

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL RESOURCES

**History of the Polk Prison Property
Blue Ridge Road**

Written by:

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Note from Mr. Michael Hill, Research Supervisor, North Carolina Division of Archives and History upon the release of the report in 2001:

This report was prepared at the request of Mr. John W. Coffey of the North Carolina Museum of Art. It was intended for the use of the museum and the Department of Cultural Resources in evaluating the historical and archaeological significance of the tract that until that time was the site of the Polk Youth Center. Mr. Daniels systematically and thoroughly combed relevant sources in his research. While an attempt was made to be inclusive, there doubtless will be additions and corrections to this document.

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Abstract

Polk Youth Center/Camp Polk Prison Farm operated for almost eight decades as a correctional institution. Before the prison was established in 1920, the land housed military encampments during the Civil War and the First World War. Between the wars and in the antebellum era, the land served agricultural purposes and was owned by several individuals.

No American Indian sites have been identified within the 2001 boundaries of Polk Youth Center. However, archaeological work in nearby sections of western Wake County has recovered artifacts from the archaic period (8,000-1,000 B.C.) and the Woodland period (1,000 B.C.-1600 A.D.). Since the prison is situated near a creek, it is probable that Indian activity occurred on the property.

Research identified two antebellum landowners within Polk's current boundaries. Josiah Davis, a yeoman farmer, owned one five-acre tract. The other tract contained ninety-seven and one-half acres and belonged to Raleigh merchant William Peck.

One section of the massive and historically significant Civil War encampment known as Camp Mangum included the grounds of the former Polk Youth Center. However, the main section of the camp was most likely southeast of Polk near the railroad tracks. Camp Mangum was a camp of instruction for North Carolina's Confederate regiments. From fall 1861 to fall 1862, an artillery battalion and twenty-one infantry regiments were organized, reorganized, or bivouacked at Camp Mangum. By 1864 the state had abandoned the camp.

After the Civil War, the land within the 2001 Polk Youth Center boundaries served agricultural purposes. Three landowners have been identified within the youth center's boundaries. Lucretia Blake, a small farmer, owned the former Davis tract and purchased the former Peck tract. Lizzie P. and Charles H. Belvin acquired both tracts and subsequently passed them to their daughter, Bessie Belvin Horne.

Part of Polk Youth Center property was owned by Rufus S. Tucker, a wealthy merchant and farmer who owned over 5,000 acres in Wake and Pitt Counties. His "Waverly Farm" included former Camp Mangum property and contained 627 acres. After Tucker's death, his widow Francis and his son William managed the extensive landholdings.

From August 1918 to February 1919, the federal government leased between 16,000 to 22,000 acres for a tank training facility known as Camp Polk. This land included the property owned by the Horne and Tucker families. The camp was named for William Polk (1758-1834), a Revolutionary War officer and a prominent Raleigh resident. The U.S. Army planned to erect permanent quarters on the site now occupied by the State Fairgrounds. One mile north of this site, a civilian camp was built that included bunkhouses (sleeping quarters) and stables for white workers helping to

construct the permanent quarters. After only limited construction work, the First World War ended leading the army to abandon the entire military installation.

When the army abandoned the land, the State's Prison (predecessor to Department of Correction) exercised the option to purchase 2,600 acres in 1920 for a new prison farm. The State's Prison initially used the bunkhouses at the civilian camp to house prisoners. The state later built additional facilities for prisoners in that area; the main building, constructed in the 1923-1924 biennium, still stands at Polk Youth Center. Polk operated as a prison farm for nearly sixty years. By the time farming operations were abandoned around 1959, the prison's land was reduced to 557 acres. Polk originally served adult black male inmates; by 1930 white males were being housed at Polk. In the 1940s Polk returned to being an all black facility, but by 1956 it was partially integrated. Once farming was abandoned, prison officials concentrated on developing industries.

Two incidents served as catalysts leading to the conversion of Polk from an adult male prison to a vocational and educational training center for young male offenders. In 1959 a former Polk inmate on the same day he was released from the prison killed Raleigh businessman Trent Ragland. Polk Prison escapee Robert Tyson in 1960 raped and murdered Sarah Bunn Farnell, wife of Polk Prison steward Clyde Farnell, and raped two other women. Tyson's actions led Democratic gubernatorial candidate Terry Sanford to join Polk's neighbors in their call for the relocation of the prison. Once elected, Governor Sanford supported the conversion to a youth center.

In December 1963 the first youthful offenders moved into Polk Youth Center. Prison officials believed that the emphasis on rehabilitation and education would make good citizens out of these young men. Polk Youth Center never really lived up to this ideal. By the 1990s it was an aging overcrowded prison with a history of violence and sexual crimes. Finally, in the summer of 1993, the General Assembly provided funding for a new Polk Youth Center with better housing arrangements for prisoners. That facility opened in 1997 in the Granville County community of Butner.

In July 2000 the General Assembly enacted legislation transferring the former Polk Youth Center property from the Department of Correction to the Department of Cultural Resources for use by the North Carolina Museum of Art. The official transaction occurred in February 2001 when Correction Secretary Theodis Beck and Cultural Resources Secretary Lisbeth C. Evans signed a letter of transfer. With acquisition of the Polk property, the art museum went forward with plans to build a new museum and to transform 100 acres of its land into a natural area.

Over the ensuing decades repeated attempts were made to relocate Polk Prison/Youth Center. The first effort was in 1924 when Governor Cameron Morrison and the State's Prison Board of Directors asked Representative Walter Murphy to present a resolution in the North Carolina House calling for the sale of Polk. Prior to 1993 the most concerted effort came following the crimes in 1959 and 1960. However, it would be another three decades before the old prison left west Raleigh.

Historical Research Report

Polk Prison Property

by

Dennis F. Daniels
August 31, 2001

Research Branch
Division of Archives and History
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

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Introduction

In February 2001 the North Carolina Museum of Art asked the Research Branch of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History to compile a report detailing the history of Polk Youth Center named for Revolutionary War officer and Raleigh resident William Polk (See Appendix A). The NCMA also wanted to add to what is known about use of the property before it became a prison in 1920. By placing the institution and the land in an archaeological and historical context, NCMA administrators believed they would be in a position to better plan development of the site.

The report that follows contains seven chapters along with appended material. The first chapter covers the prehistory of the area while the second relates what could be documented about antebellum era landowners. The third chapter is a history of Camp Mangum, a Civil War camp of instruction that encompassed a large tract including the Polk property. The fourth chapter covers the period between the Civil War and the First World War; it includes details about property owners and agricultural activity on the tract. The fifth chapter tells the story of the short-lived World War I tank training facility known as Camp Polk. The sixth chapter documents how the state obtained a section of the former tank camp property to establish Camp Polk Prison Farm and carries the history of that institution into the 1960s. The final chapter describes how Polk Prison became Polk Youth Center with its emphasis on rehabilitation for youthful offenders. That chapter describes in detail the problems associated with the youth center, that is, how Polk Youth Center never met expectations raised by state officials and eventually outlived its usefulness. The appendices contain numerous items—photos, maps, documents, etc.—to supplement the report.

The report is based on a wide range of documentary sources. Government records, published memoirs, and private manuscript collections were consulted in the North Carolina State Archives and State Library of North Carolina. Newspapers proved especially important to the project. Unpublished reports, secondary published works, and an interview rounded out the research material.

The author found the research challenging and overall a learning experience. It proved impossible to identify every landowner associated with the 2,600 acres that made up Polk's original boundaries, that is, to establish a complete chain of title. The constant focus was on the boundaries of Polk as they existed in 2001. More successful were attempts to tell the story of what took place immediately upon and in the general vicinity of the Polk Prison property.

One key finding from the research is that the main part of Camp Polk Prison Farm/Polk Youth Center was established on the site where civilian laborers engaged in building the World War I tank camp were housed. When the state took over parts of the military installation, it used the bunkhouses constructed for workers to house prisoners. The state later built additional facilities for prisoners; the main building, constructed in the 1923-1924 biennium, still stands at Polk Youth Center.

It is the author's hope that the staff at the North Carolina Museum of Art finds the report helpful in planning for future use of the Polk Youth Center property. At a minimum, it should answer questions and provide new insights into the old prison and what went before.

Chapter I

Natives on the Land

To date, no American Indian sites have been identified within the boundaries of the former Polk Youth Center. However, Indians likely did inhabit the land; archaeological work in nearby sections of western Wake County has documented their presence. Evidence suggests that Indians probably visited Wake County as early as the Paleo-Indian period (prior to 8,000 B.C.). These early Indians were a nomadic people who hunted, fished, and gathered their food.¹

The archaeological work performed in western Wake County on Crabtree and Turkey Creeks on Ebenezer Church Road (1997), between Interstate 40 and US Highway 70 (1989), and at the Raleigh-Durham Airport (various dates) did not yield artifacts from the Paleo-Indian period. However, archaeologists have located artifacts associated with Archaic period (8,000—1,000 B.C.) and the Woodland period (1,000 B.C.—1600 A.D.). A recently published survey of archaeology in North Carolina describes the consumption and settlement patterns of the Archaic Indians:

It is believed that the Archaic peoples settled into an environment similar to what exists today and lived by: (1) hunting mostly animals that can still be found, like the white-tailed deer, black bear, and wild turkey; (2) fishing and collecting both freshwater and saltwater shellfish; and (3) gathering a variety of plant foods such as acorns, hickory nuts, walnuts, seeds, greens, and berries. Because these food resources did not always occur at the same time or place, it was necessary for the Archaic peoples to move among several different campsites during the course of the year.

¹ Dolores Hall, "Prehistoric Background" (report, William B. Umstead State Park File, State Archaeology, Division of Archives and History, ca. 1990); Joffre Coe, Wesley K. Hall, and Tucker R. Littleton, "Cultural Resource Survey of the Raleigh-Durham Airport Runway 5L-23R Project Area" (report, State Archaeology, Division of Archives and History, 1982), II-2; Thomas H. Hargrove, "An Archaeological Survey of the Proposed Site of the Centennial Campus, North Carolina State University, North Carolina" (report, State Archaeology, Division of Archives and History, 1987); H. Trawick Ward and R. P. Stephen Davis, Jr., *Time Before History: The Archaeology of North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), p. 2; Elizabeth R. Murray, *Wake: Capital County of North Carolina*, Vol. 1: *Prehistory through Centennial* (Raleigh, N.C.: Capital County Publishing Company, 1983), p. 3.

The Woodland people evolved from a nomadic life to permanent settlements based on farming. Accordingly, “major villages . . . tend[ed] to be located along major rivers due, in part, to the more easily tilled floodplain soils.” Of the three sites mentioned earlier, most artifacts came from the Archaic period.²

Archaeologists conducted limited survey work at the three sites. In 1997 archaeological work “in wooded uplands north of Crabtree Creek and east of Ebenezer Church Road” yielded items from the Middle to Late Archaic period. As part of the survey conducted between, I-40 and US 70, two Woodland sites, one “located on the floodplain of Richland Creek” and the other “located on a small knoll on the west side of Richland Creek,” were identified. Another site “situated on a hilltop (elevation 365 feet) overlooking Crabtree and Richland Creek” contained Archaic and Woodland items along with other historic pieces.³

Extensive archaeological surveys were performed on the Raleigh-Durham Airport property. This work, conducted in the 1970s and 1982, indicated that the airport property was “impressive archaeologically only for its paucity of aboriginal sites and cultural material.” Still, the surveys located sixty-two prehistoric archaeological sites. A majority of the artifacts found were from the Archaic period most coming from the Middle Archaic subperiod, but some Woodland period items were identified.

Archaeologists indicated that Indians inhabited two types of locations:

² Ward and Davis, p. 2-4 (quotation); Hall (quotation); Deborah Joy and Megan O’Connell, “Archaeological Survey Report: Replacement of Bridge 44 over Crabtree Creek and Bridge 45 over Turkey Creek on Ebenezer Church Road (SR 1649), Wake County, North Carolina” (report, State Archaeology, Division of Archives and History, 1997), 7, 12; Thomas J. Padgett, “Archaeological Survey Report: Duraleigh Extension Between I-40 and US 70, Wake County, TIP No. U-2110” (report, State Archaeology, Division of Archives and History, 1989), 4-5; Coe, Hall, and Littleton, II-4; Wesley K. Hall and Tucker R. Littleton, “Cultural Resource Survey of the Raleigh-Durham Airport Area [Wake County]” report, State Archaeology, Division of Archives and History, 1978), II-5.

³ Joy and O’Connell, 7 (quotation), 12; Padgett, 4-5 (quotation).

Aboriginal sites found at the RDU Airport area tended to be located on streamside slopes and knoll tops. Elevation, slope, soil type, and proximity to the water source seem to rank high as factors determining site location. Sites found on knoll tops or ridge tops at the RDU Airport were invariably deflated, possibly as a consequence of clearing and/or agricultural activity in historical times.

Conclusions drawn by archaeologists indicated that Indians utilized this area only briefly for “hunting and gathering activities during the Archaic period.” The Woodland evidence was evidently too insignificant to draw any conclusions. They believed that “aboriginal utilization appear[ed] exceedingly insignificant.” In this area, permanent settlement probably did not occur until the historic period.⁴

Did Indians inhabit the land currently occupied by the former Polk Youth Center? This question is a difficult one to answer. Since the property was situated near a creek, there is a high probability that some Indian activity occurred on the property. Nevertheless, since this land was heavily farmed over the years and Indian activity appeared to be sporadic, any archaeological remains may be lost to the ages.

⁴ Coe, Hall, and Littleton, II-4,II-5 (quotation); Hall and Tucker, II-4, 5, and 12, IV-10, V-1, VI-1.

Chapter II

Antebellum Landowners

In this chapter an attempt will be made to identify individuals who owned land in the past within the boundaries of Polk Youth Center. The boundaries are those of the youth center at the time of its transfer to the Department of Cultural Resources in 2001. No effort has been made to identify every landowner in the 2,600 acres that originally made up the prison's boundaries (See Appendices O, AA, and BB). The research identified two distinct antebellum era tracts of land as most likely being within the current prison's boundaries. When the State's Prison (now Department of Correction) purchased the land in 1920, Bessie B. and Charles W. Horne held possession of these tracts. Following the land's history from the Hornes backward posed challenges. A story did emerge about the past landowners, but it still did not answer every question.⁵

The first permanent settlers of what is today Wake County (formed in 1771) took up tracts in the 1730s. By the nineteenth century, farmers who owned a modest amount of land dominated Wake County. These yeomen utilized the many gristmills that were established on the county's many streams. In addition to grinding corn and wheat, the mills served as public places for farmers to gather. Fendol Bevers' 1871 Wake County map situates a number of mills along the streams in House Creek (named after William or Thomas House) township where Polk Youth Center was located (See Appendix F).⁶

⁵ Bessie Belvin and Charles W. Horne to State's Prison, January 1, 1920, Book 350, pp. 533-534 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives; Cary K. Durfey, Executor and Trustee for Florence P. Tucker, etc. to State's Prison, January 31, 1920, Book 358, pp. 35-37 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives.

⁶ Kelly A. Lally, *The Historic Architecture of Wake County, North Carolina* (Raleigh: Wake County Government, 1994), 8, 11-12; Elizabeth R. Murray, *Wake: Capital County of North Carolina*, Vol. 1: *Prehistory through Centennial* (Raleigh: Capital County Publishing Co., 1983), 41, 105, 140; Fendol Bevers, Map of Wake County, 1871, State Archives.

Josiah Davis is the earliest identified property owner whose name can be associated with land within the 2001 Polk boundaries. One of the tracts purchased by the State's Prison from the Horne family was referred to as the Davis tract. According to the 1920 deed, these five-acres were situated on the south side of the Hillsborough Road (now Reedy Creek Road). In 1822 Davis acquired 274 acres in two separate transactions. The deeds described this land as being situated along Brier Creek (Cedar Fork Township near the Durham County line) which placed it too far west of the youth center's location.

However, an 1830 Wake County tax list indicated that Davis owned 120 acres in the House Creek district. In that same year, the population census listed Davis as between forty and fifty years old with a wife, four sons and three daughters, and one slave. By 1834 Davis possessed 220 acres in the House Creek district. In 1835 Davis's farm had fifteen cows, four horses, hogs, and sheep. He also had two wagons and one cart.⁷

By May 1835 Davis found himself indebted to Ezekiel Ellis, Alexander M. High, and Benjamin B. Davis for \$300. In an effort to secure repayment of this debt, Davis placed 100 acres (located five miles west of Raleigh), household and kitchen furniture, livestock, and his two wagons and cart in a deed of trust with newspaperman Weston R. Gales. By November 1837 Alexander M. High, one of Davis's creditors, had the 100

⁷ Bessie Belvin and Charles W. Horne to State's Prison, January 1, 1920, Book 350, pp. 533-534 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives; Wake County General Index to Real Estate Conveyances-Grantees, 1785-1958, Book D, p. 52 (microfilm), State Archives; John Marr to Josiah Davis, February 24, 1822, Book 5, p. 200 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives; John Jelks to Josiah Davis, October 27, 1822, Book 5, p. 317 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives; Tax Listing for Josiah Davis, 1830, Houses Creek District, Wake County Tax Lists, State Archives; Fifth Census of the United States, 1830: Wake County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, National Archives (microfilm, State Archives); Tax Listing for Josiah Davis, 1834, House Creek District, Wake County Tax Lists, State Archives; Josiah Davis to Weston R. Gales, Alexander M. High, and Benjamin B. Smith, May 9, 1835, Book 12, p. 102 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives.

acres in his possession. Between 1836 and 1841 Davis's name did not appear in the tax list for House Creek.⁸

Alexander M. High who had 1,465 acres in 1836 and at least fourteen slaves in 1837 might be described as a small plantation owner. In 1837 High like Davis was forced to place his property in deed of trust to Weston R. Gales for indebtedness over \$1,500. This property included 1,365 acres, slaves, livestock, household and kitchen furniture, farm utensils, etc. In 1840 the population census listed High as being between forty and fifty years old with a wife and five children residing in the White Oak District of Wake County. He also had ten free African Americans living with him.⁹

In October 1840, High sold to Charlotte Blake for twenty-five dollars "a certain piece of land to wit lying on the main Hillsborough road lying on the south side containing about five acres, all which is cleared and formerly owned by Josiah Davis." The 1850 population census listed Charlotte Blake as a sixty-year-old mulatto woman born in North Carolina who had a twenty-nine-year-old mulatto woman named Chatharine [*sic*] Blake and three mulatto children living with her. The children were Martha Blake, nine years old, and Salley [*sic*] and Mary Blake, both nine months old. Apparently Chatharine was Charlotte Blake's daughter while the children were Charlotte Blake's grandchildren and Chatharine Blake's children. The census also showed that

⁸ Josiah Davis to Weston R. Gales, Alexander M. High, and Benjamin B. Smith, May 9, 1835, Book 12, p. 102 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives; Alexander M. High to Weston R. Gales, Trustee, November 9, 1837, Book 12, p. 555 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives; Wake County Tax Lists, 1833-1841, State Archives.

⁹ Tax Listing for Alex. M. High, 1836, Raleigh District, Wake County Tax Lists, State Archives; Alexander M. High to Weston R. Gales, Trustee, November 9, 1837, Book 12, p. 555 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives; Sixth Census of the United States, 1840: Wake County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, National Archives (microfilm, State Archives).

Charlotte Blake lived near a twenty-nine-year-old mulatto woman named Lucretia Blake possibly a daughter of Charlotte Blake.¹⁰

Lucretia Blake obtained the five-acre Davis tract from Charlotte Blake. Lucretia Blake seemingly had this property by 1847 because she was listed as holding five acres in House Creek in the 1847 Wake County tax lists. The 1850 population census listed Lucretia Blake as a native North Carolinian who had real estate valued at thirty dollars. She had two children, Ann and Green, ages thirteen and twelve, who were listed as being mulatto.¹¹

* * * * *

The second earliest identified tract apparently within the 2001 Polk boundaries became known as the “Kraty [Lucretia] Blake place” (Lucreita Blake acquired the land from the Howle family in 1880.). In May 1853, Malinda Howle (spelled Howell on deed) purchased ninety-seven and one-half acres from the estate of William Peck for \$350. When Howle purchased the land, she acquired property once owned by a successful Raleigh merchant. Peck, a Virginia native, moved from Petersburg to the capital city in 1798 establishing himself as one of Raleigh’s earliest merchants. Peck owned a dry goods store at the corner of Morgan and Wilmington Streets that also apparently served as a bank. In part a haberdasher, Peck had a large oversized hat sign that hung from his dry goods store. He also served as an auctioneer and commission merchant. The 1850 Wake County tax list showed Peck as having 172 acres (valued at

¹⁰ Alexander M. High to Charlotte Blake, October 19, 1840, Book 14, p. 371 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds; State Archives (quotation); Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Wake County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, National Archives (microfilm, State Archives); I found Lucretia Blake’s first name spelled several ways: Lucraty, Lucrata, Lucretia, Craty, and Kraty.

¹¹ Lucretia Blake to Charles H. Belvin, April 3, 1894, Book 140, p. 316 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives; 1847 Tax Listing of Lucretia Blaki [*sic*], House’s Creek, Wake County Tax Lists, State Archives; Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Wake County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, National Archives (microfilm, State Archives).

\$860) and two lots (valued at \$2,000) and four slaves, and the 1850 population census recorded the value of his real estate at \$7,000. Peck died at the age of eighty in June 1851; his obituary stated that he had been a merchant for fifty years.¹²

Malinda Howle was a woman of significant wealth who must have been married a couple of times. An 1878 estate inventory showed her as owning 463 acres in Wake County and thirteen houses and lots in Wilmington. She married Thomas K. Howle in August 1860. Strangely, her last name was Howle when she purchased land from the Peck estate; however, when Thomas K. Howle took out a marriage bond on July 14, 1857, Malinda Howle's last name was Griffin. Yet, the marriage license listed Malinda Howle's last name as Blake.¹³

Lucreita Blake and Malinda Howle held these two tracts of land after the Civil War, and the two landowners knew each other. However, their stories must wait until after the Civil War because the area in 1861 became inundated with young Tar Heels. They were learning to be Confederate soldiers at a training facility known as Camp Mangum.

¹² Lewis W. Peck, Administrator of William Peck, Deceased, to Malinda Howell, May 2, 1853, Book 19, pp. 555-556 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives; *Weekly Raleigh Register and North Carolina Gazette*, June 25, 1851; Moses N. Amis, *Historical Raleigh with Sketches of Wake County and Its Important Towns* (Raleigh, N.C.: Commercial Printing Co., 1913), 68; Hope S. Chamberlain, *History of Wake County, North Carolina with Sketches of Those Who Have Most Influenced Its Development* (Raleigh, N.C.: Edwards and Broughton Printing Co., 1922), 148, 150; Murray, 265-266; 1850 Tax Listing of William Peck, Raleigh, Wake County Tax Lists, State Archives; Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Wake County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, National Archives (microfilm, State Archives).

¹³ Estate of Malinda Howle, 1878, Wake County Estate Records, State Archives; Wake County Marriage Bonds, State Archives.

Chapter III

Camp Mangum

One section of the Civil War encampment known as Camp Mangum was located within the original boundaries of Camp Polk Prison Farm and ~~possibly~~ included the grounds of the former Polk Youth Center. A 1959 report presented to Governor Luther Hodges stated that “Polk Prison is located on the site of one of the Confederate camps, Camp Mangum.” Camp Mangum was one of five camps of instruction for the training of North Carolina regiments for Confederate service established in Wake County. It was among the largest such camps in Civil War North Carolina.¹⁴

Camp Mangum was created by the fall of 1861; however, its exact date of establishment remains unclear. According to the *North Carolina Troops*, the 30th Regiment, North Carolina State Troops organized on September 26, 1861, at Camp Mangum. Yet, the State of North Carolina through Major John Devereux, chief quartermaster of North Carolina, apparently did not formally acquire land for Camp Mangum until November 1861 (See Appendix B). This camp of instruction was named for Lt. William Preston Mangum who died on July 28, 1861, from wounds suffered at the First Battle of Bull Run and William Person Mangum, a former U.S. senator and father of Lieutenant Mangum, who died on September 7, 1861 (See Appendix C). The state selected a site four miles west of the city encompassing several hundred acres. Post-Civil War records indicated that surveyor Fendol Bevers acquired 313 acres of Camp Mangum in 1872 from the State (See Appendix E). Wake County property tax records for 1881

¹⁴ “History and Recent Progress Report on Polk Prison Unit,” attached to a letter from W. F. Bailey to Luther H. Hodges, September 29, 1959, Luther H. Hodges, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1960, Polk Prison Complaints (quotation); Elizabeth R. Murray, *Wake: Capital County of North Carolina*, Vol. I: *Prehistory through Centennial* (Raleigh, N.C.: Capital County Publishing Company, 1983), 460-461.

reveal that Bevers owned 273 acres referred to as Camp Mangum in the House Creek Township and that businessman Rufus S. Tucker (See Appendix I) possessed 243 acres being called Camp Mangum in the same township. In 1882 the North Carolina Supreme Court ordered Bevers to return his Camp Mangum tract to the State. The state evidently gave the Bevers tract to North Carolina Agricultural and Mechanical College (now North Carolina State University) in 1887. An October 1910 estate inventory of Tucker's wife Florence P. Tucker showed her owning 527 acres known as the Camp Mangum Tract. The exact boundaries for the camp have never been precisely established. The best evidence indicates that it extended from a point one-half mile west of the old North Carolina State Fairgrounds (near the main campus of North Carolina State University) and to present-day North Carolina State University Veterinary School. The boundaries went north taking in the Veterinary School, Polk Youth Center, and part of the North Carolina Museum of Art property.¹⁵

Soldiers definitely encamped at Camp Mangum by the beginning of November 1861 even before its boundaries were blazed to prevent soldiers from trespassing onto

¹⁵ Weymouth T. Jordan, Jr., comp. *North Carolina Troops, 1861-1865: A Roster*, vol. 8 (Raleigh: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1981), 314; William S. Powell, ed., *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, vol. 2 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 59-60; John Devereux to George W. Mordecai, November 1, 1861, Letter Book 21, p. 352, Adjutant General Department, State Archives; John Devereux to Fendol Bevers, November 9, 1861, Letter Book 21, p. 389, Adjutant General Department, State Archives; *State v. Fendol Bevers*, *North Carolina Reports* 86 (1882): 555-561; Murray, 461; William S. Powell, ed., *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, vol. 4 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 208; *Spirit of the Age* (Raleigh, weekly), April 21, 1862; John Devereux to Paul C. Cameron, November 8, 1861, Letter Book 21, p. 386, Adjutant General Department, State Archives; John Devereux to Thomas Webb, February 22, 1862, Letter Book 21, p. 631, Adjutant General Department, State Archives; State of North Carolina to Fendol Bevers, December 21, 1872, Book 35, pp. 116-118 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives; *State of North Carolina v. Fendol Bevers*, Case No.13,471, North Carolina Supreme Court Original Cases, 1800-1909, State Archives; Tax listing of R. S. Tucker and Fendol Bevers, 1881, House's Creek Township (microfilm), Wake County Tax Lists, State Archives; *Public Laws of North Carolina, 1887*, c. 410, s. 7; Inventory of the Estate of Mrs. Florence P. Tucker, October 31, 1910, p. 363, Wake County, Inventories and Account of Sales, 1907-1913, State Archives; Cary K. Durfey, Executor and Trustee for Florence P. Tucker, etc. to State's Prison, January 31, 1920, Book 358, pp. 35-37 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 5, 1894.

adjoining lands. The soldiers, however, did subsequently trespass onto adjoining property. In January 1862 they were accused of “pillaging the wood on the land belonging to Briggs & Dodd, Cooper & others.” From fall 1861 to September 1862, an artillery battalion and twenty-one infantry regiments were organized, reorganized, or bivouacked at Camp Mangum (See Appendix D). By 1864 the state had abandoned the camp likely due to the need to rush troops into service without extensive instruction.¹⁶

Transporting of soldiers and supplies to Camp Mangum proved to be a problem for Major John Devereux. Initially soldiers disembarked at the depot in downtown Raleigh; then, they were taken by wagons to the camp. Transporting soldiers via wagons resulted in a “heavy charge [expense] as well as great inconveniences” to the state. Three soldiers in 1862, after being in Raleigh for most of the day, got a carriage to take them to Camp Mangum for \$1.50. Nevertheless, not every soldier had the advantage of a wagon to ride to the camp. Some soldiers upon arriving in Raleigh toured the city and then marched to the camp. In May 1862 work on the Camp Mangum hospital halted because of a supply shortage; lumber needed for construction was sitting at Stallings depot (modern-day Clayton) in Johnston County awaiting transport by the railroad.¹⁷

¹⁶ John Devereux to Fendol Bevers, November 9, 1861, Letter Book 21, p. 389, Adjutant General Department, State Archives; John Devereux to Henry Mordecai, January 16, 1862, Letter Book 21, p. 566, Adjutant General Department, State Archives (quotation); Louis H. Manarin and Weymouth T. Jordan, Jr., comps. *North Carolina Troops, 1861-1865: A Roster*, vols. 1, 4-6, 8-13 (Raleigh: N.C. Division of Archives and History, 1966-1993), various pages; *State of North Carolina v. Fendol Bevers*, Wake County Miscellaneous Land Records, State Archives; *State of North Carolina v. Fendol Bevers*, Case No. 13,471, North Carolina Supreme Court Original Cases, 1800-1909, State Archives.

