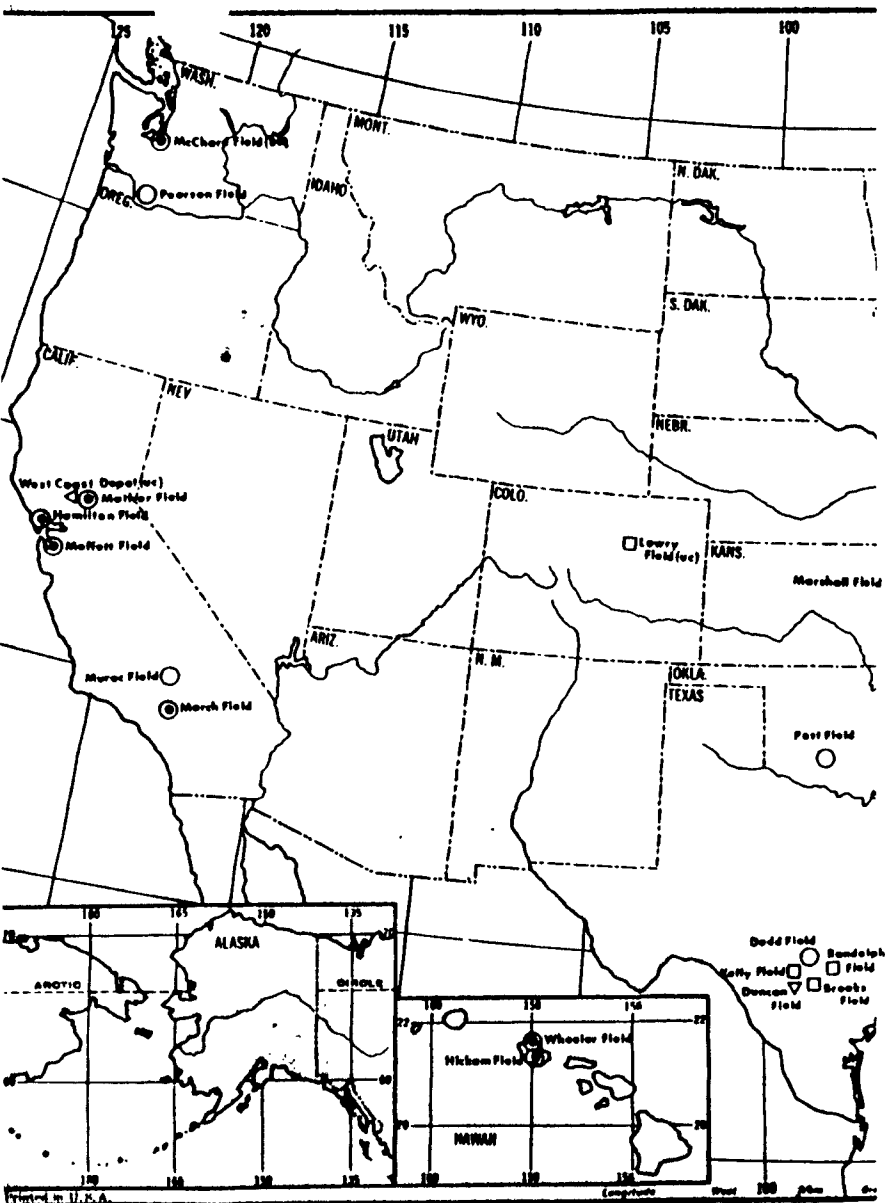
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There are extensive archival and bibliographic holdings available on historical themes related to the history of Pearson Airfield. For this report, a number of relevant archival repositories were consulted. The Military History Institute at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, contains a number of important primary and secondary sources on the U.S. Army Air Corps. One finding aid at Carlisle, a large card file on periodical literature before World War II, was particularly useful for identifying articles on aviation in the interwar years. The National Archives, the Center for Air Force History, and the National Air and Space Museum (NASM)--all located in Washington, D.C.--contain many extensive materials on the institutional history of the U.S. Army. The NASM Library, a branch of the Smithsonian Libraries, houses one of the most extensive collections of aeronautical periodicals, many dating back to the pre-World War I period. Technical and historical materials on specific aircraft (e.g., Oakley Kelly's T-2, the Douglas World Cruisers, and Valery Chkalov's ANT-25) are also available in this same Museum.



