The Story of
Camp Pattison

This booklet is dedicated to those men of Company 3663 of the Civilian Conservation Corps who through their generous contributions of photographs, artifacts, and recollections made possible the preservation of the story of Camp Pattison.

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Pattison State Park and the Civilian Conservation Corps

The area around the two waterfalls on the Black River have, since the first people saw them, been a place of inspiration and enjoyment. In 1918 Martin Pattison, a wealthy Superiorite, purchased the land around the two falls and gave it to the state so the scenic treasures could be preserved. After establishment as a state park in 1920, only modest development took place. Parking was along the roadside and some tables and simple toilets were developed on the west side of State Highway 35. No developments, other than a ranger's cabin, existed on the east side of the highway.

In 1935, Company 3663 of the Civilian Conservation Corps was established at Pattison Park.

From 1935 to 1942, thousands of young men labored to transform this wild area into one of the finest of Wisconsin's state parks.

The history of Camp Pattison has been gathered from old records and reports, newspaper articles, and the recollections of former corps members. The work and camp life experienced by the first arrivals differed greatly from those that followed. This story is a composite of those men and their accomplishments.

Creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps

The Great Depression of the late 1920s and continuing through most of the 1930s touched the lives of every American. It has been estimated that in 1932, 25 percent of those between the ages of 15 and 24 who were in the labor market were unemployed. Perhaps 30 percent more were only working part-time.

In his acceptance of the presidential nomination in 1932, Franklin D. Roosevelt suggested the idea of a Conservation Corps to ease the employment problem by putting young men to work on critical conservation projects. His plan would have the army organize and administer the men and their camps and the Forest Service, National Park Service and other technical specialists supervise the work projects. One month after his inauguration, April 5, 1933, the emergency Conservation Works program became a reality. Two months later 240,000 men had enrolled and some 1,300 camps had been established. In 1935 enrollment reached a peak of 500,000 men in 2,110 camps. Wisconsin ranked fourth in the nation in the number of camps with 103. It wasn't until 1937 that Congress officially changed the program's name to Civilian Conservation Corps.

Before Company 3663

Not long after the CCC program was established, it became evident that some work projects were too far from the camps to be undertaken because of travel distances. Although the army feared losing control, the Administration directed the setting up of side camps under the direction of technical services personnel.

Late in 1933, Company 629 was established at the site of the present Department of Natural Resources Fish Hatchery at Brule. In the summer of 1934, a contingent of 25 men from this camp was sent to work at Pattison State Park. They were under the supervision of Forest Ranger Carl Anderson, who since 1929 had been stationed summers at the park and was responsible for the fire protection and wildlife law enforcement.
The men lived in tents slightly southeast of the present park shelter building. They worked at cutting brush, constructing stone steps, and building trails to the bottom of the gorge. They erected the first safety railings overlooking Big Manitou Falls.

Camp Pattison Is Born

Camp Pattison began on July 19, 1935 when 100 men arrived at Pattison State Park from Mercer, Wisconsin. The men were drawn from Company 660, Camp Mercer, and became the infant Company 3663. An advance detail had arrived four days earlier to set up a rustic tent village in a clearing between the Little Manitou Falls and State Highway 35. New men were enrolled from Superior, Milwaukee, Ashland, and other northern Wisconsin cities. On July 28, 1935, the company was at full strength. Most of the recruits were from large cities and the life in camp took on the aspect of a summer camp. Conditions though, were crude. For example, a canvas sack below the waterfalls was connected by a hose to a bucket with holes to serve as a shower.

In late July 1935, bids were requested for construction of barracks and other buildings. Not long after, work was begun using local labor and on September 5, the men moved out of their tents and into the new barracks. Camp Pattison was in business.

The Corpsmen

During the life of the CCC, the eligibility requirements changed as the seriousness of the Depression lessened. Originally only men 18-25 years old could enlist, but by the time Camp Pattison was established, the upper age limit had been raised to 28. In 1937, the ages were changed to 18-23. Just before the closing of the camp 17-year-olds were accepted, though they could not quit school to do so. The age limits were not always honored, though, by local enlistment centers, and boys below the age limit were often accepted.