¹⁷ Murray, 263; John Devereux to Paul C. Cameron, January 18, 1862, Letter Book 21, p. 571, Adjutant General Department, State Archives; John Devereux to Thomas Webb, March 7, 1862, Letter Book 21, Adjutant General Department, State Archives; John Devereux to Paul C. Cameron, November 23, 1861, Letter Book 21, p. 441, Adjutant General Department, State Archives (quotation); Leon Louis, *Diary of a Tar Heel Confederate Soldier* (Charlotte, N.C.: Stone Publishing Co., 1913), 4-5; W. A. Day, *A True History of Company I, 49th Regiment, North Carolina Troops, in the Great Civil War, Between the North and the South* (Newton, N.C.: Enterprise Job Office, 1898), 9-10; John Devereux to Thomas Webb, May 29, 1862, Letter Book 34, p. 137, Adjutant General Department, State Archives.

To alleviate the problem of getting the troops from downtown Raleigh to Camp Mangum, Major Devereux turned to the railroad. In November 1861 he asked the North Carolina Railroad (hereafter NCRR) to construct at state expense a turnout. (Defined as a track arrangement enabling locomotives and railroad cars to pass from one track to another.) The turnout would allow the state to transport troops to Camp Mangum via the railroad instead of using wagons. Even after bringing iron for the turnout by January 18, 1862, to Raleigh, it had not been constructed by March 1862. On March 25, 1862, the pressing need of moving supplies to Camp Mangum forced the state to requisition NCRR cars. With more than three thousand soldiers in camp by that date, and with the prospect of the number increasing to five thousand, Major Devereux sought to borrow or purchase railroad cars to get the soldiers from Raleigh to Camp Mangum. While asking Thomas Webb, president of the NCRR, for the use of one or two cars daily, Major Devereux delivered a veiled threat to Webb telling him that “unless some arrangement of that kind can be made the officer charged with transportation at this point will sometimes be forced to interfere with the running of trains.” By the end of April 1862 Major Devereux had two railroad cars, but he needed to acquire a locomotive to move them. By May 1862 Major he had secured a locomotive and an engineer to operate it.¹⁸

Arriving at Camp Mangum, the men settled into a camp that in the words of Sgt. Isaac Lefevers of the 46th Regiment was “a very wicked place” with its cussing and

¹⁸ John Devereux to Paul C. Cameron, November 5, 1861, Letter Book 21, p. 368, Adjutant General Department, State Archives; John Devereux to Thomas Webb, March 7, 1862, Letter Book 21, p. 660, Adjutant General Department, State Archives; John Devereux to Paul C. Cameron, January 18, 1862, Letter Book 21, p. 571, Adjutant General Department, State Archives; John Devereux to Thomas Webb, March 25, 1862, Letter Book 21, p. 692, Adjutant General Department, State Archives; John Devereux to Thomas Webb, April 10, 1862, Letter Book 21, p. 719, Adjutant General Department, State Archives (quotation); John Devereux to Thomas Webb, April 25, 1862, Letter Book 34, p. 108, Adjutant General Department, State Archives; John Devereux to A. Faison, May 1, 1862, Letter Book 34, p. 112, Adjutant General Department, State Archives.

swearing. From March to May 1862 soldiers poured into Camp Mangum. On March 25 Major Devereux calculated that about three thousand men or more were housed at Camp Mangum while on April 7 Sergeant Lefevers estimated the number at between six and eight thousand. By the end of April one soldier writing to the *Spirit of the Age*, a Raleigh newspaper, guessed there were ten thousand soldiers at the camp. Around May another soldier stated fifteen thousand troops were at Camp Mangum when he arrived, but that number dropped to around five thousand by the end of May as soldiers were being shipped out.¹⁹

The soldiers found a wooded landscape including “an old pine field.” The army felled cut trees to use for various purposes. Sergeant Lefevers reported that two men whom had gotten into trouble “air [*sic*] digging stumps up.” The camp also contained unforested and barren areas. Pvt. William A. Day of Catawba County reported being moved to a new campsite in a field close to the railroad. Capt. John W. Graham, commander of Company D, 56th Regiment, stated, “We had a terrible gale of dust yesterday afternoon and everything is full of it this morning.” Since Beaver Dam and House Creeks transverse Camp Mangum, they served as the water supply for the soldiers. Regarding the retrieval of water, Private Day said, “We carried our water half mile [*sic*] but the road was level.” This statement is noteworthy for the fact that it indicated that the camp had a road through it. The camp also had a hospital, a powder mill, and a guardhouse.²⁰

¹⁹ Isaac Lefevers to Cathrine [*sic*] Lefevers, March 31, 1862, Isaac Lefevers Papers, Private Collections, State Archives (quotation); Isaac Lefevers to J. H. Hudson, April 7, 1862, Isaac Lefevers Papers, Private Collections, State Archives; *Spirit of the Age* (weekly, Raleigh), April 21, 1863; John Devereux to Thomas Webb, March 25, 1862, Letter Book 21, p. 692, Adjutant General Department, State Archives; Isaac *Spirit of the Age* (weekly, Raleigh), June 9, 1862.

²⁰ Leon, 4-5; Day, 11-12 (quotation); Lefevers to J. H. Hudson, April 7, 1862, Isaac Lefevers Papers, Private Collections, State Archives (quotation); John W. Graham to Susan W. Graham, June 16, 1862, *The*

As the men rolled into Camp Mangum, they were quartered in log structures or tents. In the spring of 1862 Pvt. Leon Lewis of the 54th Regiment related the joys associated with living in one of these dwellings:

We reported to Captain [Joseph H.] White, and he showed us to our hut. We were surprised to find it without a floor, a roof half off and “holey” all over. We commenced repairing, and went to the woods to chop a pole for a part of the bedstead. We walked about a mile before we found one to suit us. It was a hard job to get it to our hut. We put our bedding on it, which consisted of leaves we had gathered in the woods. And now it is a bed fit for a king or a Confederate soldier.

That same spring Captain Cary W. Whitaker of the 43rd Regiment placed William Beavans and George W. Wills, two relatives who had served previously in the 1st Regiment, North Carolina Infantry (six months, 1861), in a log cabin. Clearly impressed by his quarters, Beavans described them as “very well for a soldier.” Private Day apparently did not like the winter quarter log cabins where he and fellow soldiers were temporarily housed in April 1862. Day said, “After remaining a day or two in the old winter quarters, we moved into an old pine field, and quartered in good wall tents.” The camp’s tents and numerous men clearly impressed recruit Kinchen J. Carpenter of Rutherford County who wrote in his diary, “The white tents and so many soldiers were something I had never seen before.”²¹

Papers of William Alexander Graham, vol. 5, eds. Max R. Williams and J. G. deRoulhac Hamilton (Raleigh, N.C.: Office of Archives and History, 1973), 393-394; State of North Carolina to Fendol Bevers, December 24, 1872, Book 35, pp. 116-118 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives; John Devereux to Thomas Webb, May 29, 1862, Letter Book 34, p. 137, Adjutant General Department, State Archives; Isaac Lefevers to Cathrine Lefevers, March 31, 1862, Isaac Lefevers Papers, Private Collections, State Archives.

²¹ Leon, 4-5 (quotation); Jordan, *North Carolina Troops*, vol.10, 323; Manly W. Wellman, *Rebel Boast: First at Bethel—Last at Appomattox* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1956), 80; Day, 11 (quotation); Kinchen J. Carpenter, *War Diary of Kinchen Jahu Carpenter, Company I, Fiftieth North Carolina Regiment, War Between the States*, ed. Julie C. Williams (Rutherfordton, N.C.: privately published, 1955), 4 (quotation).

These new soldiers adjusted quickly to a way of living that clearly was foreign to them. Private Carpenter related the story of the sleeping practices of Company I of the 50th Regiment to which he as assigned:

There were 113 in our Company. We had 19 tents, 6 men to sleep in one tent; all had to sleep together, all lying one way and wedged so tight against each other that when one turned over, the whole six had to do like wise.²²

The soldiers cooked for themselves, a task performed by their wives and mothers back home. Private Day reported that his company's rations consisted of "flour, pickled beef, pickled pork, peas and rice, more than we could use." He also related the story of their first cooking experiences that revealed the soldiers' lack of knowledge in preparing food:

We had trouble with dough; it would stick to the hands and work up almost to the elbows. And not knowing the nature of rice when it finds itself in hot water, we generally filled the camp kettle full and when it began to roll out on the ground, we dipped it out and ate it to keep it from wasting. The cooking was done by details. We could manage the beef and rice very well but the bread looked like razor hones.²³

The camp life of the enlisted soldiers benefited when the troops had a commanding officer that looked out for them. Writing to the *Spirit of the Age*, one soldier proudly exclaimed how their company commander, Capt. Alexander C. McAllister was able to provide the soldiers "with the necessaries of the camp life" because of the "energetic and business manner in which . . . [he] . . . discharges his duty." At least one slaveholder enjoyed the use of an African American servant. Wash,

²² Carpenter, 5.

²³ Day, 10, 12 (quotation).

Sergeant George S. Will's slave, brought supplies to his master that included food that the sergeant liked and cooked for him.²⁴

While at Camp Mangum the soldiers were provided with clothing and equipment. William Beavans and George W. Wills received "a dress uniform, a suit of fatigues, an overcoat, two shirts, two pairs of drawers, and two pair of shoes." Private Day recalled, "After organization we drew our grey uniforms, blankets, knapsacks, haversacks and canteens." However, clothing and equipment varied in quality. Following an inspection of Company I, 56th Regiment (formally Company N, 16th Regiment) on July 1, 1862, Col. H. B. Waston reported, "Discipline: Good. Arms: Mixed but serviceable. Accoutrements: Good. Knapsacks: Worthless. Clothing: Deficient." Every man did not immediately received a rifle; many soldiers were given spears. Private Carpenter said they trained with a spear, called the "Confederate Pike", which had a ten-foot wooden handle with a steel dagger-shaped blade and a steel hook. Likewise, Private Day recalled that "the sentinels walked their beats armed with long wooden spears." When Private Day and his fellow soldiers finally received their muskets, they were not of the best quality. He stated that the muskets "if not used in the Crusades certainly did good service in the wars of Queen Anne."²⁵

Since the soldiers were at a camp of instruction, they constantly drilled. Captain Lawson Harrill stated, "We drilled every day and soon felt that as skirmishers were the best in the regiment." Private Carpenter's company spent their fifteen days in Camp Mangum mostly drilling. Private Day provided a detailed account of the daily routine:

²⁴ *Spirit of the Age* (Raleigh, weekly), April 21, 1862 (quotation); Wellman, 83-84.

²⁵ Wellman, 81; Day, 11-12 (quotation); Jordan, *North Carolina Troops*, vol. 13, 682; Lawson Harrill, *Reminiscences, 1861-1865* (Statesville, N.C.: Brady, The Printer, 1910) 10-11; Walter Clark, ed., *Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-'65*, vol. 1 (Raleigh: State of North Carolina, 1901), 23; Carpenter, 5-6.

The exercises were roll-call about daylight, squad-drill from seven to eight, company drill from nine to eleven, battalion drill from one to three, dress parade at sundown, and roll-call again at night, with the usual routine guard duty.²⁶

At Camp Mangum the soldiers did have occasional breaks from their drilling.

The men enjoyed religious services. They received permits to go to Raleigh; however, leaving camp proved to be a bad experience for two soldiers who got drunk and ended up in the guardhouse and later were ordered to remove stumps. In his spare time, a soldier might write to his wife providing her with planting instructions for their farm. Once in camp it clearly was hard to get home; however, soldiers applied for furloughs. Sergeant Lefevers described the difficulty in getting a furlough:

[I]t is a hard matter for a man to get off after he gets hear a man cannot get a furlow under three days our capt. tride three days before he got home to see his mother and I under stand this morning that she is dead[.]

Nevertheless, some soldiers received the opportunity to go home. Around June 16, 1862, Capt. John W. Graham, commander Company D, 56th Regiment, obtained permission from the Adjutant General to allow every man in his company “to go home whose crop would be seriously damaged or entirely lost.” Captain Graham noted, “Nearly every single one of my company has applied, and I suppose I will have to let them go as I don’t know whether they have wheat or not.”²⁷

For many soldiers, Camp Mangum was a place of misery due to disease. Measles and mumps apparently caused the most sickness within the camp. Disease placed many soldiers on the sick list, affecting the strength of companies and regiments. A soldier in

²⁶ Harrill, 10-11(quotation); Carpenter, 5-6; Day 11-12(quotation).

²⁷ Isaac Lefevers to Cathrine Lefevers, March 31, 1862, Isaac Lefevers Papers, Private Collections, State Archives; Isaac Lefevers to Cathrine Lefevers, April 7, 1862, Isaac Lefevers Papers, Private Collections, State Archives; Isaac Lefevers to J. H. Hudson, April 7, 1862, Isaac Lefevers Papers, Private Collections, State Archives (quotation); John W. Graham to Susan W. Graham, June 16, 1862, *The Papers of William Alexander Graham*, vol. 5, eds. Max R. Williams and J. G. deRoulhac Hamilton (Raleigh: N.C.: Office of Archives and History, 1973), 393-394 (quotation).

the 54th Regiment writing to the editor of the *Spirit of the Age* provided his view of what caused the sickness within his regiment. He said, “We cannot attribute the cause to any thing but exposures of camp life.” Private Day specified that “bad water and badly cooked rations” resulted in his company’s soldiers being on the sick list. Sergeant Lefevers battled sickness. He was on the sick list on March 31, 1862, with his fellow soldiers encouraging him to go to hospital. Yet, by April 3, 1862, he was well enough to continue drilling, but he was still suffering from bowel problems. On April 7, 1862, the sergeant told his wife Cathrine [sic] “that I am tolerable well at this time with the exception of a bad cold and very bad cough . . . [and] I have the worste cogh that I ever had in my life but that is a general complaint in camp.” On May 5, 1862, the *Spirit of the Age* provided a detailed accounting of the sickness at Camp Mangum and offered advice on improving the soldiers’ situation:

We learn that there is considerable sickness among the soldiers at the camp near this place, and that the accommodations at the camp for the sick are rather below ordinary. The hospital near town is no doubt full, and Dr. E. Burke Haywood, who is head of it, is doing his duty; but we repeat, there is a great want of proper accommodations at the camp. In addition to this, we learn that an order has been issued that sick soldiers and soldiers who are recovering, are not to be allowed to go home, where they would receive better nursing and attention than they do in camp. We agree with the *Standard* [newspaper] in the opinion, that this order is both unwise and cruel. If convalescent soldiers were allowed to go home and remain until they were able to take their places again in the ranks, the State would save by it, the services would lose nothing and many a valuable life would be saved. Every attention and kindness compatible with proper discipline, should be shown to the brave officers and men who are ready to offer their lives in the common defence.²⁸

²⁸ Day, 12 (quotation); Carpenter, 6; Isaac Lefevers to Cathrine Lefevers, March 31, 1862, Isaac Lefevers Papers, Private Collections, State Archives; *Spirit of the Age* (Raleigh, weekly), June 16, 1862; *Spirit of the Age* (Raleigh, weekly), June 9, 1862 (quotation); Isaac Lefevers to Cathrine Lefevers, April 3, 1862, Isaac Lefevers Papers, Private Collections, State Archives; Isaac Lefevers to Cathrine Lefevers, April 7, 1862, Isaac Lefevers Papers, Private Collections, State Archives; *Spirit of the Age* (Raleigh, weekly), May 5, 1862 (quotation).

With so much sickness at Camp Mangum, death remained a constant companion for the soldiers. Private Carpenter reported that measles killed many men in his regiment. Regarding the 55th Regiment, Pvt. Joseph J. Hoyle indicated that his regiment's health was not good due to measles and mumps, but "[t]here had been one or two deaths in the regiment that I am aware of." After arriving at Camp Mangum in March 1862, Sergeant Lefevers wrote to his wife telling her that "it is said that there was about 20 died here last week." On April 3, 1862, he also provided his wife with an account of a soldier who committed suicide:

There was a man killed himself here night before last he was in the hospital and it was thought he was out of his head he was found with a double barreled pistol in his pocket after he was dead the ball went right through his breast.

Many of the dead were buried near Camp Mangum and later reinterred at the Confederate Cemetery (Oakwood Cemetery, Raleigh).²⁹

With life at Camp Mangum so terrible in the eyes of Private Hoyle, he asked for prayers for the soldiers:

While we are upon the tented field, we ask an interest in the prayers of our friends at home. Especially do we beseech our christian brethren and classmates to remember us at a throne of grace. We are here surrounded by almost every influence which tends to divert our minds from serious meditation, and we need divine grace to sustain us. Ah! when I view the deteriorating influences of camp life, my heart heaves a sigh, and I implore the good Lord to cover our heads till his wrath be passed over. Friends we beseech you, pray for us and our afflicted country till the dark clouds of war and oppression give place to the genial rays of liberty and peace.

²⁹ Carpenter, 6; Jordan, *North Carolina Troops*, vol. 13, 349; *Spirit of the Age* (Raleigh, weekly), June 16, 1862 (quotation); Isaac Lefevers to Cathrine Lefevers, March 31, 1862, Isaac Lefevers Papers, Private Collections, State Archives (quotation); Isaac Lefevers to Cathrine Lefevers, April 3, 1862, Isaac Lefevers Papers, Private Collections, State Archives (quotation); Murray, 587.

Private Hoyle's regiment left Camp Mangum by July 24, 1862 and relocated to a camp along the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad near Kinston. In writing to the editor to the *Spirit of the Age* about his new camp, Private Hoyle stated that "this place seems much better adapted than Camp Mangum." He also noted that his regiment's health was "comparatively good." The 55th Regiment spent six weeks at Camp Mangum.³⁰

As mentioned earlier, the state abandoned Camp Mangum as a camp of instruction by 1864, but it continued to be used for other purposes. In April 1865 retreating Confederate forces apparently used the site as a place to bivouac their troops. Advancing in force that same month into Wake County, part of the Sherman's army likely camped on a portion of Camp Mangum. During the August 1866 term of the Wake County Court of Pleas and Quarters Sessions, a court appointed committee recommended that "the County establish a large brick yard . . . adjacent to the railroad, and convenient to wood." The committee suggested that "suitable house accommodations and fencing be erected thereon and convicts be placed in the same and be fined [*sic*] to making brick." Accordingly, the September 8, 1866, issue of *Raleigh Daily Sentinel* reported that the "Commissioners of the County Work House have purchased 'Camp Mangum.'" An 1887 map of Wake County shows a Work House and County Mill situated near the Tucker property in the House Creek Township (See Appendix G). Apparently North Carolina Agricultural and Mechanical College (now North Carolina State University) and Rufus S. and Francis P. Tucker later owned most of the land that made up Camp Mangum.³¹

³⁰ *Spirit of the Age* (Raleigh, weekly), June 16, 1862 (quotation); Jordan, *North Carolina Troops*, vol. 13, 349-350; *Spirit of the Age* (Raleigh, weekly), July 24, 1862 (quotation).

³¹ *State of North Carolina v. Fendol Bevers*, Wake County Miscellaneous Land Records, State Archives; *State of North Carolina v. Fendol Bevers*, Case No. 13,471, North Carolina Supreme Court Original Cases,

During its short history, Camp Mangum aided the Confederate war effort by transforming civilians into soldiers. For a majority of the soldiers, Camp Mangum presented them with a completely different life from the one they left at home. With ever present disease and death, Camp Mangum clearly constituted a miserable passage for most soldiers. With its abandonment, Camp Mangum passed into history little remembered by most people.

1800-1909, State Archives; Murray, 501-502, 515; August Term 1866, pp. 129-131, Minutes of the Wake County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, State Archives; *Raleigh Daily Sentinel*, September 8, 1866; Shaffer's Map of Wake County, 1887, State Archives; *Public Laws of North Carolina, 1887*, c. 410, s. 7; *Cyclopedia of Eminent and Representative Men of the Carolinas of the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 2 (Madison, Wis.: Brant and Fuller, 1892), 509; Inventory of the Estate of Mrs. Florence P. Tucker, October 31, 1910, pp. 363, Wake County, Inventories and Account of Sales, 1907-1913, State Archives.

Chapter IV

Between the Wars

After the Civil War the land within the 2001 Polk Youth Center boundaries remained rural and served agricultural purposes. Three land tracts have been identified within the youth center's boundaries. One large tract belonged to the Rufus S. Tucker; Lucretia Blake owned the other two tracts. Blake owned one of the tracts (the Davis tract) before the Civil War. She eventually lost her land to the Belvin family. Research in a variety of records has revealed biographical details about these landowners and how they used their land.

In her 1876 will, Malinda Howle, who had purchased the Peck tract in 1853 (See Chapter II), bequeathed to Lucretia Blake five hundred dollars along with land on which Blake resided (probably the Peck tract), and Howle allocated separate items to her husband Thomas and others. However, Thomas Howle protested the authenticity of the will and wanted the court to name him administrator of his wife's estate. The court agreed and named him the administrator. Lucretia Blake evidently never received any money or land from Malinda Howle's estate. W. Thomas Howle and his wife Francis acquired the Peck tract. In January 1880 Lucretia Blake and her two children, Green Blake, and Ann Eliza Mooneyham, purchased the Peck tract on which Lucretia Blake lived for one dollar from W. Thomas and Francis Howle.³²

³² Will of Malinda Howle, 1876, Wake County Original Wills, State Archives; W. Thomas Howle and wife to Lucraty Blake and others, January 21, 1880, Book 58, pp. 232-233 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives; Wake County Deed Book 53, pages 500-501, provided the reference to W. Thomas Howle being Malinda Howle's son, but this land was not associated with Polk Youth Center; Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Wake County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, National Archives (microfilm, State Archives).

The 1880 federal census listed Lucretia Blake as a fifty-nine-year-old mulatto widow living in the House Creek Township. Her occupation was listed as housekeeper although she also engaged in small-scale farming. According to the 1880 agricultural schedule, Blake had seven acres of improved (tilled) land on which she grew cotton and seventy-five acres of unimproved land (woodland and forest). She held the following livestock: two horses, two oxen, three milking cows, thirty poultry, and one animal unidentified by the census taker. Two calves were born in 1879. In 1879 her farm produced 100 dozen eggs, 104 pounds of butter, two bales of cotton, ten pounds of honey, and \$10 worth of wood products. The total value of her farm was listed at \$1,175. Blake's grandson George, age fourteen, and adopted son Charles, age thirteen, resided with her. Both of these males were listed as white and farm workers. They probably worked on Blake's farm.³³

In 1880 Blake's daughter Ann Eliza Mooneyham resided next to her mother, living on a separate farm, with her husband Adeson and four children. According to the 1880 population census, Ann Eliza Mooneyham was a forty-three-year-old mulatto housekeeper, and Adeson Mooneyham was a thirty-year-old white farmer. Their sons were Charles, age nine; Water [*sic*], age six; and Thomas, age three; the daughter was Octavia, age eight. The census listed all the children as white. Adeson Mooneyham rented his farm "for shares of the product" indicating that he was a sharecropper. His rented land consisted of fifteen acres tilled land (nine acres for cotton and six acres for corn), twenty acres of forest and woodland, and ten acres of old fields. In 1880 he kept one horse and sixteen chickens. Adeson Mooneyham's farm produced sixty dozen eggs,

³³ Tenth Census of the United State, 1880: Wake County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, National Archives (microfilm, State Archives); Tenth Census of the United State, 1880: Wake County, North Carolina, Agriculture Schedule, National Archives (microfilm, State Archives).

100 bushels of corn, three bales of cotton, 100 pounds of honey, and \$25 in forest products in 1879. The 1880 agricultural census valued the farm at \$495.³⁴

Green Blake also resided next to his mother Lucretia Blake in 1880. According to the 1880 population schedule, he was a forty-three-year-old mulatto farmer who was married to Lucy Ann, a thirty-six-year-old white woman. Blake's family consisted of four children, three sons, and a daughter: William, age nine; Robert, age six; Frank, age four; and Ceasly, age two. The census listed these children as being white. Like his brother-in-law Adeson Mooneyham, Green Blake leased his farmland, but he paid rent instead of sharecropping. Green Blake leased 245 acres of improved and unimproved land. He owned one horse, two milking cows, sixteen chickens, and one other unidentified animal in 1880. He had two calves born in 1879. Green Blake cultivated corn, oats, wheat, cotton, apples and peaches on his farm. In 1879, he produced, 150 pounds of butter, seventy dozen eggs, seventy-five bushels of corn, 100 bushels of oats, thirty-three bushels of wheat, two bales of cotton, 600 bushels of apples, ten bushels of peaches, and \$100 of forest products. The 1880 census taken valued his farm at \$1,685 far more than his brother-in-law's farm.³⁵

Lucretia Blake evidently died in 1896 being around seventy-five years old; her will was probated in October 1896. The estate inventory listed Blake as the owner of five acres (the Davis tract), ninety-six acres (the Peck tract), a host of personal belongings, and livestock (See Appendix H). She bequeathed to her daughter some furniture, a mule,

³⁴ Tenth Census of the United State, 1880: Wake County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, National Archives (microfilm, State Archives); Tenth Census of the United State, 1880: Wake County, North Carolina, Agriculture Schedule, National Archives (microfilm, State Archives) (quotation).

³⁵ Tenth Census of the United State, 1880: Wake County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, National Archives (microfilm, State Archives); Tenth Census of the United State, 1880: Wake County, North Carolina, Agriculture Schedule, National Archives (microfilm, State Archives).

cow and calf, and the Davis tract. Lucretia Blake gave to George Allen a bed with bedclothes and a sideboard and willed that the rest of the land along with other personal belongings be sold at auction. The money from the auction was to be divided between Ann Eliza Mooneyham, George Allen, and Green Blake. Unfortunately, Anna Eliza Mooneyham lost the Davis tract and the people named in Blake's will never received any money from the sell of the Peck tract. The two tracts were lost due to unpaid mortgages.³⁶

In January 1894 Lucretia Blake, Green Blake, and his wife M. Louisiana (Lucy Ann in the 1880 population census), and Ann Eliza Mooneyham took out a nine hundred-dollar mortgage at eight percent interest with William R. Blake using the Peck tract as collateral. Failing to pay the mortgage, the Peck tract was sold at public auction on March 5, 1898. William R. Blake sold the land to Lizzie L. Belvin for five hundred dollars along with a ten-dollar fee. On April 3, 1894, Blake took out a mortgage on the five-acre Davis tract for thirty-five dollars at eight-percent interest. "[Failing] to comply with the terms of the said mortgage" resulted in Charles H. Belvin placing the Davis tract up for sale at the same public auction where the Peck tract was sold. Lizzie L. Belvin, who was Charles H. Belvin's wife, purchased the Davis tract for thirty-one dollars and a ten-dollar fee.³⁷

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³⁶ Will of Craty Blake, October 9, 1896, Wake County Original Wills, State Archives, Estate of Craty Blake, 1896, Wake County Estate Records, State Archives.

³⁷ Ann Eliza Mooneyham, et al. to William R. Blake, January 24, 1894, Book 131, pp. 195-196 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives; William R. Blake to Lizzie L. Belvin, March 5, 1898, Book 147, pp. 349-350 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives; Lucretia Blake to Charles H. Belvin, April 3, 1894, Book 140, p. 316 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives; Charles H. Belvin to Lizzie L. Belvin, March 5, 1898, Book 147, pp. 350-351 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 2, 1908.

Lizzie Lee Pullen and Charles H. Belvin, also identified as landowner, married in November 1873 and had four children. Lizzie L. Belvin died on January 3, 1907, at the age of fifty-three apparently due to complications related to diabetes. The death register listed her occupation as housewife; however, Lizzie L. Belvin was also a large property holder. Her estate inventory listed her holdings at around 820 acres along with various lots. This land included the former Lucretia Blake property. At the time of her death, Lizzie L. Belvin's personal property, which included stocks, cash, and furniture, was valued at \$32,953.22. In referring to the death of his wife, Charles H. Belvin said that "all the hope and light of the world went out for me."³⁸

Charles H. Belvin was a successful banker whose occupation was classified as capitalist in the City of Raleigh Register of Death. The *News and Observer* summed up Belvin's career in his obituary:

Mr. Belvin for years had been identified with the financial life of Raleigh, through his connection as teller, cashier and president of what is locally known as the "Round Steps Bank," chartered first as the Raleigh National Bank, later as the National Bank of Raleigh, now being the Raleigh Banking and Trust Company. He was a thorough business man of sterling character, held in the highest esteem of this community. He was a staunch friend of the poor, a real friend of those in need. In his manner and in his life he was quiet, reserved and undemonstrative, of a gentle and loving disposition. A true friend of the poor he will be sadly missed. He was held in great love by those who knew him intimately. As a business man he was successful, and at times had the management of large affairs, in the handling of which he show great ability.³⁹

The death of a daughter in 1904 and his wife in 1907 evidently depressed Charles H. Belvin so much that he retired as president of the Raleigh Banking and Trust

³⁸ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 2, 1908 (quotation); Register of Deaths, 1904-1914, City of Raleigh, State Archives; Estate of Lizzie L. Belvin, 1907, Wake County Estate Records, State Archives

³⁹ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 2, 1908 (quotation).

Company in March of 1907 and ended other business connections. Belvin's obituary stated:

He did not wish to live and if it be possible for a man to die of a broken heart Mr. Belvin's death is due to that cause, for he lived after the death of his wife and daughter as if the light of his life had gone out and he was a stranger . . . and a sojourner here.