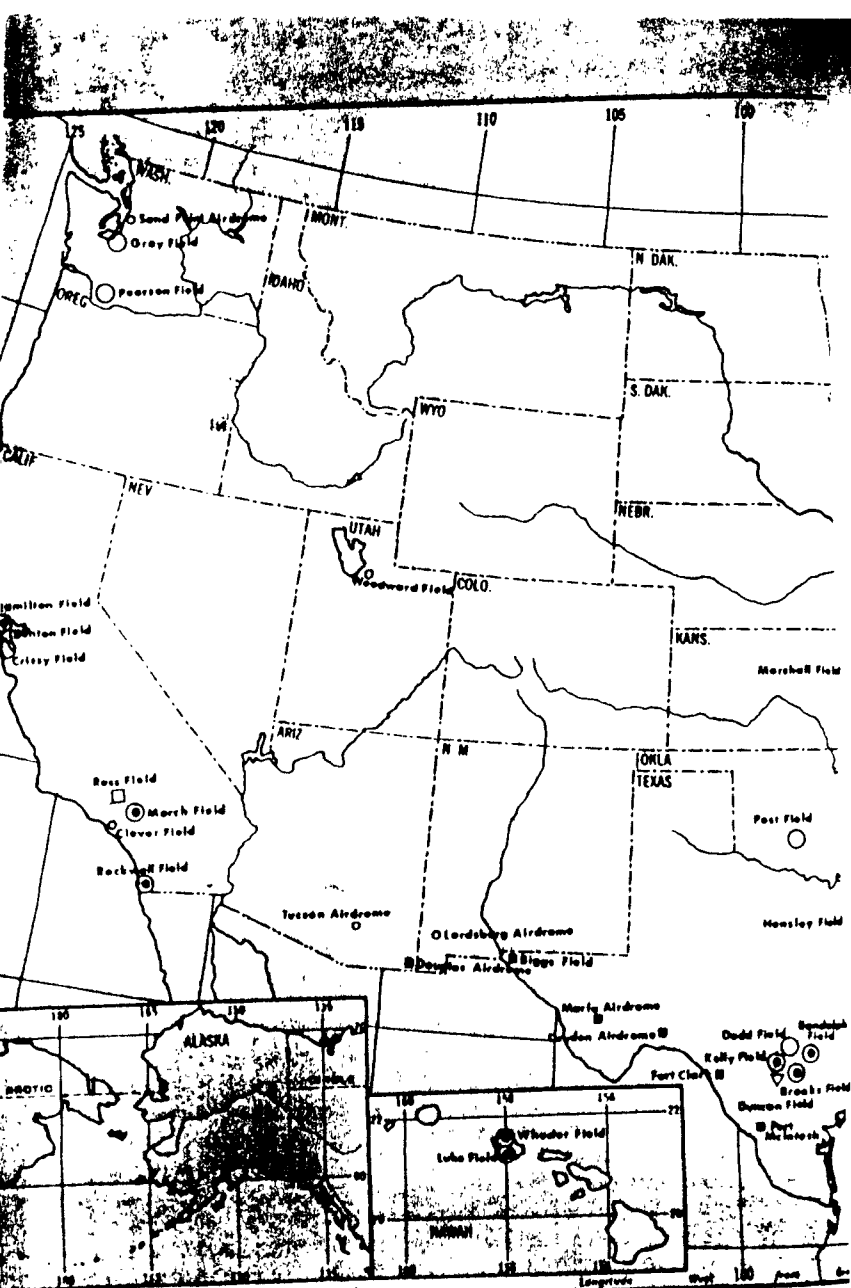
6. Major Air Corps Sites, April 1940



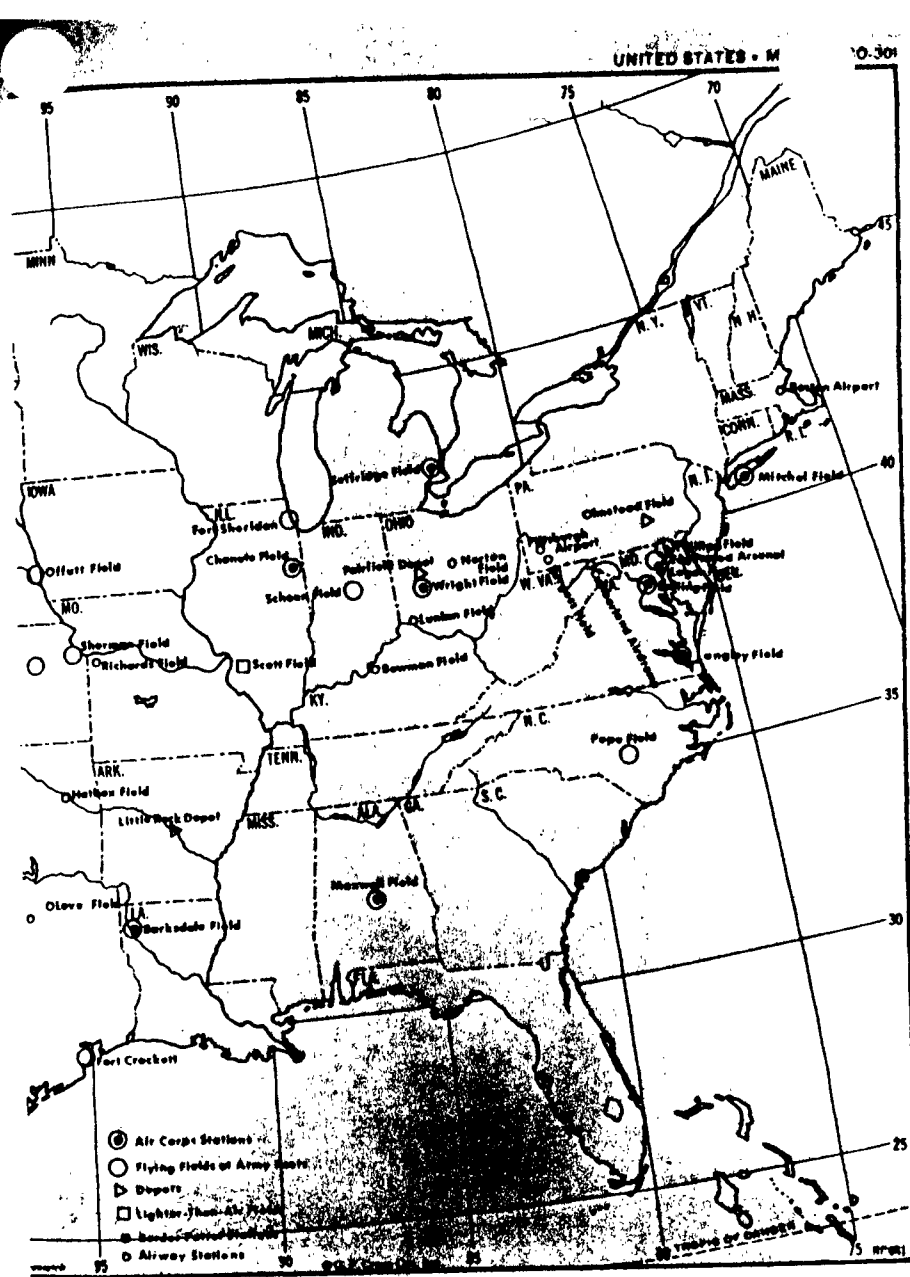