Enrollees throughout the life of the CCC had to be citizens, single (with some exceptions), of good moral character, and good physical condition. Originally, applicants, 45 percent of whom had
never had a job before, had to come from families on relief. In 1937 with the changing times, this
requirement was dropped, although men from welfare families received preference. The program
changed from a relief role to one of training and employment. Enlistments were for six month peri-
ods, with a total enrollment limited to two years (again with some exceptions).

After enlisting, men were sent to the closest military base for physicals, conditioning and training.
Assignments, when possible, were made to camps near the corpsman's home. A 1939 report indi-
cated 75 percent of the men of Company 3663 were from Superior and the vicinity. Over the years,
however, men were assigned to the camp from Michigan, Illinois, and Missouri. Morale was often
lowest among these recruits. Transfers were common. On June 27, 1938, half the men of Camp
Pattison were assigned to St. Croix Falls. On June 10, 1941, with enrollment dropping, men from
camps at Clam Lake and Minocqua were moved to Pattison.

The purpose of the CCC was to help both the corpsmen and their families. Each member was
paid $30 a month of which $22 - $25 was sent to his family. To provide an incentive for hard work
and advancement, 8 percent of the company members were assistant leaders receiving $36 per
month, and 5 percent were leaders at $45 per month. On January 1, 1941, with lessening eco-

The Achievements

The planning and development design of Pattison Park was the joint responsi-
bility of the National Park Service and the Wisconsin Conservation Depart-
ment. The NPS supervised the actual ground work.

The accomplishments were monumen-
tal, considering that most work was
done with hand tools and strong backs.
Two major buildings were constructed.
The larger, a 6,200-square-foot shel-
ter building, was begun in 1937 and
finished in 1940. It contained a large
hall, concession area, and restrooms,
and was constructed at a cost of
$60,000 using 128,000 man-days of

The shelter building required 128,000 man-days to construct.
labor. A 3,000-square-foot bath house also was completed in 1940. It contained changing rooms, restrooms, and lifeguard quarters.

Beginning with a logging dam built about 1900, there has been a lake in its present location. A stop-log dam was incorporated into a new highway bridge built over the Black River in 1932. Unfortunately, the natural river channel passed through the area used by swimmers. This was unacceptable, since logs, debris and mud carried by the river were deposited on the beach.

To solve this problem, on May 1, 1936, the lake was drained. The entire company, except the camp crew, was assigned to renovate the lake. More than 100 men working in two shifts (4:30 a.m. to noon and noon to 6:30 p.m.) labored at relocating the river channel and building a beach. They dug, by hand, a new channel on the south side of the lake. With their tractor and scraper they reshaped the lake basin and with the excess material constructed an island. More than 5,000 yards of sand were hand loaded on trucks from the Lake Superior shoreline and deposited and spread on what was to be the park beach. Additional sand was brought from the sand pit in the park. On July 20, the project was completed and the lake refilled, ready for swimmers.

The CCC installed the park’s water and sewer systems, including a sewage treatment facility, water reservoir and 5,000 feet of 10-foot-deep trenches for water and sewer lines. The corps members built three miles of foot trails, picnic tables, grills, and water fountains. By hand, in 1938, they rerouted County Highway B, which passed a few feet from the park, to its present location outside the use area.

Building the picnic area was also no easy job. The area was rough, brushy and sloping quickly to the lake. Clearing, hauling fill, grading and sodding took several years. The adjacent parking lots were a particular problem because the site was wet and swampy. Crushed rock several feet thick was deposited for a base. Eventually parking for 600 vehicles was completed in 1939.

Hundreds of trees were transplanted to complete landscaping between the parking lots, in the picnic area, near the falls and on the newly created island. Many were moved during the winter when they had to be cut out of the frozen earth. They were often dug outside the park and placed on steel plates. The plates were then chained together, forming trains, and pulled back to the park by the tractor.