Belvin died on December 1, 1907, at the age of sixty-five apparently due to a stroke. At the time of his death, Charles H. Belvin owned 2,026 acres that included the former Lucretia Blake lands once owned by his wife.⁴⁰

In 1910 Bessie Belvin Horne, daughter of Charles H. Belvin, received the former Lucretia Blake land from her father's estate. Born on March 2, 1876, Bessie Belvin graduated from Peace College; she married Charles W. Horne of Johnston County on December 23, 1898. Charles W. Horne was a merchant and farmer in Clayton who was "well known over the State." His father Ashley Horne was a millionaire who ran a mercantile business store in Clayton and farming operations. Following the death of his father in 1913, Charles W. Horne inherited most of his father's fortune and "carried on his father's business on the same tremendous scale" as the elder Horne. Charles W. Horne continued to use his father's trade name, Ashley Horne and Son, for the mercantile business. *The North Carolina Year Book and Business Directory* for 1916 listed Ashley Horne and Son under clothiers and men's furnishers and under cotton gins. The directory showed Charles W. Horne as the president of the Clayton Banking Company and Clayton Chamber of Commerce and as one of the "principal farmers who receive mail through the Clayton Postoffice [*sic*]." Furthermore, Horne was possibly involved in insurance and

⁴⁰ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 2, 1908 (quotation); Estate of Charles H. Belvin, 1909, Wake County Estate Records, State Archives.

real estate sales in Clayton. A firm engaged in these pursuits named Horne and Talton was listed in this directory.⁴¹

Besides being a merchant and farmer, Charles W. Horne held stocks in banks in North Carolina and Virginia, and served as director of several of them. In addition, he “headed two cotton mills and other local corporations.” Charles W. Horne and his wife Bessie owned 739.25 acres within the House Creek Township in Wake County (The property included the former Lucretia Blake land.) The Hornes leased the property to the federal government for Camp Polk, the World War I tank training facility and sold it to the State’s Prison in 1920 (See Appendices O and W).⁴²

The Hornes were residents of Clayton. The 1920 population census listed six people in living at the residence, among them Charles W., Bessie, and their son, Ashley, age twenty. The others were an African American family who worked for the Hornes: John Smith, hired man, age twenty-one; Sallie Smith, servant, age twenty-one, and Annie Smith, servant’s child, age nine months. On May 31, 1927, federal court judge Isaac M. Meekins declared Charles W. Horne bankrupt. In June 1927 federal court records showed Horne with \$1,138,679.85 in assets, but he had \$2,484,914.18 in debts. On May

⁴¹ Bessie Belvin Horne and Charles W. Horne to State’s Prison, February 9, 1920, Book 350, pp. 533-534 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives, Death Certificate of Bessie B. Horne, April 6, 1954, North Carolina Death Certificates (microfilm), State Archives; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), April 7, 1954; Marriage of Charles W. Horne and Bessie Belvin, December 23, 1898, Book H (microfilm), Wake County Marriage Register: White Male, 1839-1967, State Archive; Death Certificate of Charles W. Horne, May 21, 1946, North Carolina Death Certificates (microfilm), State Archives; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), June 1, 1927 (quotation); William S. Powell, ed., *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, vol.3 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 205; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), June 10, 1927; *The North Carolina Year Book and Business Directory, 1910* (Raleigh, N.C.: News and Observer, 1910), 283; *The North Carolina Year Book and Business Directory, 1916* (Raleigh, N.C.: News and Observer, 1916), 323-324 (quotation).

⁴² *News and Observer* (Raleigh), June 10, 1927 (quotation); Bessie Belvin Horne and Charles W. Horne to State’s Prison, February 9, 1920, Book 350, pp. 533-534 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives, Death Certificate of Bessie B. Horne, April 6, 1954, North Carolina Death Certificates (microfilm), State Archives; Death Certificate of Charles W. Horne, May 21, 1946, North Carolina Death Certificates (microfilm), State Archives; *Biennial Report of the State’s Prison, Raleigh, N.C., 1919-1920*, 15.

23, 1928, Judge Meekins “discharged Charles W. Horne, of Clayton, from bankruptcy both as an individual and trading as Ashley W. Horne and Sons [*sic*]” Although this order did not change the bankruptcy, it allowed Charles W. Horne “to enter into business again, his future income not liabled to his old debts.” The May 23, 1928, *News and Observer* stated that “the Horne failure . . . was the largest in the history of the State.” Horne lived to be seventy-one years old dying on May 21, 1946. His wife Bessie died on April 6, 1954 at the age of seventy-eight. Both are buried in the Horne Cemetery in Clayton.⁴³

* * * * *

Polk Youth Center was situated on land that belonged to Rufus S. Tucker (See Appendices I and O), a Raleigh merchant and farmer, who by 1892 was the largest holder of property in the city of Raleigh. Tucker’s real estate inventory taken after his death listed him as possessing 5,578 acres in Wake, Pitt, Johnston, and Chatham Counties This acreage did not include the lots Tucker also had in Raleigh and Southern Pines. In House Creek Township, Tucker owned the 95-acre T. J. Utley tract and the 627-acre Waverly Farm that included the former Camp Mangum land (See Appendix L).⁴⁴

Tucker was born on April 5, 1829, the son of Ruffin and Lucinda M. Sledge Tucker. Following graduation from the University of North Carolina in 1848, he went work as a clerk for his father, a prominent Raleigh merchant. Tucker and his two

⁴³ Death Certificate of Bessie B. Horne, April 6, 1954, North Carolina Death Certificates (microfilm), State Archives; Death Certificate of Charles W. Horne, May 21, 1946, North Carolina Death Certificates (microfilm), State Archives; Fourteenth Census of the United State, 1920: Wake County, North Carolina, Population Schedule, National Archives (microfilm, State Archives); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), June 1, 1927; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), June 10, 1927 (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), May 23, 1928.

⁴⁴ *Cyclopedia of Eminent and Representative Men of the Carolinas of the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 2 (Madison, Wis.: Brant and Fuller, 1892), 509; Estate of Rufus S. Tucker, 1894, Wake County Estate Records, State Archives.

brothers, Dr. Joseph J. W. Tucker and William H. H. Tucker inherited Ruffin Tucker's business after his death in 1851. The brothers operated the business under the name, W. H. and R. S. Tucker with Dr. Tucker "being a silent partner." In 1856 Tucker married Florence E. Perkins, the daughter of Churchill Perkins of Pitt County, a state legislator and planter. The Tuckers had seven children, six daughters and a son.⁴⁵

When the Civil War started, Gov. John W. Ellis "appointed him [Rufus S. Tucker] quartermaster and commissary for the post of Raleigh, where all the North Carolina companies as formed were concentrated and organized into regiments before being sent to the front." Tucker resigned from the position in the fall of 1861 and raised a volunteer cavalry company, the Wake Rangers, which entered service in February 1862. The Wake Rangers became Company I of the 41st Regiment (Third Regiment, North Carolina Cavalry). Tucker's company served in eastern North Carolina in 1862 where Captain Tucker received accolades for his bravery in the Union assault on Washington in September 1862. Tucker received a promotion to major, but he soon had a plan that caused him to resign his commission. According to *North Carolina Troops*:

[Tucker] [s]ubmitted his resignation by reason of his desire to remove his Negro property to a plantation in Georgia where he could carry on a provision farm without fear of Federal raids. Resignation officially accepted December 20, 1862.

It appears that Tucker did not carry out this plan. In 1863 he became assistant adjutant general of North Carolina with the rank of major. Tucker served under two adjutant generals, Daniel G. Fowle and R. G. Gatlin, before resigning the post in October 1863.

⁴⁵ William S. Powell, ed. *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, vol. 6 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 58; *Cyclopedia of Eminent and Representative Men...*, 508-511(quotations).

In November 1864 Tucker was elected as chief clerk of the House for the 1864-1865 session.⁴⁶

Following the Civil War, Rufus S. Tucker concentrated on his business affairs. In 1866 the firm W. H. and R. S. Tucker moved into a larger building and became “the leading dry-goods house in the State.” In 1867 the brothers evidently added Tucker Hall to the third floor of their building (See Appendix J). This auditorium, which seated 800 to 1,000 people, was “the first public hall ever built in Raleigh, and for years it was the only place where amusements or entertainments could be held or addresses delivered.” An 1876 city directory listed the W. H. and R. S. Tucker firm at “23 and 25 Fayetteville [Street]” and Tucker Hall “over 23 and 25 Fayetteville [Street].” An 1880 advertisement proclaimed the firm W. H. and R. S. Tucker as “Wholesale and Retail Dealers and Jobbers in Foreign and Domestic Dry Goods, Hats, Boots, Shoes, Carpeting, Notions, & c.” (See Appendix J)⁴⁷

In addition to his mercantile business, Tucker involved himself in other commercial and charitable activities. He served as director of the several railroads and

⁴⁶ *Cyclopedia of Eminent and Representative Men of the Carolinas of the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 2 (Madison, Wis.: Brant and Fuller, 1892), 508, 510 (quotation); William S. Powell, ed. *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, vol. 6 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 58; Louis H. Manarin, comp., *North Carolina Troops, 1861-1864: A Roster*, vol. 2 (Raleigh: North Carolina State Department of Archives and History, 1968), 245; Samuel A. Ashe, Stephen B. Weeks, and Charles L. Van Noppen, eds., *Biographical History of North Carolina*, vol. 7 (Greensboro, N.C.: Charles L. Van Noppen, 1908), 456-457; Walter Clark, ed., *Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War, 1861-'65*, vol. 1 (Raleigh: State of North Carolina, 1901), 50-51.

⁴⁷ Samuel A. Ashe, Stephen B. Weeks, and Charles L. Van Noppen, eds., *Biographical History of North Carolina*, vol. 7 (Greensboro, N.C.: Charles L. Van Noppen, 1908), 457 (quotation); James Vickers, *Raleigh, City of Oaks: An Illustrated History* (Sun Valley, Calif.: American Historical Press, 1997), 62; Advertisement, “W.H. & R.S. Tucker...,” *Chas. Emerson and Co.'s Raleigh Directory, 1880-'81* (Raleigh, N.C.: Edwards, Broughton, and Co., 1879), *Cyclopedia of Eminent and Representative Men of the Carolinas of the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 2 (Madison, Wis.: Brant and Fuller, 1892), 508, 510 (quotation); *Chataigne's Raleigh City Directory* (Raleigh, N.C.?: J.H. Chataigne, 1876), 117;

the Raleigh National Bank. Tucker also helped to form the Raleigh Chamber of Commerce becoming its first president in 1887. A 1908 biography stated:

[H]e stood without competitor as the foremost of business men in the community, being esteemed for his sagacity, his enterprise, his good judgement, and no less than because he was the wealthiest of all the citizens.

In addition, Tucker spent thirty-one years as director of the Institution of the Deaf, Dumb, and Blind at Raleigh and “for a long period he was president of the board controlling its affairs.” In 1888 Tucker was touted as a possible gubernatorial candidate. He retired from his mercantile business in February 1883, but the firm name, W. H. and R. S. Tucker, continued under Tucker’s son-in-law, James Boylan and his associates (William H. H. Tucker died in 1882.).⁴⁸

Even though Rufus S. Tucker devoted much of his energy to business affairs, he also gave time, effort, and money to his agricultural operations. In his 1908 biographical sketch, Samuel Ashe described Tucker’s devotion to farming:

So largely interested in mercantile business he yet had a disposition to agriculture, and successfully operated a valuable plantation in Pitt County and also developed one of the finest farms in the vicinity of Raleigh [Waverly Farm that included the former Camp Mangum land], which by his system of cultivation he brought up to a high state of fertility and productiveness. He took as much pleasure in making more than a bale of cotton to the acre as in managing the affairs of a railroad, and he found as much gratification in his fine hay and his beautiful herds of cattle and in his rutabaga turnips as in conducting successfully the extensive dealings of his store.

Tucker’s “fine” Wake County farm was situated on the site of the former Camp Mangum. The year he obtained the Camp Mangum land was not determined. However, the 1880 Wake County tax list from the House Creek Township showed Tucker as possessing 243

⁴⁸ Powell, 58; *Cyclopedia of Eminent and Representative Men...*, 508-509 (quotation), 511; Ashe, 458-459 (quotation);

acres described as Camp Mangum. An 1881 tax list for House Creek Township listed Fendol Bever as owning 273 acres being referred to as Camp Mangum and Tucker with the same 243 acres still being called Camp Mangum. Bever's and Tucker's land parcels were clearly two separate parts that made up the former Confederate camp of instruction (See Chapter III). As mentioned earlier Tucker's estate inventory listed a 627-acre tract in House Creek known as Waverly Farm (See Appendix L). The 1910 estate inventory for Tucker's wife Florence also listed a 527-acre parcel of land referred to as the Camp Mangum tract ⁴⁹

Tucker regarded himself as an excellent farmer. "In farming, he [Rufus S. Tucker] ranks with the best," an 1888 *News and Observer* article indicated, "It is his boast that he made more cotton to the acre than any other man in North Carolina, and that his stock is equal to any in the State." As quoted earlier, Tucker turned his Camp Mangum land into a highly productive farm. The Camp Mangum "was originally very poor land." The Waverly Farm was an extensive agricultural operation. Tucker produced cotton, hay, corn, wheat, oats, and peas. His livestock included mules, horses, cattle, hogs, and sheep. The farm contained various wagons, carts, and plows. It had two cotton planters, four cultivators, a thrashing machine, three McCormick hay mowers, a stump puller, a blacksmith shop, etc. (See Appendix K). Following his retirement from the mercantile business, Tucker devoted much of his time to his Raleigh area farm. He

⁴⁹ Ashe, 459-460 (quotation); *Cyclopedia of Eminent and Representative Men...*, 509; Tax Listing of R. S. Tucker, 1880, House Creek Township (microfilm); Wake County Tax List, State Archives; Tax listing of R. S. Tucker and Fendol Bevers, 1881, House Creek Township (microfilm), Wake County Tax List, State Archives; Estate of Rufus S. Tucker, 1894, Wake County Estates Papers, State Archives; Inventory of the Estate of Mrs. Florence P. Tucker, October 31, 1910, p. 363, Wake County, Inventories and Account of Sales, 1907-1913, State Archives.

lived to the age of sixty-five, dying on August 4, 1894, and passed his holdings to his wife.⁵⁰

Florence P. Tucker and her son William R. managed the extensive inherited holdings. When her son passed away in 1899, Mrs. Tucker continued to run her husband's holdings. Samuel Ashe had a high opinion of Mrs. Tucker:

Receiving from her husband a considerable estate, embracing many varied interests, she has, by prudent investments, by developing properties, with foresight and sagacity exchanging undesirable property for such as would appreciate, and by managing with consummate skill, greatly augmented the estate, exhibiting business capacity of a high order, seldom equaled by the most successful men of affairs in any community.

Mrs. Tucker died on December 11, 1909, at the age of seventy-one. The death certificate listed her occupation as "Managing her Estate." In 1918 the federal government leased (with an option to purchase) the Tucker land in the House Creek Township for part of Camp Polk, the tank training facility. When the army pulled out, the State's Prison purchased the land. In early 1920 the State's Prison paid one hundred thousand dollars in cash to the estate of Mrs. Tucker for 595 ½ acres "called 'Tucker Farm' in House's [*sic*] Creek Township, Wake County, N.C. about 3 or 4 miles west of Raleigh" (See Appendix X).⁵¹

⁵⁰ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), March 27, 1888 (quotation); *Cyclopedia of Eminent and Representative Men...*, 509 (quotation); Estate of Rufus S. Tucker, 1894, Wake County Estates Papers, State Archives Ashe, 460; Register of Deaths, 1887-1904, City of Raleigh, State Archives; Will of Rufus S. Tucker, August 11, 1894, Wake County Original Wills, State Archives; Cary K. Durfey, Executor and Trustee for Florence P. Tucker, etc. to State's Prison, January 31, 1920, Book 358, pp. 35-37 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives.

⁵¹ Inventory of the Estate of Mrs. Florence P. Tucker, October 31, 1910, p. 363, Wake County, Inventories and Account of Sales, 1907-1913, State Archives; Ashe, 460-461 (quotation); Death Certificate of Florence P. Tucker, December 11, 1909, North Carolina Death Certificates (microfilm), State Archives (quotation); Wake County Deeds, State Archives; *Biennial Report of the State's Prison, Raleigh, N.C., 1919-1920*, 15; Cary K. Durfey, Executor and Trustee for Florence P. Tucker, etc. to State's Prison, January 31, 1920, Book 358, pp. 35-37 (microfilm), Wake County Deeds, State Archives (quotation).

When the State's Prison purchased the Horne and Tucker lands in 1920, a new era began for western Wake County. Following its use by the federal government during World War I, the property passed from private to public lands where it remains today. The land again was used for agricultural purposes, but the farmers were now prisoners. The new owner was not a wealthy individual or a small landowner, but the State of North Carolina with responsibility to make sure these prisoners paid their debt to society.

Chapter V

Camp Polk

To look today at the former Polk Youth Center and the major development that has occurred around the site, it is difficult to imagine that a World War I era tank camp operated in the area. Yet, from August 1918 to February 1919, the federal government had a tank training facility that encompassed between 16,000 and 22,000 acres (See Appendices N, O, T, and V). Accounts vary as to the camp's total acreage. In August 1918 the *News and Observer* reprinted an agreement signed between the federal government and the Raleigh Chamber of Commerce saying that the amount of land was 16,000 acres (See Appendix M). An unpublished report completed by the U.S. Army in 1919 indicated that the camp covered about 22,000 acres while an official published source stated that the camp covered about 20,064 acres.⁵²

When the U.S. Army abandoned the leased land, the State's Prison exercised the option to purchase around 2,600 acres in 1920 for a new prison site and farm (See Appendices AA and BB). It also kept the Polk name for the new prison. The property on which the prison facility was built served as the housing area for laborers working at the site for the tank camp's permanent quarters (See Appendices P and S). The labor housing area was a mile north of the main permanent camp area. (The current North Carolina

⁵² Gywnn T. Swinson to Theodis Beck and Lisbeth C. Evans, February 7, 2001, Department of Cultural Resources Files; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 12, 1918; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 4, 1918; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 22, 1918; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), February 19, 1919; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 24, 1918; Capt. Edward H. Dignowity, "Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina," report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives; *Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces in the World War*, vol. 3, part 2:845.

State Fairgrounds are located at the site of where the permanent quarters were to be situated.)⁵³

With the United States entry into World War I, the federal government had to expand the armed forces; therefore, it needed to find new locations for military camps. Thirty-two new military camps were built with most being in the South because of weather. Along with Camp Polk, North Carolina had two other major military camps, Camp Greene near Charlotte and Camp Bragg near Fayetteville. The Raleigh area was being considered as the location for a military camp as early as December 1917. At that time the federal government was considering a location east of Raleigh on Tarboro Road. To secure a camp at that site, the Raleigh City Council passed a resolution on December 27, 1917, offering to improve Tarboro Street by paving between New Bern Avenue and the city limits once the Tarboro Road site had been chosen.⁵⁴

By August 1918 Raleigh was “anxious to have one of the Army Camps located in or near their City.” The Raleigh Chamber of Commerce led the effort. In August the Chamber of Commerce sent a committee led by its secretary Maurice R. Beaman to the War Department in Washington to make an appeal. The committee was referred to Tank Corps commander Col. I. C. Welborn. Eventually, it was learned that the army was looking for a site for a tank camp. The army needed to establish a suitable permanent location that allowed year-round tank training because the tank facilities in Pennsylvania were unsatisfactory for winter training. Negotiations were started with the federal

⁵³ “‘Camp-Polk’ State’s Prison Farm, Raleigh, N.C., September 1938” (map [copy of original], N.C. Museum of Art files); *Biennial Report of the State’s Prison, Raleigh, N.C., 1919-1920*, 15-16; Capt. Edward H. Dignowity, “Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina,” report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives.

⁵⁴ Sarah M. Lemmon, *North Carolina’s Role in the First World War* (Raleigh: Division of Archives and History, Department of Cultural Resources, 1975), 57; Minutes, December 27, 1917 (microfilm), Raleigh Board of Commissioners (City Council), North Carolina State Archives.

government. Beaman secured help from Senator Furnifold M. Simmons of North Carolina and Representative Edward W. Pou of the Fourth Congressional District. Both politicians lobbied for the tank camp.⁵⁵

By the second week of August, a board of experts, consisting of Col. W. H. Clopton of the U.S. Army Tank Corps, Maj. C. E. Smith of the U.S. Army Construction Division, and a colonel from the British Tank Service, visited proposed camp locations. They settled upon a site three miles west of Raleigh. After looking throughout the nation, the army had found what it regarded as the best site to establish a tank camp. The *News and Observer* provided an account of why the army liked the area:

The topography of the land was exactly suited to the needs of the tank service, according to the report of the board that inspected it; the city's accessibility to the Atlantic ports from which the tanks will be shipped abroad; the record of something over 230 clear days suitable for outdoor work each year, and the sandy loam soil quickly determined Raleigh as the winner of the competition even before a fight was being waged for the big plum.⁵⁶

To lure the army to Raleigh, local officials offered to lease the State Fairgrounds (formerly located on Hillsborough Street across from North Carolina State University) and authorities at State College (now North Carolina State University) proposed use of dormitories and other facilities. County commissioners offered to “discontinue and abandon” all roads in the proposed camp if the federal government needed them closed. The national defense needs persuaded owners to allow land options to be secured at a nominal price per acre. All the work paid off for Raleigh and Wake County on August

⁵⁵ Capt. Edward H. Dignowity, “Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina,” report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 20, 1918; *War Department Annual Reports, 1918*, vol. 1, 1,395; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 21, 1918.

⁵⁶ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 20, 1918 (quotation); Capt. Edward H. Dignowity, “Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina,” report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives.

20, 1918, for on that date, the *News and Observer* headlined: “Raleigh Lands Big Tank Training Camp.” The War Department made a formal announcement about the tank camp on September 9, 1918.⁵⁷

With the Raleigh area chosen, the federal government went forward with making the tank camp a reality. On August 21 twenty-four engineers and surveyors began work at the site. The Chamber of Commerce helped the federal government secure leases to 16,000 at three dollars an acre along with housing for officers at local residences and dormitories (See Appendices M and O). The *News and Observer* provided a detailed description of the land:

Beginning at a point on the north side of the Raleigh-Durham Highway about two and three-quarter miles west of the State Capitol, and opposite the sub-station of Carolina Power & Light Co., and thence in a northeasterly direction of one mile; thence northerly a distance on [*sic*] one mile to a point to Crabtree, between five hundred and one thousand feet westerly of Edwards’ Mill road; thence northeasterly parallel with and between five hundred to one thousand feet westerly of Pleasant Grove Church road; thence in a northwesterly direction a distance of three and three-quarters miles to Ebenezer Church; thence on a circular curve to the west swinging to the south for a radius of about four and one-half miles and distance of about six and one-half miles to the point on the north side of the Raleigh-Durham road about nine miles from the State Capitol; thence easterly in a generally straight line six and one-half miles to the point of beginning, inclosing approximately sixteen thousand acres of land.

The federal government leased the State Fairgrounds to serve as temporary quarters. The army referred to the site as the temporary camp. With the army using the fairgrounds, the 1918 State Fair was cancelled.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 20, 1918 (quotation); Minutes, August 14, 1918 (microfilm), Raleigh Board of Commissioners (City Council), North Carolina State Archives; Minutes, August 13, 1918 (microfilm), Wake County Board of Commissioners, North Carolina State Archives (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 10, 1918.

By the first week of September, workers started construction at the fairgrounds. Seven trainloads of material arrived for the tank camp. Black and white carpenters and labors renovated existing buildings and constructed bathhouses and latrines. The workers use an estimated half-million feet of lumber to build floors and sides for tents. Despite a strike by some of the carpenters, most of the repairs at the temporary camp were completed by September 21.⁵⁹

As soon as the tank camp became a reality, people began offering suggestions to the *News and Observer* for naming it. Most proposals had Confederate associations. One name suggested was “Camp Hoke” after Robert F. Hoke, a North Carolina native and Confederate major general while another name mentioned was “Camp Vance” for Zebulon B. Vance, a Civil War governor and later U.S. Senator. “Camp Hill” after Daniel H. Hill, another Confederate general, was proposed because Hill trained some of the first North Carolina soldiers for Confederate service. It was pointed out that Hill trained them at Camp Mangum, located on the same land to be occupied by the tank camp. The commander of the U.S. Army Tank Corps, Colonel Welborn, wanted the military installation named “Camp Maxey” after Col. Robert J. Maxey who had died in France and had received the Distinguished Service Cross posthumously. “Camp Wilson” for President Woodrow Wilson and “Camp Daniels” for Josephus Daniels, owner of the *News and Observer*, and Secretary of the Navy, were other suggestions.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 22, 1918 (quotation) and August 24, 1918; Capt. Edward H. Dignowity, “Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina,” report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives.

⁵⁹ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 4, 1918; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 6, 1918; Capt. Edward H. Dignowity, “Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina,” report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives;

⁶⁰ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 22, 1918 and August 24, 1918; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 24, 1918;

In the end, the name “Camp Polk” was chosen for the new tank training facility. The name honored William Polk (1758-1834), North Carolina native, Revolutionary War hero, Raleigh resident, Raleigh mayor, and North Carolina politician (See Appendix A). President James K. Polk was William Polk’s cousin, and Leonidas Polk, an Episcopal bishop and Confederate general was his son. William Polk was buried in the old Raleigh City Cemetery. Marshal Delancey Haywood, marshal and librarian for North Carolina Supreme Court, historian, and a member of a prominent Raleigh family, offered the name “Camp Polk.” In the end the choice of a name for the tank camp was between Camp Polk and Camp Maxey. Camp Polk became the official name around September 26, 1918.⁶¹

The first soldiers of the Tank Corps or “tankers” arrived at Camp Polk on September 10 and pitched their tents at the fairgrounds. The three initial companies were from the 305th Tank Battalion. The Tank Corps went by the slogan: “Treat ‘em rough.” Its symbol was “the indomitable Black Cat, arched bristling back and a fighting face.” The black cat was depicted over a tank with its back arched and wearing a campaign hat (See Appendix U). The number of soldiers the army planned to station at Camp Polk varied, depending on the source consulted. Official government publications indicated that Camp Polk was intended to accommodate about 8,000 men. The *News and Observer* stated that the camp would have the capacity to hold 16,000 men and maintain a minimum of 9,000 men. According to the newspaper, at one time plans called for housing as many as 50,000 soldiers. The camp never reached such levels. At its peak

⁶¹ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 25, 1918; William S. Powell, ed., *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, vol. 5 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 114; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 28, 1918; William S. Powell, ed., *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, vol. 3 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 88;; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 24, 1918 and September 26, 1918.

enrollment in November 1918, 234 officers and 4,586 enlisted men were encamped in west Raleigh. Tank units stationed at Polk consisted of the following: 305th, 307th, 308th, 340th, 341st, 342nd, and 343rd Tank Battalions (See Appendix V).⁶²

Besides the tank battalions, another group of soldiers, a segregated labor battalion composed of African American soldiers also served at Camp Polk. The 967-man battalion—most of them North Carolinians—came from Camp Greene. The stevedores unloaded material from railroad cars, made firing ranges, and performed “clearing up work.” They also did landscape work, built sewer systems, moved bricks, and executed various construction jobs. When cotton was left in the abandoned farm fields, these soldiers were assigned the task of picking it. With the abandonment of the camp, the stevedores helped to load up troops and equipment. They remained behind to clean up after the tankers left Camp Polk.⁶³

Since the army was still segregated at that time (and would remain so until 1948), the African American soldiers were housed separately from the white tankers. They stayed in tents next to the civilian camp (later site of Polk Youth Center). The civilian camp was located a mile north of the site for the permanent military quarters (site of current North Carolina State Fairgrounds; see Appendices P and S). The soldiers eventually gained access to the civilian camp’s bunkhouses (sleeping quarters) that were

⁶² “A Day in Camp (In Quarantine),” play program, 1918, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 11, 1918 and September 12, 1918; *War Department Annual Reports, 1919*, vol. 1, part 4:4,373 (quotation); *Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces in the World War*, vol. 3, part 1:494; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 4, 1918, September 6, 1918, September 12, 1918, and November 12, 1918; *Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces in the World War*, vol. 3, part 2:845 and vol. 3, part 3:1,545-1,547.

⁶³ Capt. Edward H. Dignowity, “Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina,” report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 21, 1918; September 27, 1918; October 4, 1918, October 3, 1918 (quotation), November 12, 1918; and February 19, 1919.

constructed for white civilian workers. Segregation also meant the black soldiers had a difficult time in finding bathing accommodations.⁶⁴

The army began training at the new installation with the arrival of the fifth tank on October 2, 1918 (See Appendix T). The tankers used their machines to clear trees in the area where their permanent accommodations were to be located. The site was also referred to as “Camp Method” probably due to its vicinity to the Method railroad station. An early plan called for the army to place its quarters on the Tucker farm property. However, the army decided to move the site to a location one-half mile west “to the property of Chamberlain, Jones, and others.” The army found “it was impossible to get sufficient suitable ground on the Tucker property for drill purposes . . . [because] . . . the ground was low and was found to be marshy and wet” (See Appendix O).⁶⁵

Holliday and Crouse Company of Greensboro received the contract to build the permanent camp. An advertisement in the October 19, 1918, *News and Observer* issued an immediate call for 1,000 labors (See Appendix Q). It was anticipated that 2,500-3,000 construction workers would be needed to complete the project. Most of the workers were local men with African Americans making up a majority of the common laborers. African American workers resided in the segregated Method community. The civilian camp (site of Polk Youth Center) was built for the white workers (See Appendix P and S). White workers also had accommodations in Raleigh. A daily train ran from Raleigh to the Method station to bring workers to the construction site, supplemented by

⁶⁴ Capt. Edward H. Dignowity, “Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina,” report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives; *News and Observer*, October 5, 1918, January 20, 1919, and January 22, 1919.