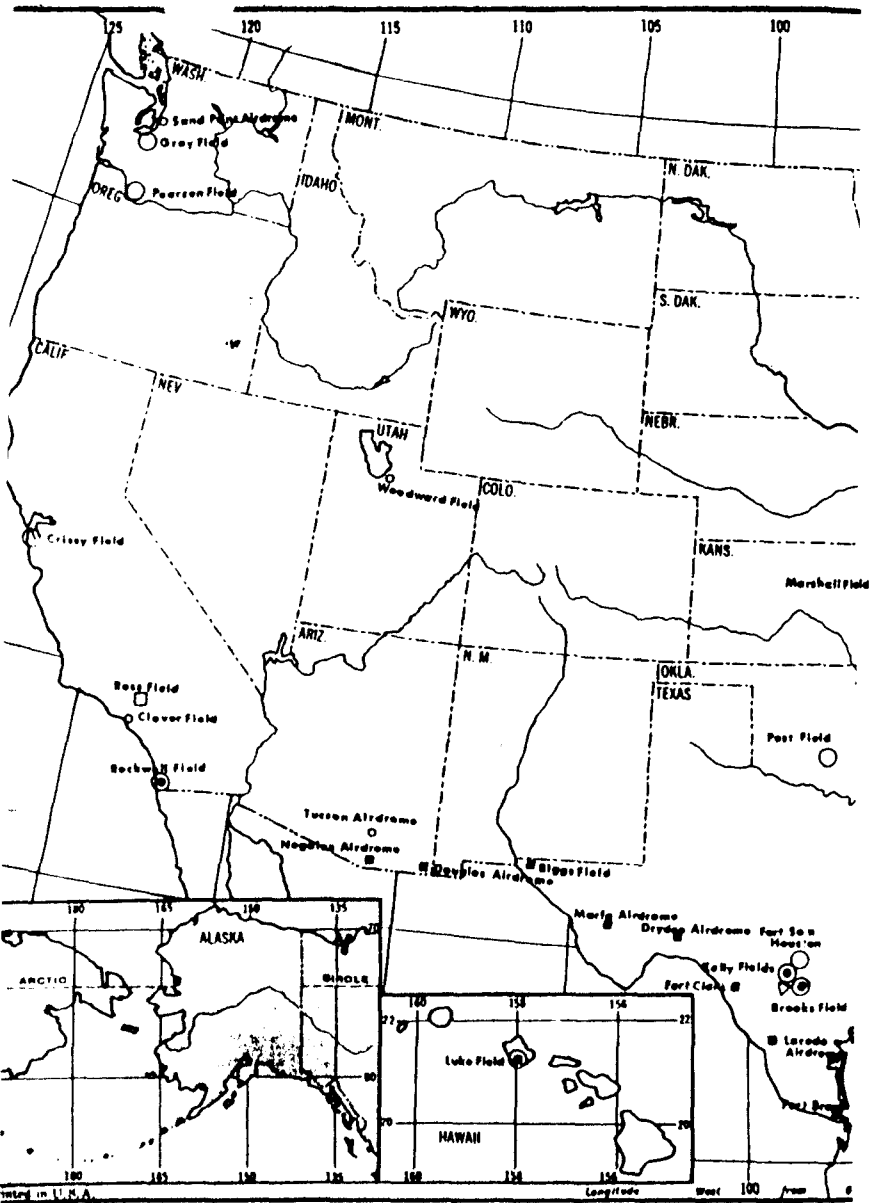
Map 5. Major Air Corps Installations as of January 1939