Another big project was the removal of the bridge abutments and road grade left when the State Highway 35 bridge over the Black River was moved in 1932. Concrete abutments were demolished, the old grade was leveled, and landscaping and tree planting done. In addition, the river banks both below and above the bridge were protected from erosion by rock walls. Stones weighing as much as 600 pounds were hand maneuvered into place.

The rock for building construction, trails, rip-rapping, fill, and many other uses came from a basalt outcropping eight miles northeast of the park off County Highway K. Quarry crews consisted of two five-man crews plus several blasters. Large sections of rock were broken free by dynamite. Corpse men with chisels and 14-pound sledge hammers further broke the pieces. Stones to be used for
building blocks (thirty was a good day’s work for a crew) were hand loaded into trucks for transport to the work site. Other rocks went to the crusher for use on roads and trails. At the park, finishers cut the stones into blocks to meet the specifications of the masons. With hammer and chisels they carefully shaped the stones. A misplaced blow would ruin the work. Four stones were a good day’s work per man. Freshly sharpened chisels were provided at the start of work and again at noon.

Although Company 3663’s mission was to develop Pattison State Park, during crisis the men received other assignments. During the summer of 1936, a detachment of 75 men was sent to fight fires on Isle Royale, Michigan. During the spring of 1937, when the flooding Ohio and Mississippi rivers were ravaging states to the south, Camp Pattison men were sent to help in Illinois and Arkansas. Throughout the life of the camp, men were called to fight area forest fires. In 1936 alone, 5,521 man-hours were spent in fire suppression work.

When Camp Pattison closed, a number of projects were left unfinished. An underpass beneath STH 35 was well underway. It was to provide safe pedestrian access from the main use area to the Big Manitou waterfall. Another project, just begun, was the development of a campground for 30 sites. It wasn’t until after WW II that a larger facility was eventually completed.

Fuel for Growing Bodies

During the Depression, times were difficult. No jobs meant no money. No money meant people were hungry and undernourished.

Sixty percent of CCC enrollees were below the standard weight for their age and height. It was found that 25 percent of the recruits were so undernourished that the weight qualification for enlistment had to be lowered. By the end of their second month in camp, however, most corpsmen had reached their recommended weight. The average weight gain per enrollee was over 11 pounds.

The Camp Pattison mess hall was a T-shaped building. The dining area was 20 by 120 feet in size and was partitioned so that the officers and technical staff had their own room on the east end of the structure. A wing
in the center was the food preparation area. An outside bell summoned enrollees when meals were ready. All men were fed at the mess hall, except the quarry crew, who had their noon meal delivered to the work site.

The company had an officer whose duty was supervision of the mess. He ordered all food and oversaw its preparation. Menus were prepared a week in advance so supplies could be obtained. Before being posted, the menus, as well as any later substitutions, had to be approved by the commanding officer. The cost of a daily food ration per corpsman varied during the life of Camp Patterson but averaged 42 cents per day.

Food was obtained from a number of sources. Nonperishables were supplied by the District Quartermaster in Sparta and in later years from the Quartermaster Depot in Chicago. Perishables such as milk and bread, which were delivered daily, were purchased by contract. Other perishables were purchased locally as needed. Food was protected by ice refrigeration and rigid meat inspections were made to assure their quality.

Originally, cooks came from the ranks of army enlisted men. Later, they were hired and trained by the CCC. Fresh cakes, rolls and pastry were baked at camp. To assist the cooks, kitchen help (called KP for kitchen police) would be assigned. KPs worked two days on and two off with a shift from early morning to late night. At times they were given three days off. Enrollees had their turns at KP assignments. Corpsmen requiring discipline often found themselves on weekend kitchen duty. Both the men and District Inspectors indicated that although the food was generally good, there were at times, less than proficient cooks. At one time a short-lived food strike took place to protest poor meals.