⁶⁵ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), October 3, 1918; Capt. Edward H. Dignowity, “Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina,” report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 6, 1918 and January 15, 1919.

automobile travel. When the abandonment order was issued, about 700 men were employed. According an army report, the project was slowed because they received only forty percent of the number of common laborers and only sixty percent of the number of skilled laborers needed. Labor shortages and government bureaucracy contributed to the to recruitment difficulties. The Spanish influenza epidemic also added to the situation making it “difficult to secure and keep labor.”⁶⁶

The civilian camp consisted of bunkhouses and stables (See Appendix P). These buildings “were made of standard construction so that they might be used as permanent buildings at the completion of the construction work [at the permanent camp].” Most men who worked for Robert G. Lassiter and Company, a sub-contractor, stayed at the civilian camp. As stated earlier, an U.S. Army labor battalion, composed of African Americans, was housed next to the civilian camp in tents. Along with the buildings, “[a]n old 5000 gallon tank was erected at this Camp, with a gasoline pump over an old well connected to the tank and temporary water lines were laid for use of the Labor Battalion and for the contractors stables.” At least a portion of the labor battalion eventually moved to the bunkhouses presumably after the white civilian workers left.⁶⁷

On November 11, 1918, officials at Camp Polk received a telegram that stated, “Camp Polk will probably be abandoned. Stop all work except absolutely necessary to prevent damage to property.” The end of the World War I had made further operations unnecessary. Within the short span of time, only a few elements of the installation had

⁶⁶ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), October 5, 1918 and October 19, 1918; Capt. Edward H. Dignowity, “Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina,” report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), November 12, 1918.

⁶⁷ Capt. Edward H. Dignowity, “Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina,” report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives (quotation)

been completed. A lookout tower was built and streets were partially graded. An office building was nearly completed when the abandonment orders arrived, but, in time, it was finished (See Appendices P and R). The army had target ranges constructed at various locations throughout the training grounds (See Appendix O). Since Camp Polk was to be abandoned, the Wake County Commissioners rescinded a conditional resolution to “appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand (20,000) Dollars to help build a permanent road from the Fair Ground to the Thompson Crossing on Hillsboro Road.”⁶⁸

With the abandonment order, the army made preparations to leave Raleigh/Wake County, but this event happened only gradually. Trainloads of lumber kept coming into the tank camp; soldiers unloaded the lumber and constructed tent floors and a recreation building at the temporary camp. Limited building activity proceeded evidently because it was suggested that Camp Polk would be a demobilization camp for discharged soldiers going home in North and South Carolina. However, Camp Polk never became a demobilization camp. By November 25 all construction work at the temporary camp and on a water tank was halted as arrangements were being made to discharge the soldiers.⁶⁹

In December, the army moved men to Camp Greene near Charlotte for discharge. By December 6, the military presence not including black soldiers was down to “218 men for checking over equipment, the headquarters staff, a few regular army officers, and the medical officers.” Forty-two sick personnel went to Biltmore Hospital in Asheville on December 9. By December 19 the remaining tankers and their tanks were making plans to ship off to Camp Benning at Columbus, Georgia. Yet, by January 13, 1919, the army

⁶⁸ Capt. Edward H. Dignowity, “Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina,” report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), November 12, 1918 and January 17, 1919; Minutes, December 2, 1919 (microfilm), Wake County Board of Commissioners, North Carolina State Archives (quotation).

⁶⁹ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), November 25, 1918 and November 28, 1918;

had decided not to ship the tankers to Georgia and the general contractor, Holliday and Crouse, was still at the permanent camp. For a brief period, Camp Polk was in limbo, but by February the army decided to send the remaining 200 tankers and their eighteen officers to Camp Meade, Maryland, new home of the Tank Corps. On February 19 soldiers left Camp Polk for Camp Meade bringing an end to the Tank Corps presence in Raleigh. Black soldiers remained for clean up along with some members of the motor transport corps.⁷⁰

With the abandonment of the camp, the army went about the process of paying landowners for damages, returning some of the land to its original condition, and getting rid of surplus property. The army paid landowners for damages to their property on which target ranges were constructed. In trying to return the land to its original condition, the army “made every effort...to have all such work removed and trenches filled.” In his report on the tank camp, Capt. Edward H. Dignowity stressed the importance of returning the property to the owners because of the approaching planting season. The War Department proceeded to rid itself of everything from lumber to soap bars.⁷¹

While the War Department was in the process of abandoning Camp Polk, politicians and citizens mounted a campaign to keep the military installation. A delegation went to Washington to persuade the War Department to retain the camp but returned to Raleigh with no commitment. Undeterred, another delegation sought the aid of Senator Furnifold Simmons. He met twice with Secretary of War Newton D. Baker

⁷⁰ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 4, 1918, December 5, 1918, December 7, 1918 (quotation), December 10, 1918, December 11, 1918, December 19, 1918, January 13, 1919, January 17, 1919, February 8, 1919, February 12, 1919, February 19, 1919, and February 17, 1919.

⁷¹ Capt. Edward H. Dignowity, “Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina,” report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), February 16, 1919.

but could not convince the secretary to keep the camp open. On November 27, 1918, Secretary Baker declared officially that the Camp Polk would be abandoned. The *News and Observer* reacted to the announcement with these words:

There were no life-saving strings to the statement of the secretary of war to bolster up the sanguine individuals where “hope springs eternal in the human breast,” when war nurtured enterprises succumb to a natural death.⁷²

Although a many Raleigh citizens wanted Camp Polk to remain, others people had no desire to see it stay open. Senator Simmons and Representative Pou received letters “setting forth the evils of the camp.” Around the time Secretary Baker was announcing Camp Polk’s demise, Senator Simmons received a petition signed by fifty-three people who did not want the military installation to remain. Since the war was over, these petitioners wanted to return to their land. The petitioners stated that they faced hardships if force to moved to another area. They criticized the persons who pressured them to give options on their land at low prices. The petitioners were not critical of the soldiers. A mass-meeting was held in Raleigh on November 29 that harshly condemned the anti-tank camp petition signers saying they insulted the tankers and injured the city of Raleigh. At that meeting, resolutions were passed that praised the soldiers and said, “we condemn their [the petitioners’s] conduct as highly reprehensible, and as a gross breach of courtesy and hospitality.”⁷³

Camp Polk like Camp Mangum was a response to the exigencies of war. Peace brought an end to the short-lived tank camp and to the excitement it brought to Raleigh.

⁷² *News and Observer* (Raleigh), November 16, 1918, November 21, 1918, and November 28, 1918 (quotation)

⁷³ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), November 28, 1918 (quotation), December 1, 1918, and November 30, 1918.

The tank camp died, but its name lived on when a prison farm was established on one section of the former military reservation.

Chapter VI

Camp Polk Prison Farm

Before becoming Polk Youth Center, the correctional facility operated as a prison farm known as Camp Polk Prison Farm having adult inmates. The state originally acquired the land “with the expectation of using the site as a new State’s Prison and farm to replace Central Prison and Caledonia Prison Farm.” The land encompassed around 2600 acres in 1920. Over the ensuing decades, the acreage shrank because of other state needs and the disposal of portions by the state (See Appendices AA, BB, and FF). The site in 1920 was a different world. The modern-day buildings, highways, traffic, and related activities have largely erased memories of its former use.⁷⁴

In February 1919 the General Assembly proposed the movement of all prisoners from Raleigh to Caledonia Prison Farm or “such other place as the General Assembly may hereafter authorize.” One month later lawmakers called for the relocation of Central Prison to a site other than Caledonia. The Board of Directors of the State’s Prison was encouraged to sell the Caledonia Prison Farm and to use funds from its sale for a new main prison. The Board of Directors decided to sell the Caledonia Prison Farm in fall 1919, but a break in the dike protecting the prison farm from the Roanoke River forced a delay until the dike was repaired. In December 1919 the State’s Prison sold 7,000 acres that were divided into fifty-three small farms at auction for nearly a half-million dollars, retaining 1,281 acres. With the enactment of legislation that provided for relocating the

⁷⁴ The prison has been referred to as the Cary Farm, Polk Prison, Camp Polk Farm, etc; the term “State’s Prison” referred to both the predecessor of the modern-day Department of Correction and Central Prison; “Decision of the North Carolina Prison Commission Reached in Session on Wednesday, November 5, 1959, Relative to Petition Requesting the Removal of Polk Prison by Citizens Who Reside or Own Land in the Vicinity of this Unit,” Luther H. Hodges, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1960, Prisons-Polk Prison Complaints, State Archives (quotation); “‘Camp-Polk’ State’s Prison Farm, Raleigh, N.C., September 1938” (map [copy of original], N.C. Museum of Art files); *Report on the Feasibility of Separating the State Prison System from the State Highway and Public Works Commission*, ca. 1956, 119.

State's Prison and the sale of nearly all of Caledonia Prison Farm, the groundwork was laid for the creation of Camp Polk Prison camp in 1920. From 1923 through 1925 the state retook most of the Caledonia Prison Farm because purchasers with the apparent exception of two, could not meet their payments. Caledonia Prison Farm was still in existence in 2001. The failure of the sale of Caledonia Prison "apparently led to an abandonment of the idea of building a new State's Prison on the Camp Polk site to replace Central Prison."⁷⁵

In 1919, following the General Assembly's authorization regarding the relocation of Central Prison, the State's Prison obtained from the War Department purchase options on the lands of the abandoned tank training facility, Camp Polk. After the sale of the Caledonia Prison Farm in December, "a certain number of the landowners in the Camp Polk area were notified that the State Prison Board [of Directors] would take up options on or before the date of expiration." In 1920 the State's Prison purchased 2,590.49 acres from eleven owners at a cost of \$282,034.62. According to a map showing Polk Prison Farm's boundaries, it had expanded to a gross area of 2,680 acres and net area of 2,605 acres during 1920. (The gross acreage included land within Polk Prison Farm's boundaries not owned by the state; see Appendices AA and BB.) In addition to using this area for the location of a new main prison, it was to serve as a new prison farm. An article in the December 5, 1919, *News and Observer* put forward another reason why the state sold Caledonia property and was seeking farmland in Wake County:

⁷⁵ *Biennial Report of the State's Prison, Raleigh, N.C., 1919-1920*, 7-15 (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 5, 1919; *Report on the Feasibility of Separating the State Prison System from the State Highway and Public Works Commission*, ca. 1956, 225; "Decision of the North Carolina Prison Commission Reached in Session on Wednesday, November 5, 1959, Relative to Petition Requesting the Removal of Polk Prison by Citizens Who Reside or Own Land in the Vicinity of this Unit," Luther H. Hodges, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1960, Prisons-Polk Prison Complaints, State Archives (quotation).

Decision to sell the farm [Caledonia] was brought about when it was determined to abandon agriculture on an extensive scale by State prisoners, and divert their energies to road building. Farm lands have been bought in Wake county [sic] that will be utilized for giving work to such prisoners as are unfit for work on roads.

The State's Prison wasted little time in gaining a foothold on its new property. As early as January 5, 1920, the Board of Directors called on the head of the State's Prison, Superintendent J. R. Collie, to construct a brick plant at the new farm. During February 1920 men and equipment were moved to the new farm. Camp Polk was ready for operation by March 1920.⁷⁶

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With the purchase of the farm, the State's Prison acquired a landscape that was far removed from 2001. In November 1920 C. L. Newman, agricultural advisor for the prison farm, provided a detailed description of the landscape:

The State owns and operates as a prison farm an area of approximately 3000 [actually closer to 2600] acres extending 3 to 8 miles west of Raleigh. The farm is traversed by three small streams and others have their origins within the boundaries of the farm. The land is broken and even rough with considerable loose stone in places. Areas of second growth loblolly and old field pine vary from 40 to 50 years of duration down to one year seedling are scattered over the farm. There is some

⁷⁶ *Biennial Report of the State's Prison, Raleigh, N.C., 1919-1920*, 15-16 (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 5, 1919 (quotation); Minutes, January 5, 1920, Prison Department Board of Directors, State Archives.

original growth hardwood, oak and hickory predominating. Less than half of the 3000 acres is in cultivation and pasture.

Newman, who came to Camp Polk in late March 1920, wanted to see part of the prison devoted something other than traditional farming. Writing to Governor-elect Cameron Morrison, Newman asked him to consider “the setting aside parts of the State’s Prison for the purpose of preserving and producing a future supply of lumber and other forest products.” Dr. Joseph H. Pratt, state geologist, suggested that prisoners be put to work in a nursery on the prison farm. The objective was to grow seedlings and sell them at cost to people wanting to reforest their land. Another idea “was the growing of holly as a secondary growth with oak and pine and in the crop along for Christmas trees, etc.” In the end, the forestry idea evidently never went beyond the proposal stage. Newman left the prison farm in December 1920.⁷⁷

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At the new prison farm, the State’s Prison secured buildings and equipment left by the army, refurbished and built structures, and started agricultural production. Prior to moving, the State’s Prison in 1919 purchased from the War Department for \$5,000 “ all the railroad tracks, buildings, electric lines, waterpipes, etc., located upon the land upon which we held the option.” This purchase included the following: an office and warehouse, five sheds, two pumphouses, four stables, three bunkhouses, a kitchen, and

⁷⁷ C. L. Newman to Dr. J. S. Holmes, November 29, 1920 (quotation) and December 9, 1920, C. L. Newman Papers, Private Collections, State Archives; C. L. Newman to Cameron Morrison, November 29, 1920, C. L. Newman Papers, Private Collections, State Archives (quotation); Dr. Joseph L. Pratt to C. L. Newman, December 16, 1920, C. L. Newman Papers, Private Collections, State Archives; C. L. Newman to Dr. J. S. Holmes, December 21, 1920, C. L. Newman Papers, Private Collections, State Archives (quotation); C. L. Newman to Cameron Morrison, January 31, 1921, C. L. Newman Papers, Private Collections, State Archives

various other things (See Appendix Y). The State's Prison placed the prisoners in the bunkhouses once used by civilian laborers building the tank camp and repaired buildings abandoned by their original owners that could be for farm purposes. New structures were added: a gin-house, a cotton-house, a cottonseed house, a sawmill, a brick plant, and homes "for the farm superintendent, assistants, guards, etc." Prisoners presumably constructed all of the buildings. Improvements were made to the bunkhouses; a water and sewage system was added to the camp. As to the agricultural pursuits, the prisoners did the best they could with land that "was in run-down and washed conditions, having been farmed for many years . . . under the tenant system." They terraced, plowed, and prepared fields for planting. The prison farm housed a wide assortment of items ranging from picks to buggies to bricks (See Appendix Z). The livestock in late 1920 consisted of the following: eighty-three mules, eighteen horses, thirty-four yearlings, fourteen calves, thirty-seven cows, one bull, 137 fattening hogs, twenty-six brood sows, eighty-six pigs, and twenty-seven shoats.⁷⁸

By 1924 Polk Prison Farm was fully operational, but it still had problems that needed to be addressed. The superintendent of the brickyard, D. M. Sellars, reported in November 1921 that he could not find any additional brick clay deposits with the prison farm. Low soil fertility, drought, excessive rain and the boll weevil damaged crops. Yet, after the hard work, the farm began to yield positive results . From 1921 through 1922, the prisoners had planted 250 peach trees and 250 apple trees and "raised a large quantity

⁷⁸ *Biennial Report of the State's Prison, Raleigh, N.C., 1919-1920*, 16-19 (quotation); Captain Edward H. Dignowity, "Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina," report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives; Minutes, January 5, 1920, Prison Department Board of Directors, State Archives; "Reply to Resolution Introduced in the State Senate Requiring the Prison Board to Deliver to the Senate and the House of Representatives a Statement Relative to Failure to Provide Suitable Quarters for Prisoners and to Deliver the Penitentiary Building to the Insane Hospital," Minutes, February 23, 1921, Prison Department Board of Directors, State Archives (quotation).

of corn, wheat, oats, soy beans, sweet and Irish potatoes, alfalfa and peavine hay.”

During that period, a sweet potato storage house with a capacity of holding 2,500 bushels was built. In 1923 the farm raised 561 cotton bales on 500 acres which was far better than the 234 bales produced on 400 acres in 1921. By July of that year 1,950 bushels of wheat had been harvested at Polk and in October “the Superintendent reported fine pea and peavine crops at Camp Polk Farm.” By the end of June 1922 the State’s Prison reported that 181 prisoners were housed at Camp Polk; at the end of October 1924 Camp Polk was home to eighteen white and 148 black inmates (166 total). As of January 1, 1926, six white men and 117 black men were imprisoned at Polk. Over this period, African American inmates were housed at Polk while Caledonia held white ones. The major problem faced at the prison farm was the need for adequate quarters. “Short time prisoners” remained at the bunkhouses and “long term prisoners” stayed at Central Prison. The State’s Prison’s biennial report for 1921-1922 reported, “Our road camps excel the general living conditions at the farm.” Administrators appealed to the General Assembly for \$50,000 for new buildings.⁷⁹

The State’s Prison finally did build new structures. In January 1923 the Board of Directors accepted plans submitted by Raleigh architect, Frank B. Simpson; the Board contracted with him as the project architect for \$2,000, pending Council of State

⁷⁹ Minutes, November 21, 1921, Prison Department Board of Directors, State Archives; *Biennial Report of the State’s Prison, Raleigh, N.C., 1921-1922*, 9 (quotation), 20; *Biennial Report of the State’s Prison, Raleigh, N.C., 1923-1924*, 4, 13; Minutes, July 10, 1923 and October 23, 1924, Prison Department Board of Directors, State Archives (quotation); Josephine Rand to Kate Burr Johnson, October 20, 1924, Department of Social Services, State Board of Public Welfare, Commissioner’s Office, Subject Files, Prisons, 1912-1949, State Archives; “Distribution of State Convicts,” January 1, 1926, Department of Social Services, State Board of Public Welfare, Commissioner’s Office, Subject Files, Prisons, 1912-1949, State Archives; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 21, 1924; “Reply to Resolution Introduced in the State Senate Requiring the Prison Board to Deliver to the Senate and the House of Representatives a Statement Relative to Failure to Provide Suitable Quarters for Prisoners and to Deliver the Penitentiary Building to the Insane Hospital,” Minutes, February 23, 1921, Prison Department Board of Directors, State Archives.

approval. The Board also authorized the Chairman J. A. Leak to borrow up to \$400,000. In September 1923 the Board accepted the lowest bids for material to be used in the construction of the new building. In the State's Prison's biennial report for 1923-1924 (published in 1925), administrators proudly boasted of the new facilities:

New quarters for the prisoners at Camp Polk have been completed at a gross cost of nearly \$90,000.00. This is a modern brick and concrete building with tool proof steel window guards and doors. The building has steam heat and modern hospital. A brick chapel has also been erected. This is used during the week days as a recreation room. The building is surrounded by a nonclimbable fence and there are four acres in the enclosure.

Prisoners constructed the building using prison-made bricks. The main building featured a central section with three attached wings. Another structure located behind the main building that was converted into a segregation (isolation) unit in the 1950s evidently was completed at this time. The main building and segregation unit were made of the same brick (See Appendices CC, DD, GG, RR, and SS).⁸⁰

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In August 1924 calls arose to close Polk Prison. Governor Cameron Morrison and State's Prison Board of Directors asked Representative Walter Murphy to present a resolution in the North Carolina House calling for the sale of Camp Polk for "not less

⁸⁰ Minutes, January 3, 1923, Prison Department Board of Directors, State Archives; Minutes, September 11, 1923, Prison Department Board of Directors, State Archives; *Biennial Report of the State's Prison, Raleigh, N.C., 1923-1924*, 13 (quotation); *Report on the Feasibility of Separating the State Prison System from the State Highway and Public Works Commission*, ca. 1956, 232.

than \$400,000”. The Board considered selling Polk because the State had repossessed the land it sold at Caledonia. The consensus was that the state did not need two prison farms. On August 21 the House debated the resolution during an extra session of the General Assembly that was about to end. In the debate, which lasted about an hour, Murphy mentioned that Governor Morrison informed him that Camp Polk was not needed and that it was operating at a loss. Representative Alexander H. Graham opposed the resolution, contending that Polk’s land might be needed because of the growing prison population. He also stated that “retention of the farm would also enable the prison to continue its policy of segregation of negroes and whites.” Representative Reuben O. Everett contended that the \$400,000 price tag was too low because the land was near Raleigh and next to the new Meredith College site and “probably would be worth a million dollars.” He also pointed out that some of the land might be used for a fairground. In the end, a motion presented by Representative James C. Braswell to table the resolution prevailed “overwhelmingly.” This debate marked only the first of several efforts to have Polk Prison closed.⁸¹

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By the mid to late 1920s Polk Prison Farm began undergoing some changes. During this period, the prison farm both lost and gained acreage (See Appendix BB). In accordance with instructions from the General Assembly, the State’s Prison transferred 200 acres to the State Fair Association that became in 1928 the site of the current State Fairgrounds. Offsetting this loss of land was the purchase of about thirty-eight acres

⁸¹ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 21, 1924 (quotation) and August 22, 1924 (quotation); John L. Cheney, Jr., ed., *North Carolina Government, 1585-1979: A Narrative and Statistical History* (Raleigh: North Carolina Department of the Secretary of State, 1981), 499-501; *Greensboro Daily News*, August 22, 1924.

from the N. C. West estate (See Appendices O and BB). By 1928 the prison farm no longer housed African American inmates. The State's Prison after "having been successful in locating and obtaining employment in quarries, mines, and road camps for all able-bodied negroes . . . [was able] . . . to set aside the Camp Polk Farm for young white boys under 20 years of age, of which there are, at this time 168." Only the less hardened prisoners were to be placed at the farm. They would be extended with the opportunity to attend night classes taught by specially selected older prisoners. By 1928 the prisoners produced in sufficient quantities the following crops: "corn, forage, peas, beans, soy beans, oats, sweet and Irish potatoes, ensilage, pork, vegetables, milk, etc." From 1925 to 1928 the prison farm produced a net profit of \$32,066.00. At the end of 1928 Polk Prison housed ninety-two prisoners. As of September 1930 the number of inmates had increased appreciably to 223 whites and two blacks.⁸²

As the 1930s opened Polk Prison Farm became the focus of new plans and ideas. A Prison Advisory Commission in 1930 "recommended construction of a new central prison on Camp Polk Farm with ample facilities for classification, segregation, employment, and treatment of all types of prisoners received by the State system." A separate commission appointed by Governor O Max Gardner, acting on legislation passed in 1931, proposed the idea and obtained the services of an architect who submitted plans that met with initial review and approval. However, the Depression and the consolidation of the State's Prison with the Highway Department resulted in the abandonment of the

⁸² "'Camp-Polk' State's Prison Farm, Raleigh, N.C., September 1938" (map [copy of original], N.C. Museum of Art files); *Biennial Report of the State's Prison, Raleigh, N.C., 1927-1928*, 10-11 (quotation), 32; "Preliminary Prison Report for the Governor's Prison Commission (First draft, tentative and uncorrected, for the consideration of the Governor and Commission only)," November 20, 1930, Department of Social Services, State Board of Public Charities and Welfare, Commissioner's Office, Prison Files, 1917-1931, State Archives.

idea. Furthermore, the idea “for a new central prison did not fit with the scheme for a State prison system spread over a network of new highways maintained by prison labor.” Another proposal was for young prisoners from Camp Polk to repair state-owned vehicles, school buses, and road-building machinery at the State Highway and Public Work Commission’s shop. However, this plan also was not implemented.⁸³

Although none of these plans were realized, Camp Polk continued its farming operations. The State’s Prison’s 1928-1930 biennial report reported that the prison farm had 1,100 acres under cultivation. During the 1930-1932 biennium, prison farms shifted their emphasis “from cotton and other crop production, to food and feed, grain and livestock farming.” The change resulted in the construction and renovation of buildings at Polk:

Repairs and extension to dairy barn; One concrete and trench silo; One laying house; Five brooder houses and six range sheds for poultry; One additional 5,000 bushel potato house; One new hog barn and three horse barns rebuilt [See Appendices EE and GG].

During this same period, “[t]he proper thinning of the Farm-Forest at Camp Polk . . . [had] . . . supplied the farm and Central Prison with both lumber and wood.” The prospect of supplying of wood and lumber in the future was “most promising.” Yet, by the late 1930s, Polk Prison Farm had lost more land than it had gained. In 1936 the prison farm acquired 160 acres from K. P. Hill, but it transferred about fifty acres to

⁸³ *Report on the Feasibility of Separating the State Prison System from the State Highway and Public Works Commission*, ca. 1956, 230-231 (quotation); “History and Recent Progress Report on Polk Prison Unit,” attached to a letter from W. F. Bailey to Luther H. Hodges, September 29, 1959, Luther H. Hodges, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1960, Prisons-Polk Prison Complaints, State Archives.

Meredith College in 1937 and 1,225 acres to North Carolina State College (now North Carolina State University) in 1938. The prison property encompassed 1,326 acres in September 1938 (See Appendices BB).⁸⁴

The population fluctuated at Polk. At the end of June 1931 the prison housed 231 prisoners, but by the end of June 1932, the total had risen to 301. The average number of prisoners was 264 for the fiscal year that end June 30, 1934. With the placement of young white men between the ages of seventeen and twenty-one at Polk Prison Farm, education and rehabilitation became a primary focus. The State's Prison placed these men at Polk to isolated them from contact with hardened older criminals. However, a few older first-time prisoners were housed at Polk. In 1930 an educational program was started "to teach as many illiterate prisoners as possible to read and write." By end of June 1932, sixty-two prisoners had participated in beginner, elementary and advanced elementary classes. Della Carroll started a prison library with 625 books and an average daily circulation of twenty-four. Carroll's concern was "that these men be supplied with good books and made to care for them." By 1934 the library evidently had 1,000 books and over that number by 1937. Statistics from April 1937 showed that 163 books and 437 magazines had been read by prisoners. By 1936 Polk Prison was "rated as the most important unit in the State prison system with respect to the rehabilitation program." In addition to education, the prisoners, according to administrators, were supposedly provided with "better food, cleaner and more comfortable quarters, and . . . recreation."

⁸⁴ *Biennial Report of the State's Prison, Raleigh, N.C. July 1, 1928-June 30, 1930*, 3; *Biennial Report of the State's Prison, Raleigh, N.C. July 1, 1930-June 30, 1932*, 52-53 (quotation); "'Camp-Polk' State's Prison Farm, Raleigh, N.C., September 1938" (map [copy of original], N.C. Museum of Art).

In 1934 the suggestion was put forward to acquire used football equipment from State College, but the college declined to provide any equipment.⁸⁵

Optimism abounded about the potential for rehabilitation of prisoners. In 1934 Capt. P. A. Hodges, head of Polk Prison Farm, cited that the absence of inmate disruptions during his six years as indication “that the youthful prisoners want to serve their terms in orderly manner and that they will behave themselves when they get out of prison.” Della Carroll clearly regarded the young men as having potential, referring to most of them as “very fine and intelligent.” Carroll believed an inspiring book could change the life of a prisoner. In asking for books from a Mrs. F. D. Castlebury, she wrote:

Books of uplifting influence, ones which you feel will help someone “TO BE SOMEBODY” will be appreciated. Only eternity will reveal the good which came from your gift of books in “HIS NAME” for some mother’s boy, who committed a simple or terrible crime and now will use it as a stepping stone to make him better or as a weight to drag him down. A good book may be the means of turning his thoughts in the right way

⁸⁵ *Biennial Report of the State’s Prison, Raleigh, N.C. July 1, 1930-June 30, 1932*, 56; *Biennial Report, State Highway and Public Works Commission, Prison Department, Raleigh, for the Two Years ended June 30, 1934*, 50; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), March 11, 1934 (quotation); *Biennial Report of the State’s Prison, Raleigh, N.C. July 1, 1930-June 30, 1932*, 19-20 (quotation); Mrs. Robert Wyatt to the Boards of Participating Agencies (Typed note on letter tells about library at Polk Prison Farm), February 16, 1937, Ernest and Della Carroll Papers, Private Collections, State Archives; Della Carroll to Mrs. F. D. Castlebury, Ernest and Della Carroll Papers, Private Collections, State Archives (quotation); “Library Report, Camp Polk Farm, April 1937,” Ernest and Della Carroll Papers, Private Collections, State Archives; *Report on the Feasibility of Separating the State Prison System from the State Highway and Public Works Commission*, ca. 1956, 231 (quotation); R. R. Sermon to C. B. Croom, October 26, 1934, Ernest and Della Carroll Papers, Private Collection, State Archives.