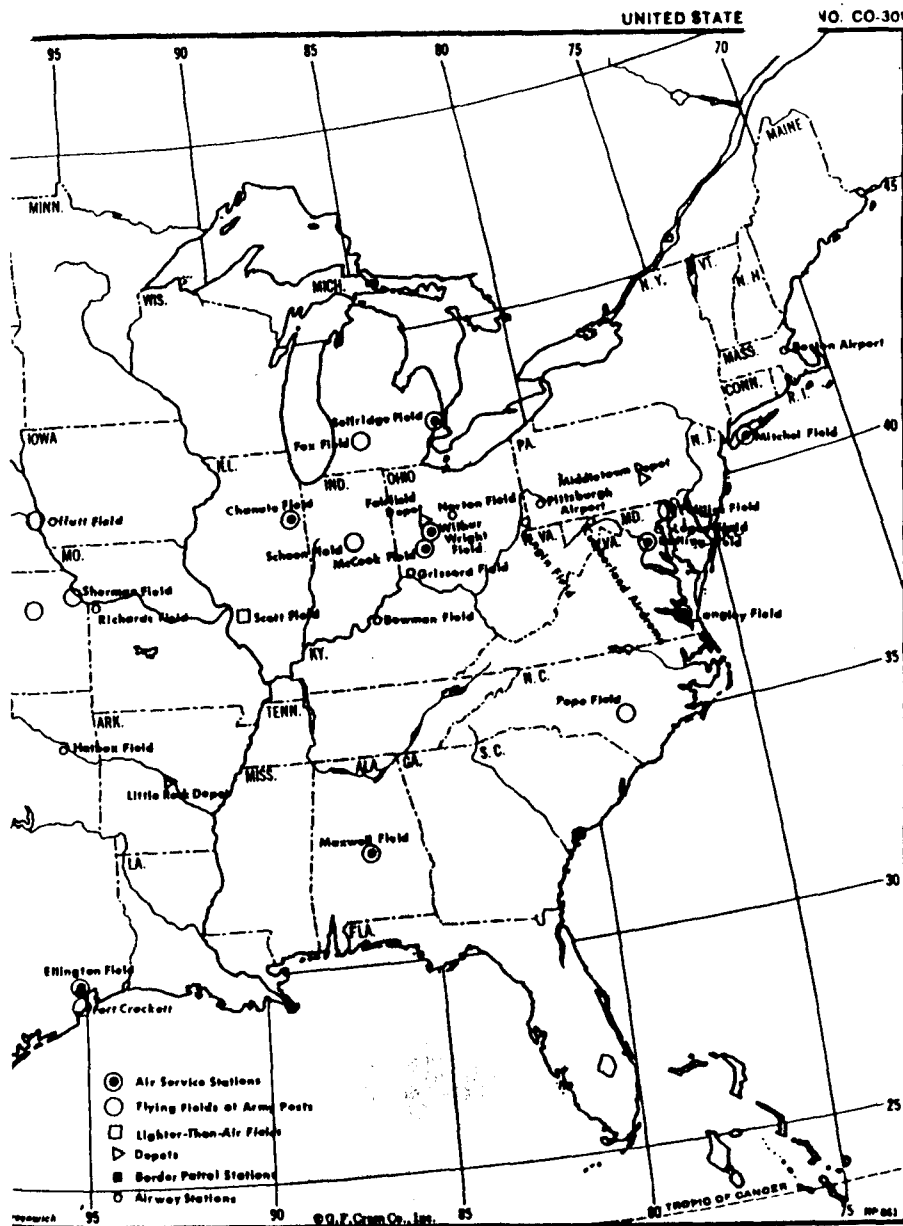


4. Disposition of Air Corps Stations, in Operation and Building, as of January 1933

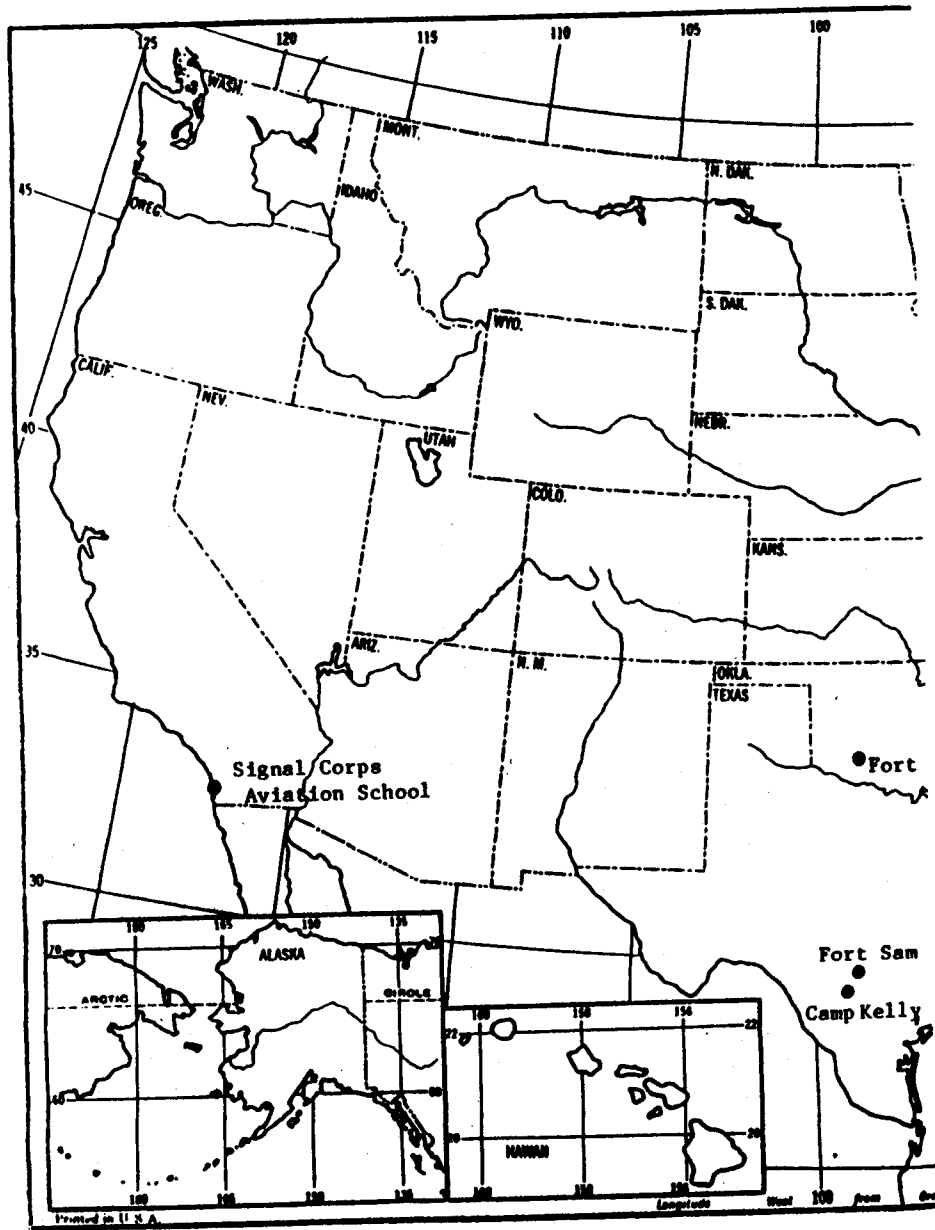