Food was nutritious, though not fancy. Meals were served family style and quantities were

| SATURDAY: | | Camp Meal: | | Sweet Pickles | | $ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fresh Apples | $4.20 | Spare Ribs | $9.99 | 1# | .71 |
| Oatmeal | $2.25 | Baked Beef Ribs | $9.60 | | |
| Fresh Milk | $5.70 | Fried Potatoes | $6.80 | | |
| Boiled Potatoes | $2.90 | Bread | $1.60 | | |
| Cold Tomatoes | $1.10 | Butter | $1.44 | | |
| Celery | $1.10 | Coffee | $96 | | |
| Bread | 1# | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Total Cost: | $17.40 | Total Cost: | $10.60 | Total Cost: | $9.76 |

A typical day’s food, the volume consumed and the cost, is shown on this menu for a Saturday in late June 1939.

The cooks, cook’s helpers, and KPs saw to it that everyone was well fed.
generally adequate. Enrollees at times, though, did complain that when a special item was served, such as pork chops, the serving tray would be empty before it reached the last man at the table. To provide traditional feasts, like Thanksgiving, yet stay within the allotted food ration, enrollees noted a reduction in meal quality for a week or two before the event. Despite generally good meals, hard work and growing bodies left the young men “always hungry.” Occasionally, corpsmen who had good friends among the night guards or cook’s helpers would receive extra sandwiches or pastry while the rest of the camp slept.

**Free Time**

After evening meals, after camp chores and inspection Saturday mornings, and all day Sunday, the time was the corpsmen’s own except when special assemblies were called. To fill this time, the men had a variety of options, although after a hard day's labor many did not look for further strenuous activities. In addition to the educational opportunities available, the camp offered many recreational activities.

The camp reading room in the education building provided newspapers and magazines and the library offered a variety of books. Many corpsmen enjoyed a swim at the park beach or in the pool below the waterfalls near the camp, just loafing, or walking to a local tavern for a 5-cent glass or 10-cent bottle of beer. For some, the thirst for beer outlasted the campers’ finances, requiring borrowing from fellow corpsmen. Repaying debts on payday meant a dry month ahead.

The camp's recreation building had pool and ping pong tables and places to play cards. It had a large hall for films, programs and dances and a canteen. In addition to providing periodic films, the CCC program provided entertaining programs from local talent or by contracting for performers such as magicians and rope trick artists to travel from one camp to another. The canteen provided for the personal needs of the men. There they could purchase candy, pop and toiletries. Ice cream was 15 cents a pint. Marvel and Sensation cigarettes sold for 10 cents a pack, and Lucky’s and Camels for 12 cents. A corpsman, usually with some bookkeeping training, was chosen to run the canteen.

Weekends were the time to get away for a while. Many locals went home and had their laundry
done. Walking was a common way to get to Superior or back. Hitchhiking was frowned upon, though often done. One corpsman tells of an enrollee who the company commander fined $3 (of his $5 monthly pay) when caught thumbing a ride.

The camp provided transportation to Superior for the men generally once a week. Men boarded canvas covered trucks at the army office and were dropped off at the YMCA building. Trucks returned for the enrollees at various times. Those that missed the last ride had a long walk back to camp.

While in town they made use of YMCA facilities, went to the roller rink, took in a 15-cent movie, or bummed around.

Periodically, dances were held at the camp with music provided by the company band. Announcements in the Superior newspaper would advise all girls wishing to participate to be at the YMCA for transportation. They rode to the camp on wooden benches in the back of the camp's canvas-covered trucks. There were no buses.

Corpsmen bought coupons for use at the camp's canteen.

Both team and recreational sports activities were available. The men had archery, fishing and wrestling and could play volleyball, horseshoes, softball and football. In the winter they could skate and ski.

The camp's boxing team took several Golden Gloves championships. The basketball and baseball teams played local teams as well as in a league against other CCC camps. In 1936, a spectacular field day was held in Superior for camps of northern

Young women were brought by truck to dances at the camp.

Team sports created competition between CCC camps.
Wisconsin. More than 1,000 CCC members marched in the parade and many participated in the track and field events. The men at camp with musical talents participated in the glee club, quartets, orchestra, and other vocal and instrumental groups. They often entertained at functions in the community and performed on the camp's weekly program on radio station WEBC in Superior.