In writing to Carroll about their son and Polk inmate Russell, Mr. and Mrs. G. L. Hampton of Elkin said, “It is so nice of you to go out and speak to the men and boys of Christ and his son Jesus, and may this be a great blessing to them is our prayer.” They were grateful for the work Carroll had done for Russell and were “living in hopes of having our dear child back home with us.” Carroll evidently had an impact on Russell Hampton because Mr. and Mrs. Hampton told Carroll that Russell thought she was “so wonderful” and asked his parents “to express his appreciation for your kindness and courtesy shown to him.” Even the prisoners themselves felt optimistic about staying out of trouble. One twenty-year-old in prison for manslaughter told *News and Observer* reporter Herbert O’Keef in 1934, “What would I do if I got out of here? Well, I’d go on home, try to get a job and behave myself.” Another prisoner, a nineteen year old also serving time for manslaughter, informed the reporter, “I’m just a kid . . . and if I got out of here right now you can bet I’d head for the nearest school and try to learn something.”⁸⁶

Reporter Herbert O’Keef referred to the inmates as “amateur criminals” and “youthful prisoners.” Parents like the Hamptons believed that their son was not responsible for his actions. In their letter to Della Carroll, the Hamptons stated that “Russell is not a bad boy, he has associated with the wrong company.” Nevertheless, many of the inmates clearly committed serious crimes even if they were first timers. One nineteen-year-old prisoner freely told O’Keef about his crime, “Sure, I killed him. . . . I was drunk, so was he and he slugged me with a pair of brass knucks so I went in the house, got my pistol and let him have it.” Two other prisoners mentioned in the article

⁸⁶ Mr. and Mrs. G. L. Hampton to Della Carroll, July 4, 1935, Ernest and Della Carroll Papers, Private Collections, State Archives (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), March 11, 1934 (quotation).

also killed people. These incidents occurred after the victim and killer had been drinking. Prisoner Ernest Campbell, age nineteen in 1935, was sent to Polk for “highway robbery.” Campbell spent time in solitary confinement for two attempted escapes in October and December 1934 and a “crime against nature” in January 1935. In February 1935, he cut a prisoner’s back. Officials sent him to Central Prison “because of troublesome disposition.” A March 1933 report on solitary confinements at Polk listed prisoners as being confined for various offenses: misconduct in the dining room, destroying food, taking bread out of dining room, destroying clothes, misbehaving in their cells and destroying state property, disobedience, drunkenness, refusing to work, improper language to an employee, possession of whiskey, and profane language.⁸⁷

In the 1930s Polk was a place where the inmates lived and worked in conditions far different from their home surroundings. Prisoners were housed by grade. A grade prisoners were not troublemakers. They ate and slept apart from the more troublesome C and D grade prisoners. Prisoners received new shoes every seven months and socks based on needs and limitations. Viewpoints on the inmates living and work situation differed. O’Keef in his 1934 article related that all prisoners had to work, either on the farm, in the cellblock or in the kitchen. He also indicated that the prisoners had “plenty of work to do.” Captain Hodges in the same article indicated that the prisoners worked ten hours everyday and received only Sundays off. However, Della Carroll wrote, “They [the prisoners] have much leisure time as there is not enough work to keep them all busy,

⁸⁷ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), March 11, 1934 (quotation); Mr. and Mrs. G. L. Hampton to Della Carroll, July 4, 1935, Ernest and Della Carroll Papers, Private Collections, State Archives (quotation); “Complaint of Earnest Campbell, Prisoner at Camp Polk,” March 19, 1935, Department of Social Services, State Board of Public Welfare, Commissioner’s Office, Subject Files, Prisons, 1912-1949, State Archives (quotation); “Report of the State Prison for Month of March 1933, Record of Solitary Confinement at Camp Polk Prison Farm,” Department of Social Services, State Board of Public Welfare, Commissioner’s Office, Subject Files, Prisons, 1912-1949, State Archives.

many hours have to be spent in idleness.” A visit to Polk in March 1935 by W. C. Ezell, field agent for the State Board of Public Welfare, provided a glimpse into the prisoners’s diet:

Agent visited at 5:5 P.M. [sic] as supper was about redy. Agent was told supper would consist of field peas, stewed tomatoes and bread. Agent tasted peas and found them palatable and without reason for criticism. The tomatoes were sitting unopened in one gallon tins. [C]orn bread looked and tasted tempting. Prisoners are allowed up to 9 slices of loaf bread for breakfast said Steward Berry, and up to 7 at supper. This is supplemented with corn bread for all who wish more. There are several large cakes of corn bread baked in anticipation that prisoners would call for it this particular evening.

Supt. stated that turnips and rutabagas were sometimes given, but stated he thought Steward Berry sufficiently careful in selection and preparation of foods.

Captain Hodges told O’Keef that after six years, “We have only had trouble only one time during those years...and that involved only four men” (See Appendices CC and RR).⁸⁸

⁸⁸ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), March 11, 1934 (quotation); Della Carroll to Mrs. F. D. Castlebury, June 24, 1932, Ernest and Della Carroll Papers, Private Collections, State Archives (quotation); “Complaint of Earnest Campbell, Prisoner at Camp Polk,” March 19, 1935, Department of Social Services, State Board of Public Welfare, Commissioner’s Office, Subject Files, Prisons, 1912-1949, State Archives (quotation).

O'Keef portrayed Hodges and the guards as paternal figures: "It [Polk] is being run by sympathetic men and is doing a good job for 'its boys.'" Yet, a complaint filed with the State Board of Public Welfare by Prisoner Ernest Campbell in March 1935 painted a different story about the "sympathetic men." W. C. Ezell, field agent for the State Board of Public Welfare, wrote:

As to specific charges in complaint, Supt. Hodges and Steward Berry concurred in about the following. Prisoners have been whipped within discretion of Mr. Whitley and not otherwise. Prisoners whipped were Campbell, Brown, Rathborne, and one whose name they did not recall. They stated the charge that prisoners were handcuffed to bars and given purgative to act while standing was false. Prisoners are handcuffed while standing only when becoming unruly at night and only until Supt. Hodges comes in the morning. They state that all prisoners are let down about every two hours so they may use the toilet.

Agent Ezzell also reported that Hodges and Steward "state[d] the interpretation of the beatings in May 1934 as false." Furthermore, Hodges indicated that he "had never heard of the guard maltreating prisoner Campbell. But would call him for questioning by Agent [Ezzell]." Ezzell did not question the guard.⁸⁹

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During the 1940s and again in the mid-1950s, Polk Prison underwent changes. A 1959 report on Polk concluded, "Over the years this unit deteriorated in facilities and

⁸⁹ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), March 11, 1934 (quotation); "Complaint of Ernest Campbell, Prisoner at Camp Polk," March 19, 1935, Department of Social Services, State Board of Public Welfare, Commissioner's Office, Subject Files, Prisons, 1912-1949, State Archives (quotation).

program and became little more than another road camp for gun grade prisoners located on a small and unsuccessful dairy farm.” By 1942 the Prison Department had returned Polk to an all-black facility. In 1953 Polk contained 200 African American men; in 1955 the Prison Department listed Polk as medium custody facility for black men who were serving time for misdemeanors. By 1956 Polk was partially integrated with white prisoners housed in one wing of the main building and black prisoners who did road work in another.⁹⁰

Polk remained a farm, but it operated on a much smaller scale. A 1956 report on the Prison Department’s agricultural program stated that Polk consisted of 557 acres divided up as follows: 170 acres for cultivation, 137 acres in permanent pasture, 220 acres in woods, and 30 acres for farmstead, camp, and roads. By the 1950s farming consisted mainly of livestock and dairy operations with the milk being “consumed by the prisoners and personnel at Camp Polk, Central Prison, and the Women’s Prison” (See Appendices FF and GG) Milk also was sent to the governor’s mansion and to other detention facilities. A 1950 report on the North Carolina prison system indicated that Polk had taken steps to improve its farm production:

A State College agricultural graduate has been appointed farm foreman.

When the Director of Farms took charge, this farm was well kept although

⁹⁰ In 1933 the State’s Prison became part of the State Highway and Public Works Commission and became known as the Prison Department; “History and Recent Progress Report on Polk Prison Unit,” attached to a letter from W. F. Bailey to Luther H. Hodges, September 29, 1959, Luther H. Hodges, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1960, Prisons-Polk Prison Complaints, State Archives; Rev. Lawrence A. Watts to Della Carroll, January 24, 1942, Ernest and Della Carroll Papers, Private Collections, State Archives; “Report of William F. Bailey, Director of Prisons to the North Carolina State Highway and Public Works Commission,” ca. November 17, 1953, State Board of Public Welfare, Child Welfare Division, Prison Advisory Council, 1953-1954, State Archives; “Classification of Prison Units,” August 5, 1955, Prison Department, Office of the Director, Subject Files, 1955, Minutes, 1955, State Archives; *Report on the Feasibility of Separating the State Prison System from the State Highway and Public Works Commission*, ca. 1956, 232.

pastures and grazing areas were seriously insufficient. The chief effort here has been to cull non-profitable cows, develop additional pastures, and improve pork production methods. The Veterinary Division of the State Department of Agriculture is cooperating in the effort to improve live stock and clear both cows and hogs of disease. Hogs have been transferred to new ranges, and non-profitable cows have been replaced by high producing Holsteins.

The report declared that most of Polk's inmates engaged in roadwork and not farmwork. Around this same period, Polk received a "new abattoir [slaughterhouse] for slaughtering "beef cattle, hogs and chickens" and a "water line from Hillsboro Street" constructed at a cost of \$65,000 (See Appendix HH).⁹¹

Notwithstanding efforts to improve production and efficiency, Polk continued to see problems with its farming operations. Milk production declined and the farm experienced difficulties with the processing of milk. To alleviate these problems, the Prison Department had to do a "little house cleaning" at Polk. In August 1954 Sam Austin took charge of the dairy herd. Through his efforts, milk production gradually increased and the cost of production decreased. Polk's milk pasteurization plant had

⁹¹ "Agricultural Program [report], North Carolina Prison Department," ca. 1956, Prison Department, Farm Operations, Correspondence of the Director of Farm Operations, 1954-1958; W. F. Bailey to Luther H. Hodges, April 20, 1956, Prison Department, Director's Office, Subject Files, 1955-1956, General-Camp Polk, 1956, State Archives; J. B. Moore to North Carolina Prison Advisory Council, December 21, 1949, State Board of Public Welfare, Prison Advisory Council, 1949-1952, State Archives; *Osborne Association Survey Report on North Carolina Prison System*, 1950 (quotation); "Pasteurization Plant Inspection Form, State Board of Health, Camp Polk Pasteurization Plant," April 12, 1955, Prison Department, Subject File, 1955, General-Camp Polk, 1955, State Archives, "Report on Milk Production and Distribution, Camp Polk, Cary, North Carolina," April 28, 1955, Prison Department, Subject File, 1955, General-Camp Polk, 1955, State Archives; *Summary of Activities of the Prison Advisory Council of North Carolina, December 1949 Through December 1952*, State Board of Public Welfare, State Prison Advisory Council, 1949-1952, State Archives (quotation).

problems that lead to the recommendation by Dairy Extension Specialist R. B. Redfern that the farm's milk, which Governor Luther Hodges refused to drink, be processed at State College. In a November 1955 memorandum to Prison Department Director W. F. Bailey, Farm Director G. M. Swicegood affirmed the idea of letting State College take care of pasteurizing and processing Polk's milk:

This change would result in the loss of one and one-half man days of prison labor. They [Mr. Lennon, Mr. Austin, and Mr. Duncan; first names unknown] stated that approximately \$100.00 per month would be saved in coal, soap powder and disinfectant. I am of the opinion that if we attempt to repair our present equipment, the Health Department will continue to require changes. Therefore, I believe we should go to bulk storage, thereby producing a quality product at the lowest production cost.

In January 1956 the dairy operations had an additional setback; a fire damaged the dairy barn (See Appendix GG). Following the fire, Swicegood again urged that measures be taken to have milk processed at State College because of the savings it would bring to Polk.⁹²

⁹² W. F. Bailey to D. S. Coltrane, April 4, 1955, Prison Department, Office of the Director, Subject Files, 1955, General-Camp Polk, 1955, State Archives, (quotation); R. B. Redfern to G. M. Swicegood, Prison Department, Office of the Director, Subject Files, 1955, General-Camp Polk, 1955, State Archives; W. F. Bailey to D. S. Coltrane, April 7, 1955, Prison Department, Office of the Director, Subject Files, 1955, General-Camp Polk, 1955, State Archives; G. M. Swicegood to W. F. Bailey, April 6, 1955, Prison Department, Office of the Director, Subject Files, 1955, General-Camp Polk, 1955, State Archives; G. M. Swicegood to W. F. Bailey, November 11, 1955, Prison Department, Office of the Director, Subject Files, 1955, General-Camp Polk, 1955, State Archives (quotation); Robert A. Allen to W. F. Bailey, January 31, 1956, Prison Department, Director's Office, Subject Files, 1955-1956, General-Camp Polk, 1956, State Archives; G. M. Swicegood to W. F. Bailey, February 14, 1956, Prison Department, Director's Office, Subject Files, 1955-1956, General-Farm, 1956, State Archives.

Even with the problems and reduced acreage, Polk maintained active farm production as indicated by a 1956 report summarizing the objectives for the Prison Department's agricultural program:

Camp Polk is largely a livestock operation. The program to meet the goals of food and feed requirements is as follows:

50 Dairy cows (plus replacements)

25 Brood sows (to furnish feeder pigs for Women's prison)

200 Top hogs

4 Work-stock

The land use will be as follows

45 Acres of corn (for grain)

20 Acres hegari and soybeans for silage

50 Acres alfalfa

55 Acres small grain (w/lespedeza)

The farm would operate a slaughterhouse and a cold storage plant and continue supplying milk for itself, Central Prison, and Women's Prison. Polk experienced positive results with its dairy herd in the mid-1950s because of the acquisition of Holstein cows and the culling of the herd. As member of the Institutional Breeding Program, the Prison

Department had access to the best bulls in North Carolina for breeding purposes. A December 1955 report showed how Polk improved itself, going from deficits to a profit:

1952-1953	\$16,439.73	Deficit
1953-1954	\$6,245.44	Deficit
1954-1955	\$21,701.02	Profit

The number of inmates actually working in agriculture at Polk was really small by the mid-1950s. The farm operations employed only twenty people in 1955 and an average of thirteen inmates worked daily in farm operations out of a daily average of 276 inmates for the 1955-1956 biennium.⁹³

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J. W. Doyle Jr, who grew up near Polk in the 1950s, recently recalled the prison farm. He said that it was a very busy place yet was clean and presentable to the public. Doyle recalled that prisoners did most of the harvesting by hand. According to Doyle, the prisoners used manure as fertilizer spreading it with a horse-drawn spreader. He also recalled that the inmates cleaned up the State Fairgrounds.⁹⁴

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⁹³ “Agricultural Program, North Carolina Prison Department,” attached to memorandum from W. F. Bailey to G. M. Swicegood, July 31, 1956, Prison Department, Director’s Office, Subject Files, 1955-1956, General-Farm, 1956, State Archives (quotation); “Report of Glenn M. Swicegood, Farm Director [presented to Prison Advisory Council],” December 2, 1955, State Board of Public Welfare, Prison Advisory Council, 1955-1957, State Archives; “Report of W. L. Fleming, Business Manager [Presented to the Prison Advisory Council], December 2, 1955, State Board of Public Welfare, Prison Advisory Council, 1955-1957, State Archives (quotation); *State of North Carolina, The Budget*, Vol. 1: *For the Biennium July 1, 1957, to June 30, 1959, Fiscal Years 1957-58 and 1958-59*, 1957, 163, 167.

⁹⁴ J. W. Doyle, conversation with author, July 11, 2001.

One of the least desirable places at Polk was the abattoir or slaughterhouse. (The site is now occupied by the modern-day state-owned textbook warehouse; see Appendix HH.) For the period from June 1, 1954 to May 31, 1955, “the Prison Cold Storage and Abattoir slaughtered, processed, packed and shipped to prison camps 4,292 head of hogs.” The carcasses of hogs and cattle slaughtered at Polk were hauled to a cold storage plant at Central Prison in an open unrefrigerated truck. J. W. Doyle recalled that the noise from the abattoir was “terrible” and that the animals’s blood was washed into Reedy Creek.⁹⁵

* * * * *

In March 1956, Governor Luther Hodges raised the possibility of relocating Polk to a site outside Raleigh. In a memorandum to Prison Department Director W. F. Bailey, Governor Hodges said, “I would be hopeful we could get the farm a little further away, and we can make a lot of money in the years ahead with the Cary property and still get our work done as well don’t you think?” Bailey offered this reply:

As you suggested in your memorandum, and I concur, we should think in terms of moving the farming and dairy operations at Polk Farm to a more appropriate location as this land is getting to be too valuable for the purpose for which it is now being used. I do feel, with our present facilities in this area, it would be the ideal spot to expand our industries outside of Central Prison to enlarge this operation. Further, with industries outside of Central Prison it would provide the Prison system not only with an additional income source but with a vocational and

⁹⁵ J. W. Doyle, conversation with author, July 11, 2001; “Information Concerning Prison Cold Storage Plant and Abattoir,” ca. 1955, Prison Department, Farm Operations, Correspondence of the Assistant Director of Farm Operations, 1954-1958, State Archives.

rehabilitation program for a large number of inmates who cannot be assigned to Central Prison because Central Prison is a maximum security institution. In fact, some of our present facilities now under construction at Polk Farm are directed towards this end. The necessary land for our industrial program could be set aside and the remaining land sold.

Bailey conceded that Polk was moving away from farming and toward prison industry and vocational training. Although Bailey was advocating a new direction for Polk Prison, Governor Hodges did not want to invest state funds in any large-scale projects at Polk. In a December 1956 Governor Hodges wrote to Bailey saying, “I seriously question spending any more capital money at Polk. Why don’t we pick another spot?” Nevertheless, the state did invest money for new buildings at Polk during Hodges’s tenure.⁹⁶

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One of the most interesting developments at Polk in the mid-1950s was the conversion of a building behind the main structure into an 18-cell segregation facility (Prior use of building has not been determined; see Appendices GG and SS). The segregation unit came into being around 1955. It was built to hold “mentally ill misdemeanant inmates requiring continuous supervision and attention.” Not long after the segregation unit opened, an escape attempt led to changes in security. The incident occurred on December 1, 1955, and was reported in a memorandum to Director Bailey:

⁹⁶ Luther H. Hodges to W. F. Bailey, March 19, 1956, Prison Department, Director’s Office, Subject Files, 1955-1956, General-Camp Polk, 1956, State Archives (quotation); W. F. Bailey to Luther H. Hodges, April 20, 1956; Prison Department, Director’s Office, Subject Files, 1955-1956, General-Camp Polk, 1956, State Archives (quotation); Luther H. Hodges to W. F. Bailey, December 3, 1956, Prison Department, Director’s Office, Subject Files, 1955-1956, General-Camp Polk, 1956, State Archives (quotation).

Guard [Herbert] Braswell was inside the segregation unit and he opened the cell door of the above prisoner [Hubert Creighton] for the purpose of allowing him to exercise in the yard. When the prisoner came out the door he grabbed both hands of the guard and in the scuffle knocked the guard's glasses off which impaired his vision to a great degree. The prisoner had a razor blade which he was trying to get to the throat of the guard. The guard received two or three minor cuts about the face and eye and eventually the prisoner was able to get the blade against the guard's throat and forced him to take off his pants which the prisoner then put on. He took the guards keys and opened the cell of Albert Hudspeth and asked him to go with him. Hudspeth refused and told him that he did not want to go that way and that he thought he was making a mistake. The prisoner locked Guard Braswell in the cell with Hudspeth and went out the door into the yard. He went down toward the back fence, went over the fence, and down through the pasture. One of the Honor Grade prisoners saw him and called the Assistant Superintendent and Creighton was apprehended in a few minutes about one-half mile from the camp in the pasture. He offered no resistance.⁹⁷

As a result of the incident, Braswell was suspended for ten days with no pay for neglecting his duty and was "assigned to such duties as are available which are

⁹⁷ *Feasibility of Separating the State Prison System from the State Highway and Public Works Commission*, ca. 1956, 232; "Report of W. L. Fleming, Business Manager [Presented to the Prison Advisory Council], December 2, 1955, State Board of Public Welfare, Prison Advisory Council, 1955-1957, State Archives; Robert A. Allen to W. F. Bailey, December 1, 1955, Prison Department, Director's Office, Subject Files, 1955-1956, General-Camp Polk, 1956, State Archives (quotation).

commensurate with his mental and physical facilities.” Policies regarding the segregation unit were revised. Inmates were not to receive razors from which they could remove the blades. (The investigation of the incident showed Prisoner Creighton actually used a sharpen spoon on Guard Braswell.) A better “shakedown” procedure had to be followed and “only young and physically and mentally alert guards” were to be assigned to the segregation unit. The procedure for removing inmates for their exercise period was changed.⁹⁸

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By the mid-1950s, Polk Prison received renewed attention from state officials, leading to expansion of the physical plan. Even with previous changes at the prison farm over the years, Polk had “deteriorated in facilities and program.” A circa 1956 report said:

Camp Polk Prison is once again being raised to its rightful place as one of the chief units of the State prison system. Facilities are being expanded to provide for more of the male prisoners requiring less than maximum security who need to be near Raleigh for one reason or another.

Improvements and additions being made will increase the capacity of Camp Polk from 225 to approximately 425 prisoners. Some of these will be prisoners in honor grade employed in work for the Prison Department and other State agencies in and around Raleigh. Some will be mentally or

⁹⁸ Robert A. Allen to M. S. Hodges, December 21, 1955, Prison Department, Director’s Office, Subject Files, 1955-1956, General-Camp Polk, 1956, State Archives (quotation); M. S. Hodges to R. A. Allen, December 30, 1955, Prison Department, Director’s Office, Subject Files, 1955-1956, General-Camp Polk, 1956, State Archives; “Orders of the Day to Custodial Officers on Duty, Camp Polk Segregation Building, Camp Polk Prison,” attached to memorandum from M. S. Hodges to R. A. Allen, December 30, 1955, Prison Department, Director’s Office, Subject Files, 1955-1956, General-Camp Polk, 1956, State Archives.

physically handicapped prisoners requiring more specialized treatment and medical care than can be readily provided at regular units of the prison system. Some will be prisoners who are particularly suited for work on the farm and in industries at Camp Polk. Some will be needed for road work in this area of the State.

Polk definitely needed improvements if it was to become a better facility. By 1955, because of crowded conditions, prison officials were occasionally forced to house inmates in the chapel (See Appendix GG). In 1956 Polk still had no sewage system and was discharging sewage into a stream, a procedure condemned by the State Board of Health.⁹⁹

From mid-1950s to the early 1960s, Polk acquired several new or renovated buildings and underwent a focus that changed it from a prison farm. The main building was renovated including expansion of the dining room, and a new structure was built as an office for the superintendent and for quarters for eighteen guards. The Prison Department renovated the boiler house, refurbished the water distribution and electrical systems, and added a central heating plant and steam distribution system. A new hide curing room and bathroom facilities were added to the abattoir. The chapel was repaired. Polk gained a new 100-man cellblock with its own fencing; the unit was initially established to hold physically or mentally handicapped felons. During the 1956-1958 biennium, Polk added a soap manufacturing plant and a vocational instructor “to

⁹⁹ *Feasibility of Separating the State Prison System from the State Highway and Public Works Commission*, ca. 1956, 231-232 (quotation); “Appendix A, Justification for Funds Now Needed to Provide for a Long Range Program of Prison Improvements in North Carolina,” October 1, 1956, State Board of Public Welfare, Prison Advisory Council, 1955-1957, State Archives.

conduct clerical and janitorial courses as well as literacy and life adjustment training” (See Appendices CC, GG, HH, and UU).¹⁰⁰

The 1958-1960 biennium brought even more changes to Polk. Polk established a clerical school and added a 300-man cellblock (See Appendices OO and TT). The latter was “needed to house properly honor grade prisoners already at work in this [Raleigh] area.” Minimum security prisoners at this time were housed in Durham and inadequately at Polk and Central Prison. By September 1959 the following projects were nearing completion:

In the industrial area—five new guard towers and a fence to enclose the area, renovation of three old dairy barns to provide for a woodworking storage building and to house a small mattress factory and a part of the soap plant which were at Central Prison, construction of a new woodworking shop and a new warehouse for industrial inventory and raw materials, erection of three pole constructions buildings and a dry kiln building (purchased from State College) needed for our forestry and saw mill operations, and a new sewerage outfall to tie in with the City to serve both the industrial area and the prison unit area in compliance with the Health Department requirements [See Appendices GG and OO].

¹⁰⁰ *Feasibility of Separating the State Prison System from the State Highway and Public Works Commission*, ca. 1956, 232-233; “History and Recent Progress Report on Polk Prison Unit,” attached to a letter from W. F. Bailey to Luther H. Hodges, September 29, 1959, Luther H. Hodges, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1960, Prisons-Polk Prison Complaints, State Archives; *Twenty-First Biennial Report of the State Highway and Public Works Commission: Prison Department, Raleigh, North Carolina, For the Biennium, 1954-1956*, xv; “Report of W. L. Fleming, Business Manager [presented to the Prison Advisory Council], December 2, 1955, State Board of Public Welfare, Prison Advisory Council, 1955-1957, State Archives; *Twenty-Second Biennial Report of North Carolina Prison System; For the Biennium 1956-1958*, viii, x (quotation);

The biennial report for 1958-1960 reported that Polk added a warehouse, a woodworking plant, and a lumberyard. The woodworking plant and the lumberyard provided services to state agencies. In addition, the woodworking plant was to refinish furniture (See Appendix VV). General and psychiatric hospitals, a meat processing plant, a new chapel, and 200-man receiving center were proposed but never added. Had these new buildings had been constructed, Polk would have had a capacity for 1,800 inmates.¹⁰¹

With the new construction adding new cellblocks and an industrial area, farming became secondary and eventually ceased at Polk. The state budget for fiscal years 1959-1960 and 1960-1961 submitted by Governor Hodges in January 1959 indicated that farming was ending:

The farming at Polk is largely a livestock operation. The dairy enterprise has been discontinued. For the next biennium, the operation of the farm will be curtailed considerably. A large portion of this farm will be transferred for other state purposes.

By 1959 the number of acres in use at Polk was to between 140 and 150 acres of a total of 557 acres. The abattoir was closed by July 1960. During this period, the number of

¹⁰¹ *Twenty-Third Biennial Report of North Carolina Prison System; For the Biennium 1958-1960*, x, xiv-xv; "Decision of the North Carolina Prison Commission Reached in Session on Wednesday, November 5, 1959, Relative to Petition Requesting the Removal of Polk Prison by Citizens Who Reside or Own Land in the Vicinity of this Unit," Luther H. Hodges, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1960, Prisons-Polk Prison Complaints, State Archives (quotation); "History and Recent Progress Report on Polk Prison Unit," attached to a letter from W. F. Bailey to Luther H. Hodges, September 29, 1959, Luther H. Hodges, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1960, Prisons-Polk Prison Complaints, State Archives; *Twenty Second Biennial Report of North Carolina Prison System; For the Biennium 1956-1958*, xi; *State of North Carolina, The Budget, Vol. 3: Capital Improvements, For the Biennium, July 1, 1959, to June 30, 1961, Fiscal Years, 1959-60 and 1960-61*, 1959, 23.

inmates nearly doubled from an average daily population of 276 inmates for the 1955-1956 biennium to 531 in 1959-1960.¹⁰²

* * * * *

As the 1960s opened, the prison continued to serve an adult population before being transformed into “a vocational training center for youthful offenders” in December 1963. Polk Prison was described in a general statement in the state budget for fiscal years 1961-1962 and 1962-1963:

Polk Prison is located near Raleigh on a tract of land consisting of 557 acres. It is a minimum security institution for male offenders, misdemeanants and felons who are convicted of crimes and sentenced to Prison for 30 days or more. This institution provides labor, under custodial supervision, for Central Services, Prison Enterprises, State Highway Department and other State Agencies.¹⁰³

In July 1962 five prisoners were convicted of making fake driver’s licenses. These honor grade prisoners produced the counterfeit licenses while working at the state’s Central Duplicating Service, operating the counterfeit ring for four or five months.

¹⁰² *State of North Carolina, The Budget, Vol 1: “A” Recommendations, For the Biennium July 1, 1959, to June 30, 1961, Fiscal Years 1959-60 and 1960-61*, 1959, 154 (quotation); “History and Recent Progress Report on Polk Prison Unit,” attached to a letter from W. F. Bailey to Luther H. Hodges, September 29, 1959, Luther H. Hodges, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1960, Prisons-Polk Prison Complaints, State Archives; “Decision of the North Carolina Prison Commission Reached in Session on Wednesday, November 5, 1959, Relative to Petition Requesting the Removal of Polk Prison by Citizens Who Reside or Own Land in the Vicinity of this Unit,” Luther H. Hodges, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1960, Prisons-Polk Prison Complaints, State Archives; “Resolutions Passed at a Meeting of the Citizens Committee for the Removal of Camp Polk Prison held at 8:00 o’clock, P.M., 19 July 1960”, Luther H. Hodges, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1960, Prisons-Polk Prison Complaints, State Archives; *State of North Carolina, The Budget, Vol. 1: For the Biennium July 1, 1957, to June 30, 1959, Fiscal Years 1957-58 and 1958-59*, 1957, 163.

¹⁰³ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), January 9, 1964; *State of North Carolina, The Budget, Vol. 1: “A” Budget Recommendations, For the Biennium July 1, 1961, to June 30, 1963, Fiscal Years 1961-62 and 1962-63*, 1961, 154 (quotation).

They sold the licenses for five to twenty dollars to people who had lost their driving privileges. For the convicts, the counterfeit licenses proved costly because they were forced to stay in prison longer. On November 14, 1963, not long before the youths were transferred to Polk, a fire broke out that burned two buildings (See Appendix II). The structures, which were used by Prison Enterprises, were formerly part of the dairy operation but had been converted into a warehouse and mattress plant. Losses were estimated at \$55,000 for the warehouse and \$2,000-\$3,000 for the mattress plant. The fire, which destroyed part of the former farming operations, was a fitting symbolic end to the old Polk Prison Farm era.¹⁰⁴

* * * * *

When Polk Prison was originally established in 1920, it was situated in an area surrounded only by farmland. As the years passed, the area became more residential leading to more contact between prisoners and local residents. J. W. Doyle recalled that it was easy for inmates to walk off from the prison and that guards came to the neighborhood ten to fifteen times a year looking for escapees. The murder of prominent Raleigh businessman Trent Ragland at his cabin on August 9, 1959, and the subsequent arrest of a former Polk prisoner who murdered Ragland on the day of his release led local residents to ban together to demand the relocation of the prison. The debate over the prison's location eventually made its way to the North Carolina Supreme Court.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), July 18, 1962; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), July 19, 1962; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), November 15, 1963.