3. Locations of Air Service Activities in the Continental United States in 1925

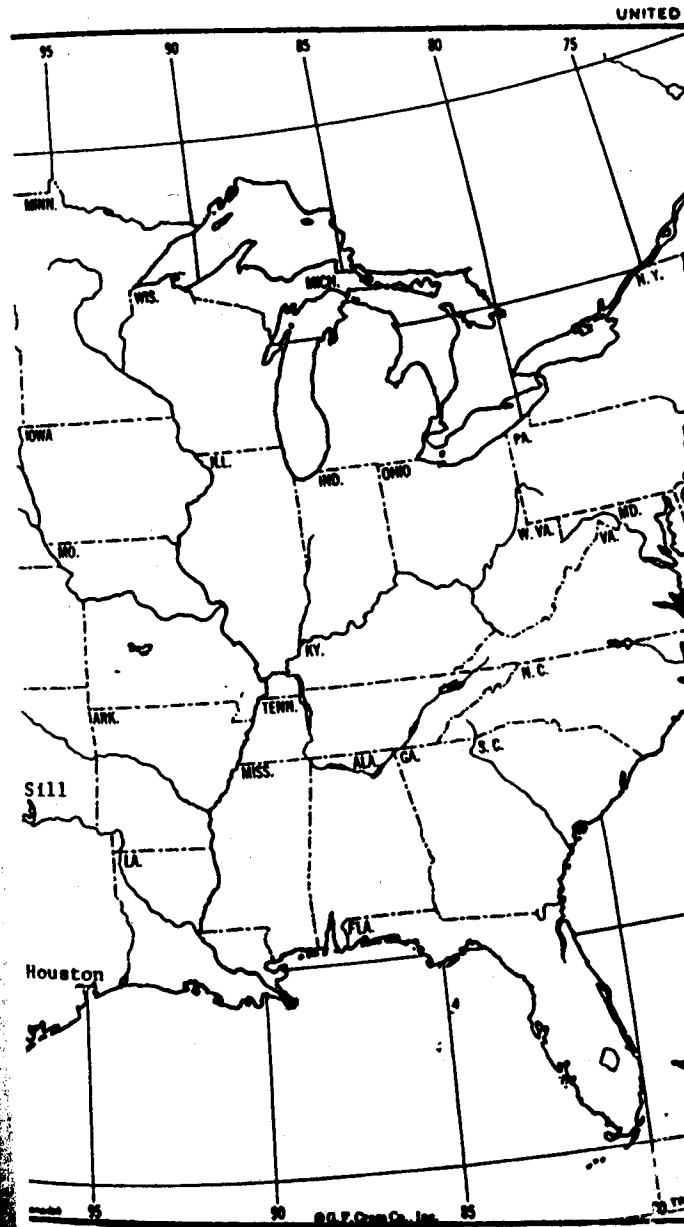
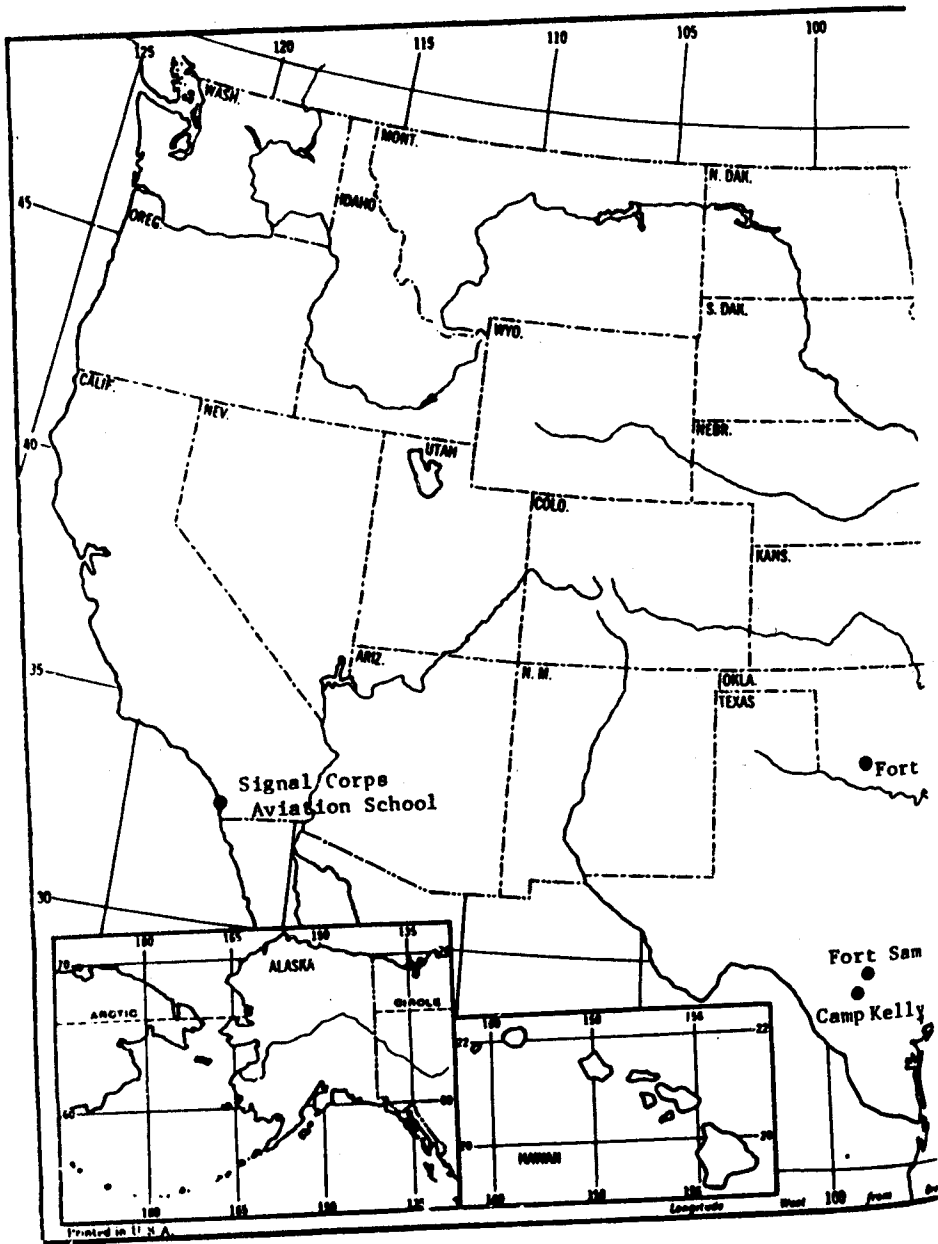