¹⁰⁵ J. W. Doyle, conversation with author, July 11, 2001; "Statement of the Free Citizens of the Camp Polk Prison Community in Answer to N.C. Prison Commission Proposals to Perpetuate Camp Polk as a Youth Rehabilitation Center," August 26, 1960, Terry Sanford, Governor's Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), October 9, 1959 and November 5, 1959; "Reply to a Petition to for Relocation of Camp Polk Prison," Luther H. Hodges to Marion Medlin, March 7, 1960, *Messages, Addresses, and Public Papers of Governor Luther Hartwell Hodges, Governor of North*

In October 1959 the State Prison Commission met with fifty people, principally residents living near Polk Prison. The Commission also received a petition from Marion Medlin, chairman of the Citizens Committee for the Removal of Camp Polk, that carried “500 signatures supporting the committee’s cause.” In the public hearing, the Commission heard testimony regarding Polk relating particularly to people’s fear of convicts. Raleigh Mayor W. G. Enloe spoke out against the prison saying it “is in the way of Raleigh’s progress.” Raleigh school Superintendent Jesse O. Sanderson presented his opposition to Polk. In the preceding week, the school board had indicated its desire to see Polk moved. Chamber of Commerce President Dan Stewart suggested that the state was wasting money at Polk and added, “[The] land near the camp is vital to the growth of the Raleigh-Durham area in connection with the burgeoning Research Triangle program.” The president of Meredith College, Dr. Carlyle Campbell, referred to Polk as “an undesirable facility.” An effort was made to have the construction at Polk stopped while the Commission pondered the citizens’ request, but the idea was rejected.¹⁰⁶

On November 4, 1959, the Commission formally rejected the “vehement requests for moving Camp Polk Prison Farm.” The Commission responded with a fourteen-page report summarizing the reasons for keeping Polk at its current location. In the report, they listed ten findings that supported their views:

1. Polk Prison has been located on its present site for forty years. Most of the present landowners and residents in the area became such after Polk Prison was established at its present site.
2. It would cost more than \$2,000,000 to provide equivalent facilities on another site.
3. Construction projects now underway at Polk Prison include a new 300-man cellblock approved by the Prison Commission in August 1958.

Carolina, 1954-1961, vol. 3, ed. James W. Patton (Raleigh: State of North Carolina, 1963), 617-618.(A brief summary about this situation appears in the book.)

¹⁰⁶ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), October 10, 1959 (quotation).

4. Construction of this cellblock was approved as the best solution to a pressing problem created by the lack of adequate housing for honor grade prisoners needed in the Raleigh area, which lack caused crowding of some of these minimum security prisoners into Central Prison, a maximum security institution, the housing of others in temporary quarters at Polk Prison, and the transportation of prisoners daily from Durham.
5. There is an urgent need for this new cellblock to relieve dangerous overcrowding and unwise mixing of maximum and minimum security prisoners at Central Prison; to replace temporary and inadequate housing at Polk Prison; and to avoid uneconomic daily transportation of inmates from Durham to perform work in Raleigh.
6. Even if we are shown or if we discover factors establishing that it would be feasible and to the State's advantage to move Polk Prison, we could not provide replacement facilities in less than three years. (As a practical matter, we believe an appropriation from the General Assembly would be necessary for this purpose.)
7. Since approximately three years would be required to replace Polk Prison with a new facility, assuming a decision to do so is eventually made, it would be in the best interest of the people of Raleigh as well as the State as a whole to complete construction already underway at Polk Prison which will enable us by June to house properly the honor grade inmates for our Raleigh operation.
8. The Raleigh residents and landowners and education institutions in the vicinity of Central Prison appear to have a greater cause for complaint about the location of that maximum security institution near them than their counterparts in the Polk Prison area have about the location of that institution for minimum security prisoners.
9. There are many units in our prison system located in or near residential districts of growing municipalities, and it is apparent that we could not move Polk Prison at the request of nearby residents and landowners without giving corresponding consideration to requests of other citizens similarly situated respecting other prisons in our system. Stated another way, action on each request will have to be taken in accordance with sound policy developed with a view to the best interests of the State as a whole.
10. Penology has progressed beyond the point where all prisoners are treated in accordance with the characteristics of the dangerous and incorrigible few. North Carolina is in a position to forge ahead in individualized treatment because the system is highly decentralized with many relatively small units, some within or near municipalities, and we should take full advantage of our position instead of retreating back into the shadows of an outworn concept of prisons as isolated institutions.

Regarding the Commission's action, the *News and Observer* offered its support for the decision editorializing, "The commission has acted responsibly and intelligently."

However, Polk opponents took their case to Wake Superior Court. State Senator John R. Jordan of Wake County served as their attorney while Attorney General Malcolm Seawell represented the state.¹⁰⁷

The hearing lasted for two days, December 15-16, 1959. Judge Reid Thompson ruled against an effort by the attorney general to have the civil action brought by Arthur L. Pharr who lived near Polk thrown out. The civil action sought to stop the operation of Polk, to halt current construction at the prison, and to remove new buildings that violated Raleigh zoning ordinances. Judge Thompson refused to stop construction at Polk but issued an order instructing "the State Prison Commission not to permit prisoners at Camp Polk to roam about the neighborhood unsupervised." His order was "to remain in effect until the case . . . [was] . . . decided." The State Supreme Court in turn issued a delay in Judge Thompson's order on December 18, 1959, pending the outcome of the state's appeal to the high court. The attorney general's petition to the Supreme Court contended:

[The order's] effect is to prevent officials of the executive branch from performing their duties, "particularly in carrying out their duties with respect to the treatment of honor prisoners who work without supervision in the State Highway Department garage near Camp Polk, the State

¹⁰⁷ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), November 5, 1959 (quotation); Decision of the North Carolina Prison Commission Reached in Session on Wednesday, November 5, 1959, Relative to Petition Requesting the Removal of Polk Prison by Citizens Who Reside or Own Land in the Vicinity of this Unit," Luther H. Hodges, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1960, Prisons-Polk Prison Complaints, State Archives (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), November 7, 1959 (quotation) and December 15, 1959.

Highway Patrol radio station near Camp Polk” and at various other State buildings.¹⁰⁸

Governor Hodges took part in the Polk debate. The governor sent a letter to Marion Medlin in March 1960 after receiving a petition asking for Polk’s removal. Hodges told Medlin that he had “not been actively involved negotiating for a relocation of the Camp Polk unit,” but he had “received information as to a possible new site and . . . [had] . . . passed that on to the Prison Commission.” He reiterated the difficulty in relocating the prison. Governor Hodges also told Medlin:

Ordinarily I would be glad to see your delegation but in view of the fact that the legal proceeding is now pending in the State Supreme Court, it would not be appropriate for me to discuss this matter with a group of citizens, as you requested, until the court case is decided one way or the other. The attorney general feels this way also.

In April 1960 Governor Hodges received a letter from Paul A. Johnson, director of the Department of Administration that placed a monetary value on relocating Polk. The information stated that a replacement facility in a remote location of 550 acres would cost \$2,154,642.81[sic] while the state could obtain \$1,543,750 from the sale of Polk ,

¹⁰⁸ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 16, 1959 and December 17, 1959 (quotation); *Pharr v. Garibaldi*, *North Carolina Reports* 252 (1960): 803-815; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 18, 1959 quotation.

meaning that the state would have to come up with an additional \$611,892.81 for a new prison.¹⁰⁹

On June 30, 1960, the State Supreme Court reversed the ruling of the lower court siding “with the State on the legal complexities of the suit.” The Supreme Court action upheld the earlier attempt to have the civil case dismissed by Attorney General Seawell. Nevertheless, by this point, prospects for the removal of Polk were looking up. Terry Sanford, the Democratic nominee for governor, “promised during his campaign to move Polk.” Also, George Randall, Director of the Prison Department, said, “I understand from the court’s ruling that we cannot legally be removed from Camp Polk, . . . [but,] . . . the Commission is interested in moving from Camp Polk and we are trying to arrange things.”¹¹⁰

On July 19, 1960, the Citizens Committee for the Removal of Camp Polk Prison approved five resolutions. The first expressed gratitude to the Prison Commission for efforts to make Polk a more secure place and to oversee the search for another site. The second resolution expressed concern that continued construction at Polk “conflicts with the public announcements concerning the moving of the prison and constitutes a waste of the tax monies of this State.” The third resolution urged the state to stop all construction and “to expedite a program for the relocation of this Prison in accordance with established precedents for removal of prisons from areas of urban development.” The

¹⁰⁹ “Reply to a Petition to for Relocation of Camp Polk Prison,” Luther H. Hodges to Marion Medlin, March 7, 1960, *Messages, Addresses, and Public Papers of Governor Luther Hartwell Hodges, Governor of North Carolina, 1954-1961*, vol. 3, ed. James W. Patton (Raleigh: State of North Carolina, 1963), 617-618 (quotation); Paul A. Johnson to Luther H. Hodges, April 22, 1960, Luther H. Hodges, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1960, Prisons-Polk Prison Complaints, State Archives.

¹¹⁰ *New and Observer* (Raleigh), July 1, 1960 (quotation); *Pharr v. Garibaldi, North Carolina Reports* 252 (1960): 803-815; “Resolutions Passed at a Meeting of the Citizens Committee for the Removal of Camp Polk Prison held at 8:00 o’clock, P.M., 19 July 1960”, Luther H. Hodges, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1960, Prisons-Polk Prison Complaints, State Archives (quotation).

forth resolution expressed the committee's appreciation for the support they received from the public and from the Democratic gubernatorial candidates. In the same resolution, the Committee because of Democratic gubernatorial nominee Terry Sanford's commitment to remove the prison "urge[d] forthright action [in removing Polk] in order to save time and money." The final resolution implored "all public officials, civic organizations and interested citizens of Raleigh and Wake County to exert every effort for the early removal of this prison."¹¹¹

As the 1960s wore on, Polk Prison did not close. Rather, it evolved into a correctional institution for youthful male offenders with an emphasis on vocational training and education. It would be another three decades before the facility was relocated. The youth facility represented in some respects a clean start, but it soon became a blight on the community.

¹¹¹ "Resolutions Passed at a Meeting of the Citizens Committee for the Removal of Camp Polk Prison held at 8:00 o'clock, P.M., 19 July 1960", Luther H. Hodges, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1960, Prisons-Polk Prison Complaints, State Archives (quotation).

Chapter VII

Polk Youth Center

Polk Youth Center or Polk Youth Institution (the names are interchangeable) operated in Raleigh until 1997 when the facility was moved to the Butner community in Granville County. The term “youth center” suggests that the place was a recreation hall for schoolkids. It was in fact a medium security prison for young male offenders. When it opened Polk Youth Center’s objective was “to give many young men a chance of a lifetime to participate in a real rehabilitation program—to learn a trade—so they may become community assets instead of a threat to the public and a drain upon society.” In February 1964 Prison Commission Chairman Linn D. Garibaldi stated that “the Polk Youth Center is going to be a model for the nation.” The facility never completely lived up to these high expectations. By the 1990s Polk was described “as a hellhole where prisoners can’t escape sexual assaults, razor slashings and attacks by homemade blackjacks.” When the prison moved in 1997, few were sad to see it leave. In February 2001 the Department of Correction conveyed the old prison to the Department of Cultural Resources for use by the North Carolina Museum of Art. The land transfer offered the promise of turning a blight on the Raleigh landscape into a place of beauty and culture. It would be a place far removed from Polk’s history.¹¹²

The 1959 murder of Trent Ragland by a recently released Polk inmate intensified efforts by local residents to have Polk Prison relocated. The violent actions of Polk

¹¹² Minutes, Prison Commission, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1962, Prison System-Minutes of Meetings, State Archives (quotation); Minutes, February 20, 1964, N.C. Prison Commission, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1964, Prison Dept.-Prison Commission Minutes, State Archives (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), May 13, 1993 (quotation); Gywnn T. Swinson to Theodis Beck and Lisbeth C. Evans, February 7, 2001, Department of Cultural Resources Files, copy of letter in author’s possession.

Prison escapee Robert Tyson only months later increased those efforts, but his rampage also served as the catalyst leading to the conversion of Polk from an adult male prison to a vocational and educational training center for young male offenders. On March 24, 1960, Tyson walked away from his job at Polk's slaughterhouse and raped and murdered Sarah Bunn Farnell, wife of Polk prison steward Clyde Farnell, at the family's home about one hundred yards from the slaughterhouse (See Appendix HH). In the past Tyson had done odd jobs and brought meat scraps for the Farnell's dogs. On April 2 Tyson raped two more women in the Falls of the Neuse area. Tyson eluded law enforcement officials for two weeks. National Guardsmen were called out to help in the search for the fugitive. On April 8 guardsmen found Tyson's body. He had taken his own life "by sticking the muzzle of a stolen double-barrel shotgun in his mouth and pulling the trigger."¹¹³

Tyson's escape and his violent rampage produced a firestorm of outrage, leading to swift action by government officials. Ruth Duval, who employed a claw hammer to chase Lloyd B. Walker (Trent Ragland's murderer) from her home, said, "Move it, I say, move it, before they kill a dozen more." Mrs. Tom Byrd told the *News and Observer* that "many in her neighborhood . . . [were] . . . afraid to leave their homes." Several pointed out that the Prison Department had not kept its promise of keeping a better watch on the prisoners after the Ragland murder. Director W. F. Bailey on March 25 fired Polk's superintendent "because he had been allowing Tyson to take dog food to the Farnell home." On April 1 new Prison Department Director George Randall stated that prisoners

¹¹³ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), March 25, 1960; *Raleigh Times*, April 5, 1960; "Statement of the Free Citizens of the Camp Polk Prison Community in Answer to N.C. Prison Commission Proposals to Perpetuate Camp Polk as a Youth Rehabilitation Center," August 26, 1960, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), April 9, 1960 (quotation);

who had committed serious sex crimes would no longer be held in minimum-security prisons and that more security fencing and guards would be placed at Polk. By April 6 seven prisoners had been transferred to Central Prison and all of the buildings except the slaughterhouse had been fenced.¹¹⁴

On April 5, 1960, a powerful voice stepped into the debate about Polk. On that day, Democratic gubernatorial candidate Terry Sanford released a press statement:

Camp Polk should be moved immediately. If it hasn't been moved it will be the first thing I do. There is no reason why any prison camp of this type should be located in a heavily populated area, and it is outrageous that one should be located where repeated attacks have been made upon the residents of that area.

Today, in Northern Wake County, women and children are traveling with guns. Families are frightened in their own homes. This situation cannot be tolerated in North Carolina.

In a May 25, 1960, reply to a letter from the Citizens Committee for the Removal of Camp Polk Prison (cited hereafter as Citizens Committee), Sanford reiterated his view that Polk should be moved and that a prison like Polk should not be in a residential area.¹¹⁵

By August Sanford had modified his stance on Polk. That month he received a thirteen page statement from the Citizens Committee and a request for a meeting. In a letter sent to Citizens Committee Chairman Marion B. Medlin on August 29, Sanford wrote:

¹¹⁴ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), March 25, 1960 (quotation); *News and Observer*, April 2, 1960 and April 6, 1960.

¹¹⁵ "Statement by Terry Sanford [Polk Prison and Robert Tyson]," April 5, 1960, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation); *Raleigh Times*, April 5, 1960; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), April 6, 1960; Terry Sanford to Marion B. Medlin, May 25, 1960, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives.

However, as you know, I am deeply interested in the Camp Polk situation; and I feel the dangers involved in having adult prisoners there are going to be removed, regardless of the methods used.

Sanford did not address the request for a meeting with committee members, but he said was on the road eighteen hours a day and asked the committee to keep him advised. He also stated, "I am counting on your support of the straight-Democratic ticket in this November election."¹¹⁶

On August 13 the *News and Observer* revealed that the Prison Commission planned to remake Polk Prison "into a vocational and educational center for youthful offenders." Converting Polk was part of a broader plan to change the state's prison system. The announcement amounted to policy shift for state prison officials who earlier had expressed interest in relocating Polk. Prison Department Director George Randall said, "We have made an earnest effort to find a suitable site for the relocation of Camp Polk." A site between Umstead State Park and RDU airport had been considered but was rejected due to the expected growth of Raleigh. Another site thirty-three miles from Raleigh was deemed not isolated enough, yet too far away for economical transportation of prisoners to and from their jobs in the capital city. Plans called for the youth center to consolidate 650 male inmates between ages fourteen and twenty-one in one central facility instead of having them at seven camps working on roads. The facility would require only 150 acres of Polk's total of 521 acres, using only the fenced-in areas.

Randall boasted about the industrial training objectives for the youth center:

¹¹⁶ "Statement of the Free Citizens of the Camp Prison Community in Answer to N.C. Prison Commission Proposals to Perpetuate Camp Polk as a Youth Rehabilitation Training Center," August 26, 1960, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation); Terry Sanford to Marion B. Medlin, August 29, 1960, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961 (Camp Polk), State Archives (quotation).

The industrial area will be developed to provide a program of work, general and vocational education, and training calculated to stop the downhill plunge of these boys toward confirmed criminality and start them uphill toward useful, citizenship.

Randall contended that the Prison Department would save \$50,000 a year by housing youthful offenders in one unit and that “the ‘proper and superior use’ of Camp Polk facilities . . . [would] . . . save the State ‘several millions of dollars.’”¹¹⁷

The announcement about converting Polk to a youth center did not sit well with the Citizens Committee. In the detailed statement the Citizens Committee sent to Sanford in late August, they strongly opposed the conversion. Their statement read in part:

The proposal to bring youthful offenders to the Camp Polk prison is intolerable and cannot be accepted by the community. The outrages that the community has suffered because of Camp Polk have created an indelible climate of fear in the community. It can only be erased by the complete removal of Camp Polk in its entirety.

On September 2 the Citizens Committee sent a follow-up letter to Sanford. The Committee, taking note of an earlier effort to close Polk, wrote, “Ours is merely the continuation of this movement for it was commenced in the early 1920s” (See Chapter Six). Members stated, “During the past year we have been completely disregarded and to the extent possible, ignored.” The Citizens Committee thanked Sanford for his efforts and asked him “to once again state your position in this matter in such fashion as you may choose so the Prison Commission will have to face the realities of the situation.”¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 13, 1960 (quotation), April 2, 1960, and July 1, 1960; “Resolutions Passed at a Meeting of the Citizens Committee for the Removal of Camp Polk Prison held at 8:00 O’clock, P.M., 19 July 1960”, Luther H. Hodges, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1960, Prisons-Polk Prison Complaints, State Archives.

¹¹⁸ “Statement of the Free Citizens of the Camp Prison Community in Answer to N.C. Prison Commission Proposals to Perpetuate Camp Polk as a Youth Rehabilitation Training Center,” August 26, 1960, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation); Marion Medlin to Terry Sanford, September 2, 1960, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation).

In a press conference on January 13, 1961, days after his inauguration, Governor Sanford gave tentative endorsement to the idea of converting Polk to a vocational training school because it “might be the ‘best solution’ to the controversy of the use of the facility.” The governor reiterated his campaign promise to “remove the dangerous situation,” but he qualified the statement indicating that he never meant for the buildings to me abandoned. On January 16 WRAL editorialist Jesse Helms entered the debate on Polk:

We do not wish to be unduly critical of Governor Sanford, but we believe it appropriate to suggest that the Governor owes the residents of the Camp Polk area a much better explanation than the one he voiced Friday [January 13] at his press conference.

Helms went on to recount the problems associated with Polk and to accuse Sanford of changing his mind about removing Polk. Helms ended the editorial by saying:

Still, it would seem the part of wisdom for the Governor to check back with all of the people to whom he has made promises. If he cannot fulfill the promises, he should say so—and why, and not wait until press conferences.

We do not accuse the Governor of bad faith, but we do suggest that good judgment would indicate the necessity of his further explaining a position in January that seems so different from a promise that sounded unequivocal in May.¹¹⁹

Chairman Medlin of the Citizens Committee sent another letter to Sanford on February 10 after the governor’s implicit endorsement of the Prison Commission’s plan to convert Polk. Medlin told Sanford, “Various members of our committee who supported you in your three campaigns found it difficult to comprehend your recently announced position.” He continued, “We urge you to use all the power of your high

¹¹⁹ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), January 14, 1961 (quotation); “Viewpoint #39—January 16, 1961,” attached to a letter from Robert L. Thompson to Terry Sanford, January 25, 1961, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation).

office as the Governor of the State of North Carolina to remove Camp Polk Prison as you promised to do.”¹²⁰

Governor Sanford then took steps to clarify his position on Polk. On February 13 he released a press statement in response to the February 10 letter that he had received from Medlin and the Citizens Committee. Medlin had released the letter to the press. Sanford replied in regards to the letter, “This is the first time I have heard from this group directly since being in a position to do something about the matter.” Sanford stated that he only meant to remove the dangerous felons but that he “never intended to give the impression” that he endorsed demolition of the buildings. The governor pointed out:

I had thought the suggestion that Camp Polk be used as a school for industrial training for the higher type of youthful offenders would be about as harmless as a use as we could devise. The prisoners would not be out of the building and it would be an entirely different kind of operation.

Sanford indicated that he was unsure “what the citizens group wants” but that he welcomed their input. Sanford referred to his April 5, 1960, statement to back up his position.¹²¹

During a February 17 meeting with the Prison Commission, Sanford outlined his views on the Polk situation, admitting, “I am afraid that we have not made our position entirely clear about the Camp Polk matter.” The governor called the youth center plan “an ideal solution,” but he stated that a misunderstanding existed about the youth center being a minimum-security prison. He concluded by saying:

It is not our plan to make this a youthful offenders camp. It is our intention to make an industrial school with maximum security provisions.

¹²⁰ Marion Medlin to Terry Sanford, February 10, 1961, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation).

¹²¹ Untitled Press Statement (Response to Marion Medlin’s letter of February 10, 1961), February 13, 1961, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation), *News and Observer* (Raleigh), February 14, 1961.

Prisoners will not be allowed outside the installation. It will be adequately guarded. Those prisoners sent to this school will be carefully screened. They will be of the highest type individual. They will have the added incentive of being part of a progressive program which holds hope for their future development and by the very nature of this would not be the type of people inclined to try to escape.¹²²

The attempts to clarify his position notwithstanding, the Citizens Committee sent Sanford a strongly worded letter on February 28 indicating that they had been told by Hugh Cannon, assistant to the governor, that the governor would meet with them. Cannon also told them that Sanford was “supporting Mr. Randall and the Prison Commission in the move to convert Camp Polk to a Youthful Offender Rehabilitation Training Center.” The Citizens Committee told Sanford that “the vigil has not ended, . . . [and] . . . [w]e are the ones that have lived and are living with the terror generated by the murder of Trent Ragland . . . and the rape-murder of Mrs. Sarah Bunn (Sally) Farnell”. They were not consoled by the fact that only youthful offenders would be placed at Polk and provided the governor with a list recent crimes committed by youthful offenders. The Citizens Committee stressed that Polk was in the wrong place with the residences, churches, schools, Meredith College, and the North Carolina State College Faculty Center nearby, They also pointed out that the growth expected to occur once the proposed highway was built to connect Raleigh to the Research Triangle was another reason for the prison to be relocated. They closed by asking that Polk be not used for any kind of prison and saying:

We ask only that we be given relief from this terror that grips us. WE HAVE HAD OUR SHARE! Wake County has more than its proportionate share of the State’s prison population.

¹²² Untitled Typed Notes, “Governor Sanford today expressed his ideas about the Camp Polk situation. . . .” February 18, 1961, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation).

Along with this letter, the Citizens Committee sent the governor a copy of his May 25, 1960, letter and an article from the April 5, 1960, *Raleigh Times*, which stated Sanford backed removal of Polk Prison.¹²³

Some powerful voices expressed their disagreement with the prison system's idea for a youth center. On March 25, 1961, Edwin B. Jeffress, Jr., former journalist, legislator, and chairman of the State Highway and Public Works Commission, sent Sanford a letter suggesting that "the whole body be transferred to State College; where it may be available [*sic*] for educational and other government uses." He believed State College would need the land in long run since it was growing. Jeffress, a member of the Commission to Study the Prison Situation in North Carolina during the 1931 General Assembly, wrote, "The purpose for which Camp Polk was established was noble. But that the theory has not worked out." The governor responded that "we are interested in seeing that this property is used to the best advantage of the entire State as a youthful offenders' training center." In April the Executive Committee of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina asked for the removal of Polk because of its proximity to Meredith College which was planning to expand. They also foresaw problems arising once road construction in the area was completed. The Executive Committee expressed its strong opposition saying:

We are especially apprehensive of efforts to convert Camp Polk into a center for youthful offenders. Presuming the prison's population under such a plan would be male, it is easy to see that the side-by-side existence of Meredith College and the prison population would be highly incompatible, and that it would pose an actual hazard to young women on the college campus.

¹²³ Citizens Committee for the Removal of Camp Polk Prison to Terry Sanford, February 28, 1961, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation).

Sanford responded that “an industrial training school, with top security measures” was the best for the state. He also said, “There is no way we can move the buildings and their value is around \$2,000,000.” The Baptist State Convention did not give up easily.

Baptist State Convention President Charles B. Deane sent a telegraph to the governor in early June 1961 saying, “We will be very grateful for [sic] consideration correcting a serious situation.”¹²⁴

The governor did hear from ordinary citizens regarding the Polk debate. Mrs. Willard Moss Connelly of Raleigh told the governor that it would be unfair for the residents near Polk to impose their will on the taxpayers in having the prison moved and these people knew they were moving near a prison that had been there for forty years. She stated, “I do not feel that we elderly residents, or the younger residents, should be forced to pay to get others out of the dilemma they deliberately got themselves into.” Seventy-four-year-old Mrs. W. H. Doyle who lived near Polk told Sanford, “I would like to see the camp replaced with a trade school or technical high school. . . . I believe we should train our high school graduates before they get into trouble.”¹²⁵

At a March 6 news conference, Sanford repeated his support for the youth center, indicating that no one had offered money for the Polk property and that “it might not be wise to sell the land anyway.” Nevertheless, Sanford also did say “the decision

¹²⁴ William S. Powell, ed. *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, vol. 3 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 275-276; E. B. Jeffress to Terry Sanford, March 25, 1961, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation); Terry Sanford to E. B. Jeffress, April 18, 1961, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation); Nane Starnes and Charles B. Deane to Terry Sanford, April 14, 1961, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation); Terry Sanford to Nane Starnes, April 26, 1961, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation); Charles B. Deane to Terry Sanford, June 2, 1961, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation).

¹²⁵ Mrs. Willard Moss Connelly to Terry Sanford, February 17, 1961, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation); Mrs. W. H. Doyle to Terry Sanford, February 21, 1961, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation).

[regarding the youth center] is no way ‘irrevocable,’ if someone comes up with a better suggestion.” The Citizens Committee seized on the words that they saw as opening offered by the governor. In a March 8 letter to Sanford, the Citizens Committee offered to find a solution to the problem that “would not cause a loss investment for the tax payers of the State.” They offered to help promote the property to seriously interested buyers. By March 22 Sanford’s legislative counsel J. William Copeland had received word that the Citizens Committee, members of which were going to appear before the Appropriations Committee, had a letter from Sanford that stated he “will remove Camp Polk in its entirety.” In a memorandum to Sanford, Copeland said, “I assume that they are bluffing.” However, he wanted to “know what the record will disclose on this subject.” In the end, the record showed that Governor was a backer of Polk Youth Center.¹²⁶

Because of the Prison Department’s effort to change Polk, Director George Randall appeared before the Joint Appropriations Committee of the House and Senate regarding the proposal to make Polk a vocational training center of youthful offenders. A legislative subcommittee visited Polk; they unanimously endorsed the youth center proposal. Later the proposal passed the Appropriation Committee and the General Assembly. In a meeting with the Prison Commission, Randall told them that money for the youth center had to come from selling Polk land or other sources or the youth center idea had to be abandoned. The youth center needed around \$500,000. Responsibility for the land sale came under the Department of Administration. In June 1962 Meredith

¹²⁶ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), March 7, 1961 (quotation); Marion Medlin to Terry Sanford, March 8, 1961, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation); Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation).

College offered to lease fifty-six acres of Polk land at \$5,000 a year for ten years with an option to purchase at \$160,000 at any time during the lease period. The Commission turned down the offer. Lashley-Austin, Inc. proposed to purchase this land “located at the northeast quadrant of Wade Avenue Extension and the western bypass beltline” for \$152,449. The Commission passed a motion recommending that the governor and Council of State approve the sell of the fifty-six acres to Lashley-Austin, Inc. Yet, by August Director Randall “informed the Commission that ways had been found to obtain the money to complete the Training School at Polk Prison;” therefore, he recommended that the Commission “withdraw its request that the Department of Administration sell the surplus land at Polk Prison.” The Commission concurred with the recommendation. Nevertheless, Meredith College did purchase fifty-six acres of Polk land “east of the beltline” in 1963 or 1964.¹²⁷

With Polk being converted from an adult prison to a facility that emphasized vocational training, the state had to make changes to the aging prison. To house the adult prisoners being transferred, the 1961 General Assembly approved the construction of a 400-man facility at Central Prison. Buildings were erected at Polk for classroom and vocational uses (See Appendices NN, OO, and WW). At the December 9, 1963, Prison Commission meeting, Director Randall told the Commission that:

¹²⁷ Minutes, February 22, 1962, Prison Commission, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1962, Prison System-Minutes of Meetings, State Archives; Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1961, Camp Polk, State Archives (quotation); Minutes, July 12, 1962, Prison Commission, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1962, Prison System-Minutes of Meetings, State Archives (quotation); W. Herbert Weatherman to Terry Sanford, June 13, 1962, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, Press Secretary’s General Files, 1961-1964, Polk Prison; Minutes, November 9, 1962, Prison Commission, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1962, Prison System-Minutes of Meetings, State Archives (quotation); Minutes, December 9, 1963, Prison Commission, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1964, Prison Dept.-Prison Commission Minutes, State Archive (quotation).

Polk Prison is being converted into a vocational and educational center for felons between the ages of 16 and 21. These inmates were formerly housed in felon youthful offender units throughout the state where they were employed in road work. Ninety per cent of these inmates are school dropouts. Since Highway labor needs are decreasing, we have started moving these youthful offenders to this center in an effort to prepare them for release and make them better equipped for employment which will prevent many of them from re-entering prison. He explained that the Department of Public Instruction, Mr. Lee Bounds, and the Institute of Government have worked closely with us in developing a wonderful program.

In early December 1963 youthful offenders began to move into Polk Youth Center, and by early January 1964 the facility had 300 inmates. By June 1964 Polk had about 450 prisoners, 400 under age twenty-one and fifty adults who handled maintenance and cooking. In addition to providing vocational and educational training, Polk inmates worked for Prison Enterprises at the facility. The new emphasis on training and rehabilitation did not immediately impress some prisoners. In January 1964 the first inmates escaped from Polk Youth Center by climbing over two barbed wire topped fences. They were captured about twelve hours after their escape.¹²⁸

In 1964 and 1965 the Prison Commission and newspapers emphasized the potential that Polk offered for young males (See Appendix LL). In June 1964 the *News and Observer* reported that the inmates as students were “eager and well-disciplined”.

They learned in modern classrooms taking courses in science, math, and social studies

¹²⁸ Minutes, April 11, 1962, Prison Commission, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1962, Prison System-Minutes of Meetings, State Archives; *North Carolina Department of Correction, Division of Prisons: Polk Youth Institution*, 1993; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), May 9, 1993; Kimley-Horn and Associates, “Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, Polk Youth Center Property, 1900 Blue Ridge Road, Raleigh, North Carolina”(report provided to Research Branch, North Carolina Division of Archives and History by Kimley-Horne and Associates, written April 2001), 4-5; Minutes, December 9, 1963, Prison Commission, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1964, Prison Dept.-Prison Commission Minutes, State Archives (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), January 9, 1964; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), June 28, 1964; *State of North Carolina, The Budget*, Vol. 1: “A” *Recommendations, For the Biennium July 1, 1965, to June 30, 1967, Fiscal Years 1965-66 and 1966-67*, 1964, 164.

from ten college-educated teachers (See Appendix KK). Fifteen inmates obtained their high school diplomas in Polk's first graduating class. *Raleigh Times* reporter Nick Elliott said that "what makes Polk unique is a sort of heavy-handed compassion," adding, "still, a tour through Polk is a sad experience. . . . A prison camp is never home. It is bars, a bunk and plain food" (See Appendix MM). Polk Youth Center was to provide guidance and compassion to the young men. According to Elliott, Polk in some respects was like other prisons:

But at Polk there is a difference. As a teacher there put it, "There is nothing more rewarding than to take one of these kids, get him motivated and watch him try to go ahead and make something of himself."

By January 1965, another twenty-nine inmates had received their high school diplomas at Polk.¹²⁹

Inmates could learn skills to become electricians, carpenters, and bricklayers. They also could acquire skills in repairing automobiles, lawn mowers, and appliances (See Appendices LL). Polk had an office machine repair shop and a mattress factory. It produced floor-sweeping compound for public schools. Polk transported inmates to work at the meat processing plant in Butner. In 1965, the Prison Commission was boastful of one of Polk's industries:

At Polk Youth Center we have a woodworking plant where we manufacture specialized wood items, laboratory furniture, cabinets, and refinish a good deal of school furniture. We can take school or college furniture . . . refinish it, and put it back in good workable condition for about 30% of the purchase price of new furniture. That has been real

¹²⁹ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), June 28, 1964 (quotation); Minutes, July 30, 1964, Prison Commission, Terry Sanford, Governors Papers, General Correspondence, 1964, Prison Dept.-Prison Commission Minutes, State Archives; "Education in N.C. Prisons: Reprints from Newspaper Articles," ca. 1964-1965, Reference Vertical Files, Prisons-North Carolina, State Library of North Carolina (quotation); *Charlotte Observer*, January 3, 1965.

popular with many of the State institutions and public schools [See Appendices LL and VV].¹³⁰

Along with the move to provide young offenders with an education and vocational skills, the Department of Correction (as the Prison Department was known after August 1, 1967) adopted new way of dealing with youthful offenders. The Department of Correction administered a “Youth Complex” that by 1968 consisted of Polk Youth Center, Harnett Youth Center, Johnston Youth Center, Umstead Youth Center, and Goldsboro Youth Center. In March 1967 Youth Complex Commander Harold Lilly told the Prison Commission about how youthful offenders were processed:

He explained that all youthful offender felons are now being received at the Polk Youth Center and all youthful misdemeanants at the Harnett Youth Center for reception and reclassification processing, and initial orientation. A treatment program is planned for each inmate. This is done in a manner to minimize disruption if the inmate is moved. An effort is being made to establish in the Youth Complex programs emphasizing rehabilitation and treatment. Both inmates and personnel have been receptive to those programs.¹³¹

In August 1967 the General Assembly enacted legislation to help in the rehabilitation of youthful offenders by “preventing, as far as possible, their association during their terms of imprisonment with older and more experienced criminals.” The law was designed to help in their rehabilitation “by closer coordination of the activities of sentencing, training in custody, conditional release, and final discharge.” Under this act youthful offenders could be released conditionally after only serving thirty days following approval by the State Board of Parole. It gave judges “the prerogative to send

¹³⁰ *Charlotte Observer*, January 3, 1965; Minutes, September 11, 1965, Prison Commission, Department of Correction, Secretary’s Office, Board of Correction File, 1957-1976, State Archives (quotation).

¹³¹ *State of North Carolina, The Budget*, Vol. 1: “A” *Budget Recommendations, For the Biennium July 1, 1969, to June 30, 1971, Fiscal Years 1969-70 and 1970-71*, 1968, 164; Minutes, March 31, 1967, Prison Commission, Department of Correction, Secretary’s Office, Board of Correction File, 1957-1976, State Archives (quotation).

minors to the Polk Youth Center in Raleigh or the Harnett Youth Center in Lillington” and provided psychiatric treatment if necessary. Prisoners demonstrating an inability to be rehabilitated could be dismissed from the program.¹³²

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Even after the major 1963 additions at Polk, construction work of some kind continued throughout the decade. By 1967 two temporary wooden guard towers, outdoor basketball courts, and a 50 x 150 concrete pad on the athletic field had been constructed (See Appendices NN and OO). Prison officials also changed a residence at Polk into a staff officer’s quarters in 1967. In 1968, Polk acquired a prefabricated spray booth to replace equipment in the Industrial Education Shop prohibited by the Department of Insurance following a fire (See Appendix OO).¹³³

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During the 1960s prison officials granted access to the land that once made up the prison farm. The Raleigh-Durham Radio Control Club leased seven acres for a landing strip for their flying model airplanes and North Carolina State University leased forty acres for research and food production during the decade and operated a truck driving school on Polk’s property (See Appendix NN)). In December 1966, an idea surfaced to develop “at or near Polk Youth Center a training academy that could serve several State agencies.” Prison officials never implemented this idea. In October 1967 the North

¹³² *Session Laws of North Carolina*, 1967, c. 996, s. 10 (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 11, 1967 (quotation).

¹³³ K. B. Bailey to H. M. Lilly, October 17, 1966, Department of Correction, Director’s Office, Subject Files, 1960-1968, State Archives; J. C. Edwards to H. M. Lilly, March 31, 1967, October 2, 1967, and October 25, 1967, Department of Correction, Director’s Office, Subject Files, 1960-1968, State Archives; R. T. Parrot to J. H. Thompson, November 1, 1967, Director’s Office, Subject Files, 1960-1968, State Archives; Charles G. Wilson to Robert G. Bourne, April 3, 1968, Director’s Office, Director’s Subject Files, 1960-1968, State Archives; Wayne Corpening to V. L. Bounds, July 21, 1968, Department of Correction, Director’s Office, Director’s Subject Files, 1960-1968, State Archives.

Carolina National Guard received permission to store 400 utility trailers and 200 jeeps of Polk property (See Appendix NN). In February 1968, the National Guard requested from the Commission of Correction (formerly Prison Commission) a part of the Polk land “to be used for a proposed military park.” In December of that year the Division of Motor Vehicles obtained ten acres of Polk land. In May 1969 the Commission of Correction agreed to negotiate the sell of twenty-one acres between Old Trinity Road (Reedy Creek Road) and Blue Ridge Road (site of the slaughterhouse) to the North Carolina Capital Planning Commission for a warehouse to be built for State agencies. In December 1969 the Commission recommended to the Department of Administration the sale of twelve acres at Old Trinity Road and Blue Ridge Road to the Department of Agriculture for the construction of an Animal and Poultry Disease Diagnostic Laboratory.¹³⁴

A major issue involving Polk’s land concerned the construction of the NC 54 freeway (now Wade Avenue Extension/I-40) from Raleigh to the Research Triangle. To build an interchange for the freeway at Blue Ridge Road, the Highway Commission needed to close a road that provided access to the rear of Polk, to the North Carolina State University Truck Drivers’ School and the Highway Commission’s road oil lot (See Appendix NN). The Highway Commission wanted to move the road that ran along Polk’s southern boundary further north. The Commission of Correction in February 1968

¹³⁴ Minutes, September 30, 1966, Prison Land Committee, Department of Correction, Secretary’s Office Board of Correction File, 1957-1976, State Archives; Minutes, February 16, 1968, Commission of Correction, Department of Correction, Secretary’s Office, Board of Correction File, 1957-1976, State Archives (quotation); W. H. Webb, Jr. to V. L. Bounds, March 11, 1968, Department of Correction, Director’s Office, Director’s Subject Files, 1960-1968; Minutes, December 15, 1966, Prison Commission Minutes, Department of Correction, Secretary’s Office, Board of Correction File, 1957-1976, State Archives (quotation); Charles G. Wilson to Colonel Thomas B. Longest, October 12, 1967, Department of Correction, Director’s Office, Director’s Subject Files, 1960-1968, State Archives; Charles G. Wilson to William B. Ray, December 30, 1968, Department of Correction, Director’s Office, Director’s Subject Files, 1960-1968, State Archives; Minutes, May 16, 1969, Commission of Correction, Department of Correction, Secretary’s Office, Board of Correction File, 1957-1976, State Archives; Minutes, December 17, 1969, Commission of Correction, Department of Correction, Secretary’s Office, Board of Correction File, 1957-1976.

decided to withhold a decision pending more study. The action delayed approval of the freeway project by the United States Bureau of Public Roads and compromised a promise made by Governor Dan Moore to IBM officials that the freeway would be completed in 1969 or early 1970. By May 1968 the Highway Commission and the Department of Correction came to an understanding regarding the freeway interchange and the access road. Correction sold forty-six acres for construction of the interchange while the Highway Commission sold about eight acres including the road oil lot to Correction. The current access road was to be used until freeway construction necessitated its relocation. The Highway Commission was to build a temporary road and the necessary security fencing (See Appendix NN). With the construction of the freeway, Polk also lost the superintendent's house because it was within the freeway's right-of-way.¹³⁵

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Despite the optimism associated with the new focus, Polk Youth Center began to have the type of problems experienced by other correctional facilities. On the evening of June 21, 1967, two inmates tried to escape as a group was being called in from intramural sports activities at the recreation field. Both made it over the first fence, but one was shot as he went over the barbed wire of the second fence. The inmate, who was seriously wounded, fell between the fences. The other inmate, who sustained superficial wounds, made it over the second fence but was recaptured within fifteen minutes. The seriously wounded inmate was taken to the hospital at Central Prison and was expected to recover

¹³⁵ *Raleigh Times*, February 28, 1968; W. H. Webb, Jr. to Joseph M. Hunt, Jr., February 21, 1968, Department of Correction, Director's Office, Director's Subject Files, 1960-1968; W. F. Babcock to V. L. Bounds, May 1, 1968, Department of Correction, Director's Office, Director's Subject Files, 1960-1968; Charles G. Wilson to V. L. Bounds, May 5, 1968, Department of Correction, Director's Office, Director's Subject Files, 1960-1968, State Archives; Charles G. Wilson to H. M. Lilly, May 13, 1968, Department of Correction, Director's Office, Director's Subject Files, 1960-1968, State Archives; Charles G. Wilson to C. J. Baldwin, May 13, 1968, Department of Correction, Director's Office, Director's Subject Files, 1960-1968, State Archives.

satisfactorily while the other one was treated under local anesthetic. On February 15, 1968, Polk experienced an outbreak of food poisoning. On that day 328 inmates and employees, out of a total of 425 eating lunch, suffered sickness. All but two of the affected inmates were able to go to work the next day.¹³⁶

By the summer of 1966 Polk was again being considered for relocation. In July 1966 local residents along with State Senator Ruffin Bailey and Meredith College President Carlyle Campbell met with Correction Director Lee. Bounds to demand that Polk be moved because of recent inmate escapes. Bounds agreed that that the youth center should be moved, but he also responded that the decision was up to the Commission of Correction and the General Assembly. Bounds said that Polk “is poorly located, strung out along a busy highway and being constantly encroached by the development of Raleigh.”¹³⁷

The Polk issue became more volatile in wake of the youth center being “branded as a place of rape and brutal homosexuality.” The accusations came before the State Advisory Budget Commission on August 18, 1966 as it was considering a request from the Department of Correction to build three 500-man institutions in eastern, piedmont, and western North Carolina. These new facilities were to be single cell instead of dormitory style. At the meeting Bounds “held up a sheaf of medical reports telling of young prisoners coming to Polk and being raped and infected with venereal disease.” On August 19 the *Raleigh Times* recorded that “a recent epidemic of gonorrhea indicated that prisoners have been forced into unnatural sex acts” at Polk. The newspapers also wrote that Bounds stated that “some of the victims ended up in the mental health unit at Central Prison.” Bounds placed part of the blame on the dormitory-style housing used in the

¹³⁶ H. M. Lilly to V. L. Bounds, June 23, 1967, Department of Correction, Director’s Office, Director’s Subject Files, 1960-1968, State Archives; R. J. Holloman to K. B. Bailey, February 2, 1968, Department of Correction, Director’s Office, Director’s Subject Files, 1960-1968, State Archives; “N.C. State Board of Health, Laboratory Division, Bacterial Examination of Food [Collected from N.C. Department of Correction],” February 19, 1968, attached to memorandum from R. J. Holloman to K. B. Bailey, February 2, 1968, Department of Correction, Director’s Office, Director’s Subject Files, 1960-1968, State Archives.

¹³⁷ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), July 6, 1966 (quotation).

prison system. After the disclosure about forced homosexual activity at Polk, Bounds personally believed that the youth center was going to be closed.¹³⁸

By December 1968 the Department of Correction was seriously considering relocating Polk. The Commission of Correction minutes from December 12, 1968, stated:

Governor [Dan] Moore had received a letter from the City of Raleigh stating that a resolution had been adopted by the City Council on September 3, 1968 requesting that the Department not relocate Polk Youth Center in the southeast quadrant of the City of Raleigh.

In 1969 the Department of Correction made another request for a replacement for Polk, but as the decade closed the facility remained.¹³⁹

As 1970 opened, Bounds provided the Commission of Correction with a detailed statement about the correctional services offered to children and youths who break the law. He stated that the Department of Correction received 2,000 offenders a year under twenty-one and that “[t]he average daily count of people under 21 in the Department’s custody exceeds two thousand.” This group made up twenty percent of the prison population. Most of these youthful offenders were between sixteen and twenty-one with eighteen being the average age. Bounds also reported that “at the beginning of 1970, the Department had custody of a girl and two boys under 20 years of age sentenced to die in Central Prison’s gas chamber.” Polk was the “facility for committed youth male felons who require a period of correctional treatment in medium security.” Correction in cooperation with the Department of Public Instruction’s Division of Vocational Rehabilitation offered vocational rehabilitation programs for physically and mentally

¹³⁸ *Raleigh Times*, August 18, 1966 (quotation) and August 19, 1966 (quotation).

¹³⁹ Minutes, December 12, 1968, Commission of Correction, Department of Correction, Secretary’s Office, Board of Correction File, 1957-1976, State Archives (quotation); Minutes, February 18, 1970, Commission of Correction, Department of Correction, Secretary’s Office, Board of Correction File, 1957-1976, State Archives.

challenged inmates at Polk and Harnett Youth Centers. The statement indicated that all inmates worked either part-time or full-time based on their correctional program with most being full-time workers who attended school at night or during their off-duty hours. The academic schools at Polk and Harnett used teachers with class "A" certificates. All inmates who needed it were "taught the fundamentals necessary to achieve at the fourth grade level." Some inmates proceeded through the twelfth grade level and obtained a "Diploma of High School Equivalency." Polk, Harnett, and Johnston Youth Centers taught vocational courses consisting of "auto mechanics, body and fender repair, brick masonry, electrical wiring and appliance service, electrical linesmanship, heavy equipment operation and maintenance, machine shop skills, office equipment maintenance and repair, printing, welding and woodworking." Inmates were assigned to vocational programs based on interest and aptitude.¹⁴⁰

By 1972 prison officials again were dealing with requests for former Polk land. In 1971 the General Assembly "authorized an expenditure for a Textbook, General Warehouse, and Motor Pool Facility." In April 1972 State Property Control and Construction Officer Carroll L. Mann requested an agreement with Correction on twenty-three acres. The site was located across from Polk at the intersection of Blue Ridge Road and Reedy Creek Road. At the May 19 Commission of Correction meeting, Bounds stated "that he did not favor approval of this request because it would create a parking problem at Polk and he did not feel the Commission should set a precedent where land is exchanged without compensation to the Department." The Commission concurred with Bounds. In June 1972, Mann came back with an offer that asked for only twelve acres

¹⁴⁰ "A Statement on the Correctional Services for Children and Youths," Minutes, February 18, 1970, Commission of Correction, Department of Correction, Secretary's Office, Board of Correction File, 1957-1976, State Archives (quotation).

and reserved one acre of this tract for Polk parking. The Department of Administration offered \$103,500 “for the purpose of compensation to the Department of Social Rehabilitation and Control.” (The functions of Correction briefly existed under a department by this name.) The Commission accepted the proposal. In 1973 the Council of State transferred to the Art Museum Building Commission 100 acres of Polk land for a new art museum.¹⁴¹

By the mid-to-late 1970s, Polk was again going through ups and down. The General Assembly in 1974 approved \$7.5 million for a Polk replacement to be constructed in Hillsborough. In February 1975 the Department of Correction expected to remain at Polk for three or four more years while the replacement facility was being built. However, other overcrowded prisons and a budget crisis led the General Assembly to use the money for improving other prisons. Two years later at an art museum fund-raising drive, Governor Jim Hunt told “museum backers he’ll do all he can to close Polk and to build a replacement somewhere else.” At the beginning of 1977, overcrowding had become an issue at Polk and Harnett Youth Centers. Both institutions, designed to hold a maximum of 909 inmates, contained nearly 1,500 inmates between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one. Governor Jim Hunt’s proposed budget for 1977-1979, included this about the crowded conditions:

¹⁴¹ Minutes, May 19, 1972, Commission of Correction, Department of Correction, Deputy Secretaries, Board of Correction Minutes, 1965-1976, State Archives (quotation); V. L. Bounds to Carroll L. Mann, Jr., May 26, 1972, Commission of Correction, Department of Correction, Deputy Secretaries, Board of Correction Minutes, 1965-1976, State Archives (quotation); Carroll L. Mann, Jr. to V. L. Bounds, June 20, 1972, Commission of Correction, Department of Correction, Deputy Secretaries, Board of Correction Minutes, 1965-1976, State Archives (quotation); V. L. Bounds to Carroll L. Mann, Jr., June 20, 1972, Commission of Correction, Department of Correction, Deputy Secretaries, Board of Correction Minutes, 1965-1976, State Archives; Minutes, August 4, 1972, Commission of Correction, Department of Correction, Deputy Secretaries, Board of Correction Minutes, 1965-1976, State Archives; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), May 9, 1993.

Because correctional authorities believe that young offenders offer the best chance of responding to rehabilitative measures, a high share of the divisions resources are concentrated in this program; however, overcrowding diminishes this effort, while increasing the threat to employees and inmates.¹⁴²

By this time, the Polk as well as the other four institutions holding youthful offenders—Harnett, Sandhills, Western Correctional, and Burke—changed instructional methods. Individualized learning was emphasized allowing “each resident to progress at the right speed.” The technique was used primarily on inmates “who are functioning on at least a sixth-grade level and are pursuing a GED certificate.” In addition, a program using federal funds helped inmates with learning disabilities; Correction tried to meet special education needs of inmates.¹⁴³

In February 1979 five inmates attempted to escape from the youth center. The group broke free from a guard as they were leaving an evening Bible study class and successfully scaled the inner fence. When the inmates refused to listen to a stop order and started scaling the second fence, the prison guards opened fire on them. Three of the five were wounded; none escaped.¹⁴⁴

During the 1980s, escapes continued to be a problem. In January 1980 two inmates attempted to escape but did not succeed; one was wounded by a guard and the second inmate quickly surrendered. Six months later, Polk dealt with an escape by two prisoners that obviously humiliated prison officials. While working on a state car at the vocational shop, two inmates “jumped in, started the car and rammed the locked inner

¹⁴² *News and Observer* (Raleigh), May 9, 1993 (quotation); Minutes, January 17, 1975, Board of Correction, Commission of Correction, Department of Correction, Deputy Secretaries, Board of Correction Minutes, 1965-1976, State Archives; *State of North Carolina, The Budget, 1977-1979*, 1977, I-37 (quotation).

¹⁴³ *State of North Carolina, The Budget, 1977-1979*, 1977, I-47.

¹⁴⁴ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), February 28, 1979.

and outer perimeter gates,” making their escape despite firing from guards. After going only two miles, the inmates ditched the car, but neither inmate had an opportunity to enjoy freedom. One inmate was caught the same day at the intersection of Lake Boone Trail and the Beltline. Authorities captured the second escapee at the same location the next day. In November 1988 two prisoners “escaped by crawling through an underground drain pipe.” Like their earlier counterparts, the inmates never had a chance to take pleasure in their freedom. Authorities captured one inmate at his parent’s home in the Hoke County town of Raeford. The other inmate, a convicted murderer, “was dropped off at the prison by his mother.”¹⁴⁵

Rather embarrassing and controversial situations came about in the 1980s with allegations of sexual abuse against prisoners. In 1982 a Wake County jury heard testimony from a Polk inmate charged with escape who stated he “feared being raped.” Jurors acquitted the inmate and met with prison officials “to voice their concerns.” That same year, a former inmate sued the Department of Correction in federal court charging prison officials with neglecting to protect him. As a prisoner, he had told prison officials about rape threats, however, he ended up being gang-raped by three fellow inmates. Correction settled the lawsuit in 1984 for \$20,000 and promised to reduce prison violence. In 1986 the State Bureau of Investigation was “looking into allegations of sexual offenses at Polk Youth Center.” The following year a former Polk guard received a five-year prison sentence for having sex with inmates.¹⁴⁶

In the 1980s Polk was hemmed in by the North Carolina Museum of Art, Interstate 40, and Blue Ridge Road. In 1983 the art museum, Polk’s newest neighbor,

¹⁴⁵ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), June 17, 1980 (quotation) and June 18, 1980; *Charlotte Observer*, November 27, 1988 (quotation).

¹⁴⁶ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), May 9, 1993 (quotation); *Charlotte Observer*, May 29, 1986 (quotation).

opened its new building. When the museum moved to its new location, “advocates of the site understood that the aging Polk eventually would be razed.” To server as a buffer, 600 pine and myrtle trees were planted between the museum and the prison. In July 1988, the General Assembly imposed a restriction on the art museum’s use of the land near Polk.

The restriction stated:

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the State land which lies beside the North Carolina Museum of Art and behind the Polk Youth Center, and which is bounded by the Raleigh Beltline on the east, Wade Avenue on the south, Blue Ridge Road on the west, and a northern boundary that is the extension of the current State land boundary beginning at the Raleigh Beltline and running generally westward to Blue Ridge Road between the Cross Country Transmission Line and the intersection of Myron Drive and Nancy Ann Drive, may not be used by the North Carolina Museum of Art until the Museum’s master plan for site development is presented to and expressedly approved by the General Assembly.¹⁴⁷

In 1988, artist Barbara Kruger, architects Laurie Hawkins and Henry Smith-Miller, and landscape architect Nicholas Quennell won a national competition sponsored by the art museum to produce a landscape master plan. Entitled “Imperfect Utopia: A Park for the New World” the plan proposed to “integrate art and nature and transfer art from the walls of the museum to the wilds around it.” The plan languished until Museum of Art Director Lawrence J. Wheeler and other staff members revived it in 1994. The first phase, added in 1996, included “a funky modernistic amphitheater set amid san serif letters that are 80 feet tall and that spell out ‘PICTURE THIS’”(See Appendix QQ). The

¹⁴⁷ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), May 9, 1993 and May 23, 1993 (quotation); *Session Laws of North Carolina, 1988*, c. 1100, s. 22 (quotation).

1988 restrictions were repealed when the General Assembly enacted legislation transferring the former youth center to the art museum in July 2000.¹⁴⁸

In 1987 the issue of relocating Polk again came up. In January 1987 Representative Anne C. Barnes, who served as the chairwoman of the House Correction Committee in the 1987 General Assembly, “urged the state to appraise the land around Polk Youth Center in Raleigh and consider selling the property and relocating the prison.” Her senate colleague David R. Parnell, who served as one of the vice-chairmen for the Senate Appropriations Committee also issued the same call to sell Polk’s land and move the prison. In February 1987 the Special Committee on Prisons issued their report to the General Assembly which recommended the hiring of a private company “to obtain a full appraisal of the land and buildings at Polk Youth Center to determine the best use and the highest market value.” It further suggested that the Attorney General’s Office perform a title search on Polk’s land. The Special Committee judged that an appraisal was necessary because increased commercial activity near Polk had caused land values to rise tremendously and because a appraisal of the youth center property had not been done recently. In justifying an appraisal of Polk, the Special Committee reasoned:

When providing for the needs of the prison population, it is important for the state to examine ways to most efficiently use its resources. In order to efficiently use its resources, however, the State must know the current value of its resources. Thus, there is a need for an appraisal to determine the best use and highest market value of the land and buildings of Polk Youth Center.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ *News and Observer*, (Raleigh), May 23, 1993, September 1, 1996 (quotation); and May 22, 1994 (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), June 16, 1996; *Session Laws of North Carolina, 2000*, c. 102, s. 3-4.

¹⁴⁹ *Charlotte Observer*, January 10, 1987 (quotation); *Journal of the House of Representatives of North Carolina*, 1987, 31; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), May 9, 1993; *Journal of the Senate of North Carolina*, 1987, 15; *Report of the Special Committee on Prisons. Report to the 1987 General Assembly of North Carolina*, 22.

The 1990s finally saw the demise of the venerable old Raleigh prison when a new institution also named Polk Youth Center opened in 1997 in Butner. However, the old prison did not die a quiet death; its last years were long, noisy, and violent. In 1990 Governor Jim Martin led reporters on a tour of Polk after holding a news conference to begin a \$200 million bond campaign for prisons that voters approved in November of that year. That same year the Martin administration adopted the Blue Ridge Road Area Master Plan, prepared for the Department of Administration, which urged the removal of Polk. In March 1991, Martin unveiled his proposal for using the bond money which called for construction of a “720 man medium-and close-security prison,” costing \$34.2 million to replace Polk. Prison officials wanted the new facility located in Wake County but also considered a site in Johnston County. In 1992, Secretary of Correction Lee Bounds presented a plan to spend the remaining \$87.5 million bond money that included a replacement for Polk containing 712 cells and priced at \$33.5 million. When Jim Hunt returned to the governor’s office in 1993, his administration decided to use the entire plan except a replacement for Polk. Hunt’s Secretary of Correction Franklin Freeman reallocated the \$33.5 million “with an emphasis on minimum-security prison space, including two work farms, a youth boot camp, and an additional dorm at Morrison Youth Institution.”¹⁵⁰

Polk increasingly made headlines because of the violence and terrible conditions in the prison. By May 1993 Polk had the distinction of being the most crowded prison among the state’s prison units holding at one time 750 inmates and the only one using triple bunking. That same month Polk inmates filed a lawsuit demanding that the prison population be cut in half and calling the institution “unfit for unhuman habitation.”

¹⁵⁰ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), May 9, 1993 (quotation), May 23, 1993, and March 22, 1991;.

Crowded conditions resulted in strained plumbing and electrical systems. The cafeteria operated twenty hours a day; inmates had only ten to fifteen minutes to eat. “Inoperable sinks, showers and toilets, and sewer lines that frequently back up” clearly made the situation worse. The inmates used open bathrooms, and the poor plumbing forced them to take cold showers. Their dorms had no air-conditioning. Polk contained the most violent segment of the prison population, males ages nineteen to twenty-one, which added to a volatile situation. In 1992 “correction officials logged 1,631 infractions . . . [at Polk] . . . about three a day or 2.5 an inmate for the year . . . [while the] . . . comparable rate at Central Prison was 1.1 infractions per inmate.” Racial conflict between white and black inmates added to the tensions (See Appendices RR, SS, and TT).¹⁵¹

Polk still served as a processing center for inmates before they were sent to their permanent assignment in the prison system; therefore, the average stay was only a few months. According to one inmate, in this situation the young men “continually tr[ie]d to establish their reputations that they are not to be messed with.” Inmates made homemade weapons “by dropping a lock into the toe of [a] sock . . . [or made] . . . a ‘shank,’ used for slicing other inmates, by attaching a razor blade to the ends of a toothbrush.” Inmates also used their fists. In this volatile mix, inmates complained that guards did not prevent or stop violence.¹⁵²

In October 1992 five inmates filed a lawsuit in federal court “alleging that conditions in Polk’s protective custody unit constitute[d] cruel and unusual punishment.” When an inmate for asked protective custody to protect him from being harmed at most prisons, he was placed in a single cell, so others could not harm him. However, at Polk,

¹⁵¹ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), May 9, 1993 (quotation), June 9, 1993 (quotation), June 13, 1993, and January 7, 1994.