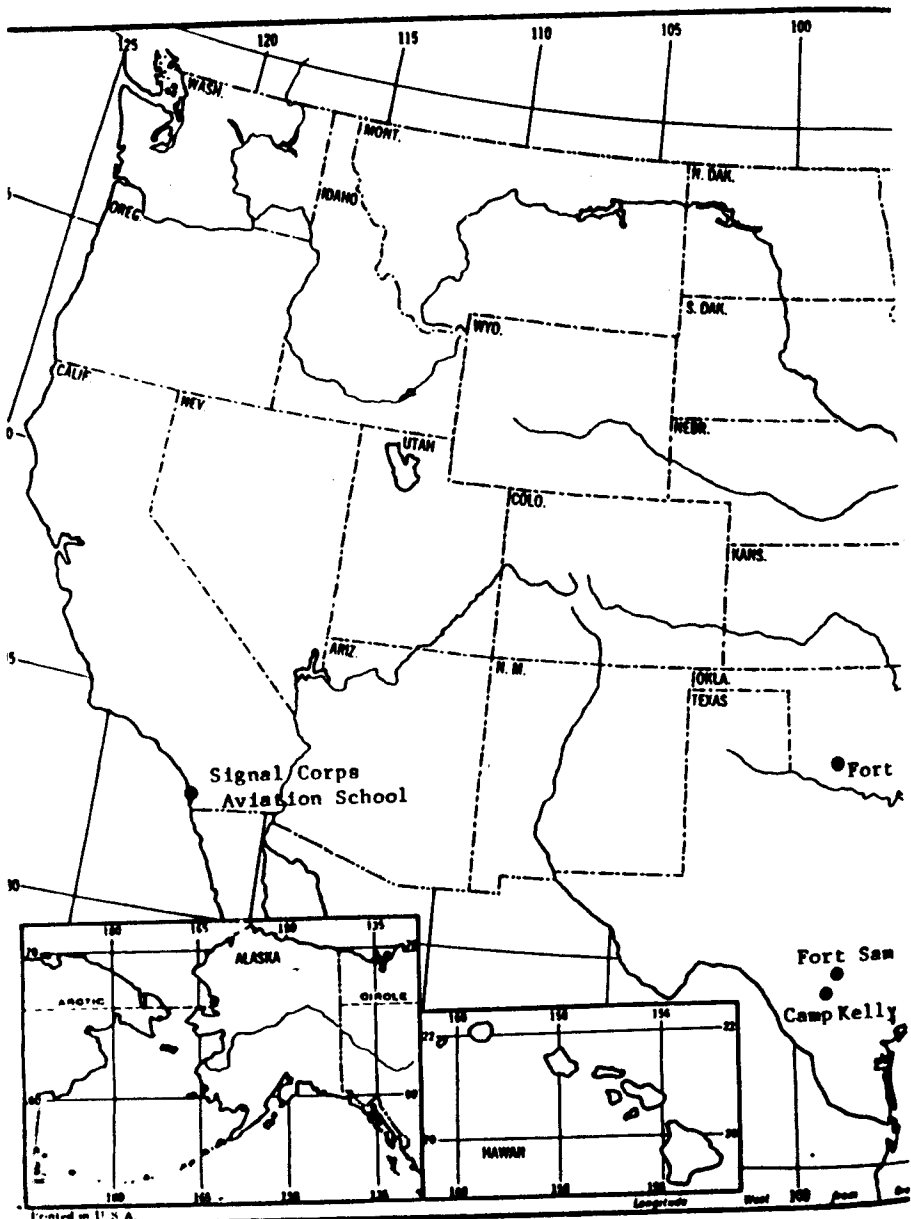




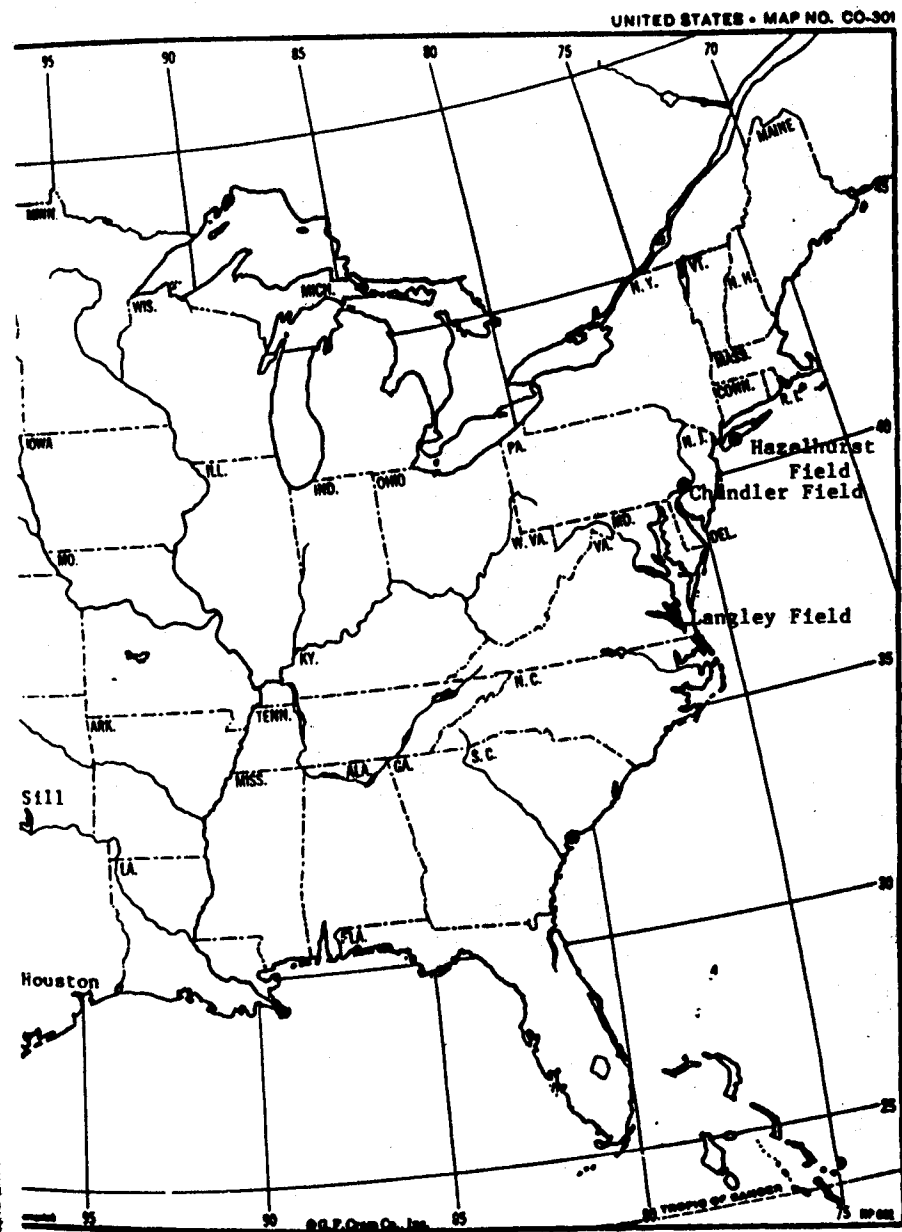
Map Signal Corps Aviation Facilities, 1 April 1917



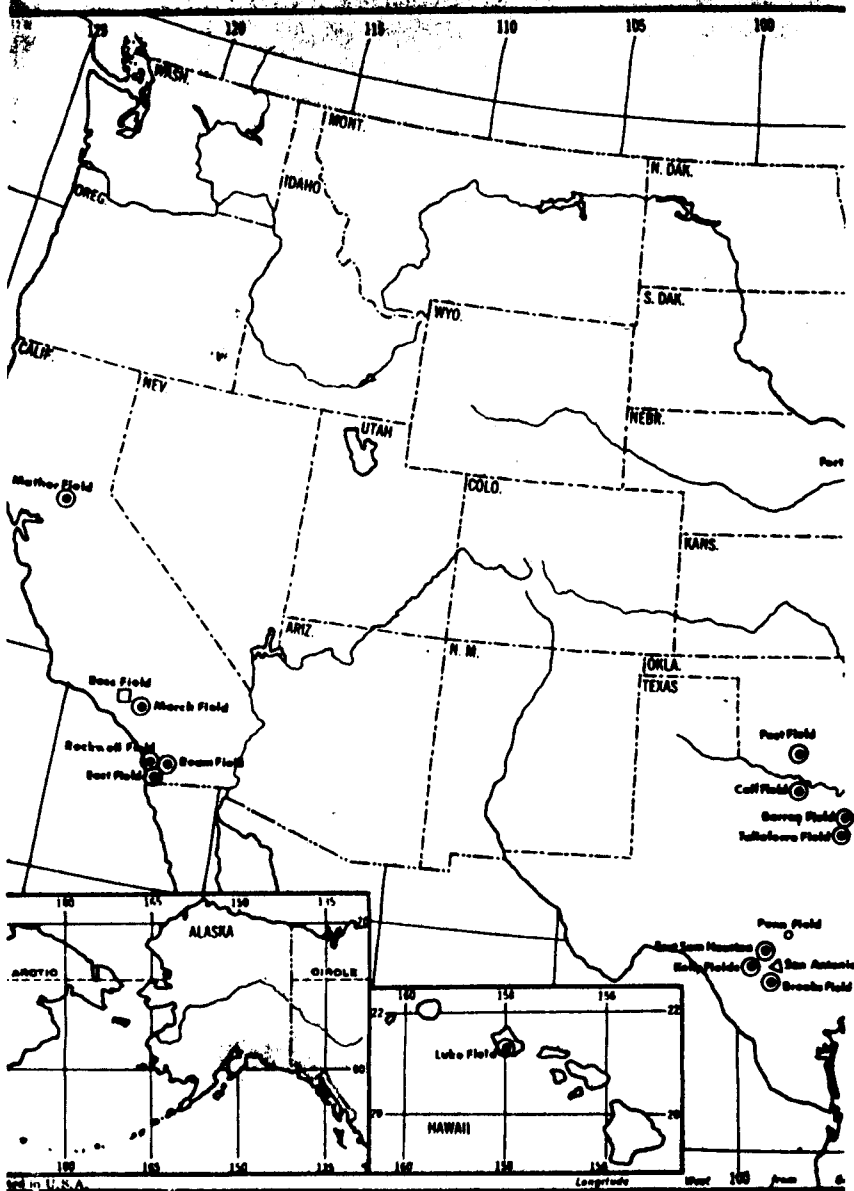




Map 1. Signal Corps Aviation Facilities, 1 April 1917



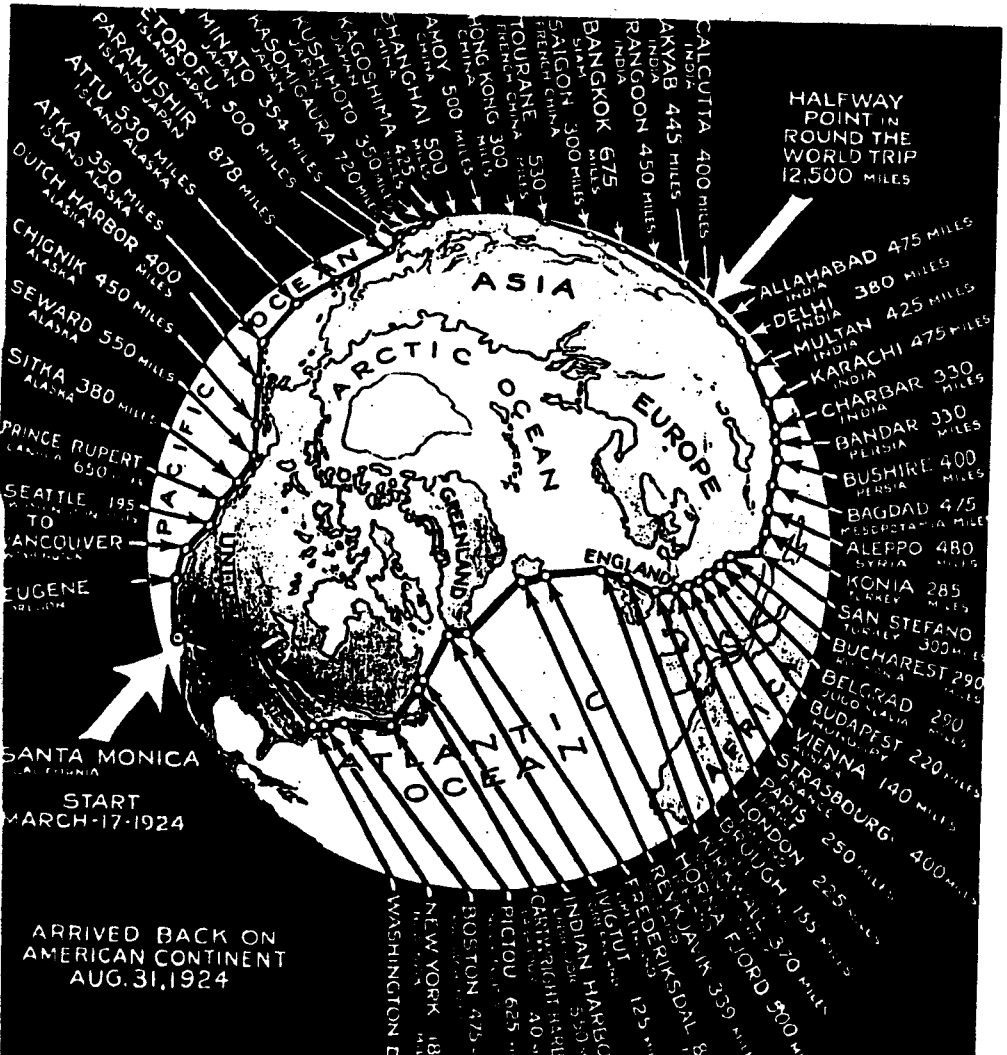




2. Army Flying Fields and Major Aviation Facilities as of November 1918



HALFWAY POINT IN  
ROUND THE  
WORLD TRIP  
12,500 MILES



START  
MARCH-17-1924

ARRIVED BACK ON  
AMERICAN CONTINENT  
AUG. 31, 1924



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## IX APPENDIX

The appendix includes two items, an illustration of the 1924 Douglas World Cruisers flight and photocopies of several maps from Jerold Brown's Where Eagles Land. Both items relate to Pearson Army Airfield in the interwar years.



FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON 98661

Visitor Center

NPS Number **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AREA**

Title: FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC  
SITE

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VANCOUVER  
( # 1 )



FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON 98661

**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AREA**

Model of Fort looking S.W

NPS Number \_\_\_\_\_

Title: FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC  
SITE

Loc. CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON  
VANCOUVER  
( # 2 )



FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON 98561

Restored gate in north wall

NPS Number **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AREA**

Title: FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC  
SITE

Loc. CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON  
VANCOUVER  
( # 3 )