¹⁵² *News and Observer* (Raleigh), May 9, 1993 (quotation) and June 9, 1993 (quotation).

the only single cell units were in the segregation unit (See Appendix SS). Those eighteen cells were “reserved for the most violent inmates and for defendants awaiting trial.” Polk placed inmates in a protective custody dormitory, known as N-dorm. N-dorm was far from being a safe place for “passive, physically weak, and victimized” inmates because it was available for any inmate who requested protective custody including aggressive inmates. In this dormitory, some inmates faced being cut with a razor or hit with a blackjack; others suffered sexual assaults. One inmate told this story of what happened to person in N-dorm:

[A prisoner] was jumped one time by practically the whole dorm and had his face smashed to the floor . . . He was taken to segregation, but was brought back to N-dorm two days later. The guards had to carry him back in because he braced his arms and legs on the bars so they couldn’t get him through the door.¹⁵³

N-dorm tended to be overwhelmingly white, the population of which included “aggressive inmates who just don’t want to live in lockup with black inmates,” as alleged by a prisoner’s lawsuit. Weaker inmates had to buy protection from stronger ones by giving them canteen money or sexual favors. Ironically, Polk became the first prison in the state system to stop the use of money by going to a cashless canteen in May 1991. The five inmates who filed the lawsuit were paid \$40,000 by the state in 1993. Due to the lawsuits, Polk’s superintendent was reassigned to another prison facility, and Correction Secretary Freeman committed to hiring additional guards and to take measures to protect prisoners.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), June 9, 1993 and May 9, 1993 (quotation).

¹⁵⁴ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), May 9, 1993 (quotation); *North Carolina Department of Correction, Division of Prisons, Polk Youth Center*, 1993; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), April 1, 1994 and June 9, 1993.

Unfortunately, the situation at Polk worsened. A riot occurred on New Year's Eve 1993 involving over 200 inmates. Accounts conflict as to whether or not the event was planned. It started shortly before midnight when inmates in one of the main building dormitories, who had been watching television, began smashing light fixtures and windows and turning over beds. One inmate claimed the riot was motivated because officials cut off the TV sets five minutes before the dropping of the ball in Times Square. Yet, a correctional officer insisted that the riot was planned. The disturbance spread to another dorm in the main building and eventually to every dorm in the 300-man building (See Appendices RR and TT). The *News and Observer* reported:

Officers abandoned an effort to control the inmates after 30 minutes. More than 200 inmates ran wild for two hours, many of them fighting with steel-toe boots, padlocks, table legs, straightened bed springs and pieces of glass.

In the 300-man dormitory, inmates tore out sinks and toilets, seized walkie-talkies and telephones, and damaged equipment in an administrative area. Thirty members of the Prison Emergency Response Team quelled the uprising, in which sixty inmates and one officer were injured. Most were treated at a triage station set-up by Wake Emergency Medical Services. Seventeen inmates, a majority of them white, went to Central Prison hospital. Officials said that the white inmates taken to the hospital "had been targeted by black inmates." Contradictions appeared about the seriousness of the injuries.

Superintendent George Currie said they were minor while two officers stated, "they watched helplessly outside the 300 Building as white inmates were severely beaten and stabbed." Currie had referred to the incident as "a New Year's celebration that got out of hand." A smaller uprising had taken place on New Year's Eve 1992 when a fight between two men erupted into an event that involved two dorms for about a three hour

span. One inmate was injured and fifteen others were transferred to other facilities because of the melee.¹⁵⁵

By mid-1993, with all the problems associated with the youth center, the debate over Polk once more sprang up. A former chairman of the homeowners association at nearby Meredith Woods said, “It [Polk] is unsightly, and we look forward to a happier use of that particular area.” Meredith Woods subdivision was located near the prison. Bryant Lindsey, former chief of programs development at the Department of Correction during Governor Martin’s administration, worked to have the prison closed and the land sold. Lindsey contented that “Polk detracts from the art museum . . . and we’ll never be able to turn the fairgrounds into a full-year, world-class attraction as long as Polk is there.” Selma Mayor Jay Creech wanted Polk moved to Johnston County because it would bring recession-proof jobs. An editorial in the May 13, 1993, *News and Observer* said the following about the prison:

Polk stands out because it occupies a prime chunk of land on Blue Ridge Road near the State Fairgrounds, the N.C. Museum of Art and Rex Hospital. Many would like to see it torn down for aesthetic reasons and because the land presumably could be put to better use. But there is nothing wrong with keeping prisons visible, both for the deterrent effect and as a reminder of where tax dollars are going.

In fact, Polk may be salvageable as a minimum-security unit close to work-release jobs. That change of mission could be accomplished without sinking large sums in renovations, which would be unwise. As for inmates prone to violence, whatever their age, Polk has proved itself grossly unsuited. They need to be confined where it’s not open season on other inmates—which means somewhere else.

This editorial continued, “Most prisoners eventually are released, and chances are those who had the misfortune to pass through Polk will be greater threats to society than when they went in.” This outcome was very different from the goal of the founders of the

¹⁵⁵ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), January 7, 1994 (quotation) and January 2, 1994.

youth center who had hoped to make inmates into assets for society and better men. In May 1993 *News and Observer* writer Chuck Twardy, in an article about Polk and the art museum contended that Polk was not a “cheerful welcome” for visitors coming to the art museum. He suggested the demolition of Polk and the transformation of Blue Ridge Road near the art museum, concluding that “we would all be better off without Polk there.”¹⁵⁶

Not every voice expressed a desire to see Polk moved. Blanche C. Haning, a NCSU professor and 1990 volunteer of the year of the prison system, argued that the prison population be reduced and conditions improved. Haning offered a variety of suggestions, such as updating the physical infrastructure, adding fans to the dining hall, designing better spaces for education and volunteer programs, moving storage buildings, and improving the grounds. In addition, she painted a more humane picture of the inmates saying:

The young men at Polk are not all horrible, incorrigible individuals. Some never had much of a chance. Some have made one mistake. Others have made many. Most are school dropouts.

Most succumbed to peer pressure to live in the fast lane, seeking happiness in the immediate pleasures of money, sex, drugs, and power. Many are not too different from other young men “on the street” who have not been caught and incarcerated. Many profoundly regret their crimes and the hurt that they have caused others. They want to be forgiven . . . They worry about how they will succeed in life with the stigmas of incarceration for a felonious crime. They worry about how they will deal with the temptations that await them when they return to society.

Haning believed that Raleigh and Polk could live together, noting “the realities of prison life don’t disappear by relocating them to distant sites.”¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), May 9, 1993 (quotation), May 13, 1993 (quotation), and May 23, 1993 (quotation).

¹⁵⁷ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), June 13, 1993 (quotation).

The final call as to whether to relocate Polk was up to the General Assembly. In 1993 legislators set in motion the relocation process. On July 1, 1993, the Senate-House Appropriations Subcommittee on justice and public safety voted unanimously to replace the youth center. In referring to the situation at Polk, Senator and committee co-chairman Fountain Odum stated, “This is an emergency situation[.] . . . We are going to find the money this year, one way or another.” The legislation to replace Polk was bogged down in a debate between the House and Senate on the best way to pay for it. The House wanted a replacement for Polk to come from the \$87.5 million left from the balance of \$200 million in bonds for prison and youth services facilities approved by voters in November 1990. The Senate wanted a new youth facility built from the capital budget and wanted a new prison processing center constructed using the bond money.¹⁵⁸

Governor Hunt and Correction Secretary Franklin Freeman also wished to see the prison processing center built. Freeman advocated that Polk should be replaced in time but believed that additional space was also high priority. Hunt and Freeman hoped to make Polk a minimum-security prison meaning “most of the fences could come down, the guard towers could come down, and some of the cosmetic blemishes could be dressed up.” The minimum-security prison could house inmates who worked in the Raleigh area and could be a replacement for the Triangle Correctional Center. In the end, lawmakers agreed to include a replacement for Polk in the \$87.5 million bond package, approving it on July 24, 1993. However, they also added a section to the capital improvement appropriations that called for the conversion of old Polk into minimum-security prison

¹⁵⁸ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), July 2, 1993 (quotation) and July 22, 1993; *Session Laws of North Carolina, 1989*, c. 935; *Session Laws of North Carolina, 1993*, c. 550; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), July 25, 1993; *Session Laws of North Carolina, 1993*, c. 561, s. 73; *Session Laws of North Carolina, 2000*, c. 102, s. 3-4.

after Polk's replacement was completed and the prisoners were moved to the new facility. The General Assembly repealed this provision when it passed a law in 2000 transferring the Polk facility to the art museum.¹⁵⁹

While awaiting construction of a new youth center, prison administrators continued to use the old facility. In September 1993 Correction released a report after conducting an internal audit at Polk in February and March of that year which was critical of the prison's operation. The *News and Observer* reported these findings:

The 40-page report released in September had one bright spot: Auditors commended the officer in charge of firearms for "his efficient manner and pride" in carrying out his job.

But the other 39 ½ pages chronicle a sloppy ship in numbing detail. Keys were lost, bank deposits were late, inventory logs were poor or non-existent. Medical items had outlived their expiration dates.

State employees were running a vending operation, something prohibited by state law. Purchasing guidelines were sometimes ignored and inmate canteen operators had unauthorized access to the warehouse or other canteens.

Sometimes the Polk staff waited 10 months to request checks from headquarters to cover purchases. Meanwhile, past-due notices and collection agency letters piled up.

On a quality scale of 1 to 5—in which 5 is the worst possible score—Polk was the first ever prison unit to receive a 5 from department auditors.

In June 1994 four inmates attacked a guard, choking and beating him. The inmates went after the guard apparently as "retaliation for a complaint . . . [the guard] . . . made against one of the inmates." The inmates did not injure the guard, but they were charged and sent to Blanch Youth Institution in Caswell County. Gang and hate group activity by inmates was a problem. Superintendent George Currie posted a notice to inmates

¹⁵⁹ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), July 22, 1993 (quotation); *Session Laws of North Carolina, 1993*, c. 550; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), July 25, 1993; *Session Laws of North Carolina, 1993*, c. 561, s. 73; *Session Laws of North Carolina, 2000*, c. 102, s. 3-4.

telling that anyone associated with such activity “will be recommended for a minimum of six (6) months on administrative lock-up or maximum control lock-up (See Appendix PP)”¹⁶⁰

Prison official made efforts to improve the situation at Polk before its move. New leadership brought by Superintendent Currie improved “morale and management.” The protective-custody policy was changed. A screening process was developed and list of inmates was kept “to ensure that predatory inmates are not housed with their victims.” An inmate requesting protective custody would be placed in one of the segregation cells (See Appendix SS). If the cells were not available, a dorm with a posted guard was opened and no inmates with “predatory or assaultive behavior” would be allowed entry. On March 31, 1994, Secretary Freeman “ordered the elimination of triple bunking of inmates at Polk Youth Center and a temporary increase in staff.” Officials wanted to cut the prison population down to 340 by the July 1994. In addition, Freeman sought \$4 million to make the old facility livable. In April 1994 prison officials moved sixty-nine inmates to the Dare County Jail.¹⁶¹

In 1997, the new Polk Youth Center designed to hold about 1,000 inmates opened in Butner, Granville County. A debate soon commenced about what to do with the old facility. In May 1997 real estate broker Jim Anthony, president of Anthony and Company, said the land would be best used for commercial purposes. The North Carolina Museum of Art expressed a strong interest in obtaining the forty-five acre tract. The art museum saw the land as an opportunity:

To them, the Polk Youth Center is a blank canvas waiting to be filled with their brightest ideas for a “museum park,” a fresh model for education combining outdoor recreation and participatory activities that cross the boundaries of traditional museums.”

¹⁶⁰ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 13, 1994 and June 24, 1994 (quotation). Printed flyer, “Notice to Inmates,” retrieved by author while visiting form Polk Youth Center, March 22, 2001.

¹⁶¹ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 13, 1993 (quotation); Press release, “Secretary Freeman orders elimination of triple bunking at Polk,” March 31, 1994, North Carolina Department of Correction Web Site, May 17, 2001 (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), April 1, 1994 and April 29, 1994.

The Department of Correction which had communication and transportation offices at Polk “proposed building new facilities there in conjunction with the museum’s plans: a central administration building, a training center and a small minimum-security prison.” A letter in the *News and Observer* on July 15, 1998, suggested that Polk be use temporarily to alleviate crowded conditions in the Wake County Jail.¹⁶²

While others were debating what to with Polk, it was being partially dismantled. By September 1998, inmates had knocked down wooden guard towers and had begun the task of taking up the protective fencing. The fencing was to be reused at McCain Hospital and at prisons in three western counties. Fort Bragg soldiers were assigned to “practice blowing open door locks” at the prison. Correction made use of some of the old buildings, for example, to house a computer-refurbishing shop. In March 1999 Dan River Prison Work Farm inmates improved Polk’s grounds in anticipation of use of the old prison by the National Guard during the 1999 Special Olympic World Games.¹⁶³

On July 4, 2000, the General Assembly enacted legislation that gave the former Polk property to the art museum. The legislation from Chapter 102, Section 3 of the 2000 *Session Laws* read:

The State land located in Raleigh bounded by Blue Ridge Road on the west, Wade Avenue on the south, the Raleigh beltline on the east, and the Meredith Woods subdivision on the north is hereby allocated to the Department of Cultural Resources for the North Carolina Museum of Art.

Governor Hunt signed the legislation on July 11, 2000. However, the transfer did not end the controversy about the property. A group formed by the late Governor Terry Sanford (1917-1998) expressed an interest in the property “for its proposed arts institute, a

¹⁶² *News and Observer (Raleigh)*, November 16, 1997, May 15, 1997, March 18, 1998 (quotation), and July 15, 1998.

¹⁶³ *Greensboro News and Record*, September 24, 1998, Rockingham edition; *News and Observer (Raleigh)*, September 24, 1998 (quotation) and March 4, 1999.

campus of performance spaces, rehearsal halls, and classrooms.” Of course, the art museum did not favor this idea. The governor asked Cultural Resources Deputy Secretary Elizabeth F. Buford “to negotiate between the museum and the Sanford group.”¹⁶⁴

The situation became more complicated when Durham leaders and Senator Wib Gulley stated they wanted the arts institute in Durham to stimulate downtown revitalization. The Sanford group was not deterred by the legislation that gave the land to the art museum because they saw art museum Director Lawrence J. Wheeler as a supporter. Wheeler had been supportive of the arts institute, but he said:

[H]e had a change of heart last year when the Sanford group introduced an early plan of the proposed institute. He and [Dan] Gottlieb were taken aback by the size of the project . . . feeling it would dwarf the Art Park.

Wheeler proposed to honor Sanford by naming a theater or performing arts space for him within the museum’s proposed plans. Eventually, both sides got what they wanted. Hunt offered the Sanford group another site near to the Polk property. On February 7, 2001, the Department of Correction formally transferred the forty-five acre Polk tract to the Department of Cultural Resources to be used by the art museum (See Appendix XX).¹⁶⁵

In December 2000, the art museum unveiled plans to construct a new facility on the old prison site. The projected building was to be part of an overall expansion of the museum’s 164 acres. In addition to the new building, the art museum planned to leave 100 acres as a preserve of undeveloped land with restored creeks and native plants which could be accessed by walking and biking trails. The plan was to include a “Land Art

¹⁶⁴ *Session Laws of North Carolina, 2000*, c. 102, s. 3-5; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 17, 2000 (quotation).

¹⁶⁵ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 17, 2000; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 7, 2000; Gywnn T. Swinson to Theodis Beck and Lisbeth C. Evans, February 7, 2001, Department of Cultural Rescues Files, copy of letter in author’s possession.

Trail, a network of foot trails incorporating outdoor sculpture projects.” The art museum proposed to extend their one-mile paved trail, completed in 2000 “to connect the Museum to the University District (to the east) via Meredith College, and to Umstead Park (to the west) making the Museum an attractive recreation destination from both directions and a vital link in the region’s greenway system.” The new museum was expected to cost between \$60 and \$100 million. In 2000 the art museum had only three million that could be used for a new building from a \$24 million campaign from private donors. Director Wheeler said, “he plans to ask the General Assembly, Raleigh and Wake County for money over the next three years.” However, a substantial percentage of the money was expected to come from private donors.¹⁶⁶

In 2000 and 2001 the art museum decided to transform the old guard towers at Polk into an art. In his exhibit *Et in Arcadia Ego*, Craig Pleasants built a charred log tower on a mound surrounded by marigolds and overgrown grass outside the art museum. He “conceptually linked his guard tower” by having four prison guard towers “painted black in a ghostly echo of his charred wood construction.” In April 2001 high school students and local artists decorated guard towers with graffiti. The art museum wanted them “to reclaim the towers by attaching their own meaning to it.” The inspiration for the artwork entitled *Physical Graffiti* came from the recent art museum exhibit *Reading Landscape* by the Chinese artist Xu Bing. In the July/August 2001 issue of the art museum’s *Preview and Calendar of Events*, an article stated that Xu Bing “plays with language, mixing visual and verbal, and in a similar way, graffiti artists assign meaning to the symbols they create.” *Physical Graffiti* was meant to startle people. In the

¹⁶⁶ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), December 7, 2000 (quotation); *North Carolina Museum of Art, Preview and Calendar of Events*, July/August 2001, 20-21 (quotation); *News and Observer*, June 30, 2001.

Independent Weekly Christopher Weber said, “Whatever this prison meant before, it’s been rededicated.”¹⁶⁷

Weber’s words are a fitting close for the old prison which never became the model youth correction center envisioned by prison officials. The prison during its eight decades of existence meant many things to different people; few if any retained positive memories of the place. It was time for the property to be rededicated for something better.

¹⁶⁷ *North Carolina Museum of Art, Preview and Calendar of Events*, January/February 2001, 11 (quotation); *Independent Weekly* (Raleigh), May 2-8, 2001, 3.

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Confederate (N.C.) Regiments at Camp Mangum

3 rd Battalion N.C. Light Artillery	Organized, Feb. 1862.
8 th Regiment N.C. Troops	Reorganized, September 1862.
11 th Regiment N.C. Troops	Organized, March 31, 1862.
17 th Regiment N.C. Troops (2 nd Organization)	Organized, May 1862.
30 th Regiment N.C. Troops	Organized, September 26, 1861.
31 st Regiment N.C. Troops	Reorganized, September 17, 1862.
34 th Regiment N.C. Troops	Bivouacked, Fall 1861-Winter 1862.
37 th Regiment N.C. Troops	Bivouacked, Fall 1861-Winter 1862.
38 th Regiment N.C. Troops	Organized, January 17, 1862.
43 rd Regiment N.C. Troops	Organized, March 18, 1862.
44 th Regiment N.C. Troops	Organized, March 28, 1862.
45 th Regiment N.C. Troops	Organized, April 1, 1862.
46 th Regiment N.C. Troops	Organized, April 4, 1862.
47 th Regiment N.C. Troops	Organized, March 24, 1862.
48 th Regiment N.C. Troops	Organized, April 9, 1862.
49 th Regiment N.C. Troops	Organized, April 12, 1862.
50 th Regiment N.C. Troops	Organized on or about April 15, 1862.
52 nd Regiment N.C. Troops	Organized, April 28, 1862.
53 rd Regiment N.C. Troops	Organized, May 5, 1862.
54 th Regiment N.C. Troops	Organized, May 16, 1862.
55 th Regiment N.C. Troops	Organized on or about May 16, 1862.
56 th Regiment N.C. Troops	Organized, July 31, 1862.

U.S. Army Tank Battalions at Camp Polk

<i>Unit</i>	Organized, Place and Date	Stations, Place and Date	<u>Demobilized, Place and Date</u>
305 th Tank Battalion	Camp Colt, Pa.—June 1918	Camp Polk— September 1918	Camp Greene, N.C.— December 1918
307 th Tank Battalion	Camp Polk— October 1918		Camp Greene, N.C.— December 1918
308 th Tank Battalion	Camp Polk— November 1918		Camp Greene, N.C.— December 1918
340 th Tank Battalion	Camp Polk— November 1918		Camp Greene, N.C.— December 1918
341 st Tank Battalion	Camp Polk— November 1918		Camp Greene, N.C.— December 1918
342 nd Tank Battalion	Camp Polk— November 1918		Camp Greene, N.C.— December 1918
343 rd Tank Battalion	Camp Polk— November 1918		Camp Greene, N.C.— December 1918

Camp Polk Outline

- Getting Camp to Raleigh
- Repairing and altering State Fairgrounds
- Labor Strike
- Civilian effort to help camp.
- Naming the Camp
- Building of Permanent Camp
- Soldier's Life
- Soldier's Play
- Politicians in Tank Camp
- African Americans workers and soldiers.
- Winston-Salem Riots
- Influenza and Poor Health Conditions
- Civilian and Military interaction.
- Abandonment of Camp.

Chapter IV (Draft)

Camp Polk: United States Army Tank Corp Training Facility

The World War I tank training camp established in Western Wake County in late 1918 served as the catalyst that established Polk Youth Institution. When the U.S. Army abandoned the land, which according to official reports was about 20,064 acres, it leased for a military camp early 1919, the State's Prison took the option to purchase of some the land in 1920 for a new prison site and farm. It also kept the name Camp Polk for the new prison. Prior to the tank camp's abandonment, the troops and their tanks brought excitement to Raleigh and Wake County providing new economic stimulation and a sense of pride. The tank camp was to suppose to be permanent, but it lasted less than a year. However, the tank camp forever changed the west Raleigh and Wake County.¹⁶⁸

By December 1917 Raleigh/Wake County was being considered as the site for somekind of military camp. At that time the federal government was considering a location east of Raleigh on Tarboro Road. To get a military camp at this site, the Raleigh City Council passed a resolution on December 27, 1917 offered to improve Tarboro Street (not Tarboro Road) by paving between New Bern Avenue and the city limits once the Tarboro Road site had been chosen.¹⁶⁹

By August 1918 Raleigh was "anxious to have one of the Army Camps located in or near their City" with the Raleigh Chamber of Commerce leading these efforts. The Chamber of Commerce sent a committee led by John Beaman at the beginning of August to the War Department in Washington to somekind of military camp. The committee was referred to Tank Corps commander Colonel I.C. Welborn. Eventually, it was learned that

¹⁶⁸ *Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces in the World War*, vol 1, part 2:845.

¹⁶⁹ Minutes, December 27, 1917 (microfilm), Raleigh Board of Commissioners, North Carolina State Archives

the army was looking for a site to for a tank camp. The army needed to establish a suitable permanent location that allowed year round tank training the tank facilities in Pennsylvania were unsatisfactory for winter training. Negotiations were started with the federal government. Beaman also secured help Senator Furnifold M. Simmons of North Carolina and Representative Edward W. Pou of the Fourth Congressional District which included Raleigh and Wake County. Both politicians lobbied for the tank camp According to the *New and Observer*, “[t]he friendly relations between Senator Simmons, Representative Pou, and the War Department smoothed the way for the successful outcome of the fight.”¹⁷⁰

According to newspapers accounts, it took one week, August 13 through 20, of work by all parties to secure a camp for Raleigh. Army officers visited proposed camp locations and found a location three miles west of Raleigh. Local officials offered to lease the State Fairgrounds (formerly located on Hillsborough Street across from N.C. State University) to the army and college authorities at State College (now N.C. State University) proposed use of dormitories and other facilities for the army. Meanwhile county commissioners stated that all roads in the proposed camp would be “discontinue[d] and abandon[ed]” if the federal government need them closed. Furthermore, the *News and Observer* reported that land options were secured at a nominal per acre because of the patriotism of Wake County citizens. All the work paid

¹⁷⁰ Captain Edward H. Dignowity, “Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina,” report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 20, 1918; *War Department Annual Reports*, 1918, 1395; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 20, 1918; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 21, 1918.

off for Raleigh and Wake County because on August 20, 1918, the *News and Observer* formally announced: “Raleigh Lands Big Tank Training Camp.”¹⁷¹

With the selection of Raleigh/Wake County as the location of a tank camp, the army moved forward to make the camp a reality while locals made ready for their new neighbor. By August 22, army engineers and surveyor were making a survey of the campsite. The federal government formally took over the leases on the land for the camp that encompassed sixteen thousand acres after signing an agreement with the Chamber of Commerce (See Appendix *N&O* August 24, 1918 ?). In addition, the government decided to use the State Fairgrounds which served as temporary quarters. News of the tank camp evidently brought people to seeking employment since labor would be needed to build the camp and seeing business opportunities created by the new camp.¹⁷²

To help explain tank camp and prepare the people of Raleigh for it, the Chamber of Commerce and government officials held a meeting at the City Auditorium on August 28 that well attended. At the meeting, people learned about the tank corps and camp and how Raleigh received the new military installation. They were told how only two people out of one hundred families were being difficult in allowing the federal government to use their land. Congressman Pou, speaking for Chamber of Commerce, “demanded that the merchants refrain from a two price business [evidently one for local people and one for the military] and that landlords maintain house rent at present standard.” People were

¹⁷¹ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 20, 1918; Captain Edward H. Dignowity, “Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina,” report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives; Minutes, August 14, 1918 (microfilm), Raleigh Board of Commissioners, North Carolina State Archives; Minutes, August 13, 1918 (microfilm), Wake County Board of Commissioners, North Carolina State Archives (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 20, 1918 (quotation).

¹⁷² *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 22, 1918; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 23, 1918; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 24, 1918; Captain Edward H. Dignowity, “Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina,” report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), August 23, 1918.

also told that the Chamber of Commerce would serve as a watchdog for inappropriation business transactions.¹⁷³

In September, the federal government was sending men and material to Raleigh to get the camp ready for an estimated sixteen thousand soldiers. Seven railroad cars of material came to the fairgrounds for constructing the temporary quarters and the United States Employment Service secured labors and carpenter for the this work. Initially, the federal government used less than one hundred workers, who were black and white, out of the one thousand that signed up to work. With this activitiy occuring on the fairground, it was announced that no State Fair would occur in 1918. Ironically with all of this activity already occurring, the War Department on September 9 formally announced the establishment of a tank camp in Raleigh. By September 11, the first soldiers, three companies from the 305th Battalion, Tank Corps, arrived from Camp Colt, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, to their new home at the fairgrounds with Captain David E. Hannan as camp commander. The soldiers were referred as “tankers” and “‘treat-‘em rough’ soldiers.”¹⁷⁴

Even though work was progressing of the temporary quarters and soldiers were arriving, the federal government had problems with the labor at the fairgrounds. By September 17, forty-four carpenters went on strike because they said their union hourly wage of sixty-fives cents an hour had been cut to fifty-five cents an hour. The federal government responsed by arresting John Abrams, a member of the local Carpenters’

¹⁷³ (Raleigh) *News and Observer*, August 29, 1918 (quotation).

¹⁷⁴ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 4, 1918; Captain Edward H. Dignowity, “Completion Report: U.S. Army Tank School, Raleigh, North Carolina,” report, 1919, World War I Papers, Military Collection, North Carolina State Archives; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 6, 1918; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 4, 1918; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 10, 1918; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 11, 1918; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 12, 1918.

Union, “on a charge of interfering with the prosecution of the war.” In response, the Carpenters’ Union sent John Holland, a foreman at the fairgrounds camp, to Washington to meet with a representative from the International Carpenters’ Union with the goal of bringing walkout to the American Labor Federation. In reaction to Holland’s arrest, the union contended that he “was a half-witted man and not responsible for the statements which caused his arrest.” Holland allegedly told the military police that the union would not allow him to work. Holland spend only one night in jail after bond was posted for him. The carpenters’ strike no effect on the construction work at the fairground because there were enough men still available to work and the preliminary repair work had been completed by September 21. Nevertheless, the carpenters gained a wage increase. According to newspaper account, the war wage board evidently adjusted the carpenters achieved hourly wage to seventy cents.¹⁷⁵

In Raleigh, the local officials took extra steps to help the camp and to ensure the well-being of the soldiers. To help in dealing with an potential problems between the soldiers and civilians, local and military police agreed to work together. During this month, the Chamber of Commerce formed a company known as the “Chamber of Commerce Holding Company,” which would sell stocks, to help “in carrying out its agreement with the government in connection with the location and maintence of a tank camp here.” To help soldiers secure reasonable rates for public transportation, city

¹⁷⁵ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 17, 1918; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 20, 1918 (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 17, 1918; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 21, 1918; *News and Observer*, October 3, 1918.

commissioners, public chauffers and, Captain Hannan worked out an argeement that charge twenty-five cent per person as “jitney fare.” The YMCA¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁶ *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 6, 1918; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 10, 1918 (quotation); *News and Observer* (Raleigh), September 18, 1918;

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Chapter II (Rejections)

The first permanent settlers to Wake County (formed in 1771) arrived in the 1730s. By the nineteenth century, Wake became dominated by farmers who owned a modest amount of land, held no slaves, and produced most things their families needed. Because of its many streams, Wake County contained numerous gristmills that allowed farmer to grind their corn and wheat and served as public place for farmers to gather. Fendol Bevers 1871 Wake County map showed numerous mills along the streams in the House Creek (named after William or Thomas House) township where Polk Prison was located. The Bever's map even showed a gristmill owned by the Tucker family situated on House Creek. However, the various property owners who owned the land on which Polk Prison covered a wide spectrum on the economic ladder. They ranged from a typical small farmer to wealth merchants to mix-raced women¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁷ Kelly A. Lally, *The Historic Architecture of Wake County, North Carolina* (Raleigh: Wake County Government, 1994), 8,11; Elizabeth R. Murray, *Wake: Capital County of North Carolina, Volume I, Prehistory through Centennial* (Raleigh, N.C.: Capital County Publishing Co., 1983), 41,105, 140; Fendol Bevers, Map of Wake County, 1871, State Archives.