## FORT VANCOUVER

CONSTRUCTION ON THE FIRST SITE OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S FORT VANCOUVER WAS STARTED IN 1824 AT A LOCATION ABOUT ONE MILE EAST OF THIS PLACE. THE POST WAS DEDICATED AND NAMED FORT VANCOUVER ON MARCH 19, 1825, BY GEORGE SIMPSON (LATER SIR GEORGE SIMPSON), GOVERNOR OF THE NORTHERN DEPARTMENT AND WESTERN TERRITORIES.

IN 1829, UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT MANAGER, CHIEF FACTOR JOHN McLOUGHLIN, THE FORT WAS MOVED TO THIS LOCATION. FROM THAT DATE IT WAS IMPROVED AND ENLARGED UNTIL IT REACHED THIS SIZE IN 1846. WITHIN ITS STOCKADE WERE 27 MAJOR STRUCTURES.

FROM 1824 TO 1849 FORT VANCOUVER WAS THE CAPITOL OF THE EXTENSIVE COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT CONSISTING OF THE PRESENT DAY STATES OF WASHINGTON, OREGON, IDAHO, WESTERN MONTANA, AND THE CANADIAN PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA. DURING THIS PERIOD AGRICULTURE AND LUMBERING WERE DEVELOPED FOR THE FIRST TIME ON A LARGE SCALE IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST. IN ADDITION, FOREIGN TRADE WAS DEVELOPED WITH LATIN AMERICA, RUSSIAN ALASKA, AND THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS.

FORT VANCOUVER SERVED AS A PRINCIPAL SUPPLY DEPOT FOR AMERICAN SETTLERS IN OREGON DURING THE 1840'S. IT WAS ABANDONED BY THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY IN 1860.

THE FORT BECAME A PART OF THE U.S. MILITARY RESERVE KNOWN AS VANCOUVER BARRACKS. IN 1866 THE REMAINING STRUCTURES WERE DESTROYED BY FIRE OF UNKNOWN ORIGIN. RECONSTRUCTION WAS STARTED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE IN 1966.



FORT VANCOUVER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON 98661

One of the aluminum signs

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SITE

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VANCOUVER  
( #4 )