The Chance to Learn

Although the purpose of the CCC program was to put needy young men to work and to accomplish conservation projects, it was soon realized that the opportunity for education could not be overlooked. By 1935, when Camp Pattison was established, academic and vocational training were a part of camp life. President Roosevelt, however, never fully approved of spending money for anything but job-oriented training.

Phillip Davies was the educational advisor throughout the life of the camp. Putting together an effective program was a definite challenge since enrollees ranged from illiterates (2 percent) to college graduates (1 percent). Half had not finished high school and 10 percent did not complete the elementary grades. To compound the problem, a new group of corpsmen arrived every six months. An education committee comprised of the company commander, camp superintendent and education advisor met weekly to guide the program.

Their efforts were successful, too, even though it wasn't until 1938 that the camp's education building was completed. It had seven classrooms, a library-reading room and a carpenter shop where vocational courses were taught.

A great variety of classes were available through the years. They could generally be grouped as academic, vocational and cultural. In addition to Davies, instruction was given by camp officers, the technical staff, Works Progress Administration teachers and by corpsmen who possessed special skills.

Enrollees could attend the Superior Vocational School on Saturdays or evenings if they wished. Correspondence courses were available from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. College credits were also earned from Northland College at Ashland. Some enrollees attended day classes at Superior State Teachers College. They were assigned night work as guards and to keep the camp stoves filled.

Those enrollees who could not read or write gained these skills while at Camp Pattison. Of those working for 8th grade diplomas, 90 percent were successful. Corpsmen completing high school requirements received diplomas from Superior Central High School and Gordon, (Wisconsin) High School.

Vocational training was done in the classroom and on the work projects. A wide variety of skills were taught including photography in the camp's darkroom. Professional levels of competence
were often gained, as in the earning of state blaster’s licenses. A number of enrollees participated in publishing a camp newspaper.

A third type of educational opportunity was available so corpsmen could learn social and recreational skills, including home economics, music, drawing, etiquette, insurance, drama, taxation, leathercraft, archery, radio broadcasting and motor vehicle operation.

Classes began following the evening meal and were conducted five nights a week. Most enrollees recognized the opportunity offered at Camp Pattison to better themselves. The number of voluntary participants ranged to 95 percent of all young men of the company.

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Health and Safety

In the beginning, the CCC Program was plagued with injury and death of corpsmen. Thus, in 1934 a Safety Division was established. Safety Division representatives visited each camp, demonstrating accident prevention techniques, checking camp equipment for safety hazards, insuring that high sanitation standards were maintained, and giving instruction in work safety measures. By 1936, a year after Camp Pattison was established, the CCC death rates from disease and injury had been reduced to a point much lower than those of the regular army and one third that among men of similar age groups throughout the United States.

*The company ambulance served both the camp and community when emergencies arose.*
There is no record of loss of life among enrollees at Camp Pattison, though safety inspection reports show as high as 70 man-days lost per week due to injury and illness (1940). The camp superintendent, Schrieber, was responsible for safe working habits and conditions. To carry out the directions of the corps’ Safety Manual, a camp safety assistant was assigned and the Safety Committee met twice monthly. The Safety Committee was composed of the company commander, camp superintendent and camp doctor. Safety posters were displayed around camp and weekly or bi-weekly safety meetings were held with all enrollees and National Park Service personnel attending.

Camp Pattison had a doctor in residence at the camp, although in later years when he served two camps, he was available only every other day. Doctors were selected from medical officers of the Army Reserve Corps. Even though corpsmen were given a physical on enrollment, the camp doctor could reject the applicant if he felt he was unfit. The doctor instructed the men in personal hygiene and gave periodical medical checkups. In addition, he taught first aid to all enrollees. Two trained medics assisted the doctor.

Corpsmen, on enlistment, were given vaccinations against small pox and typhoid fever. Monthly (food handlers weekly) the men were checked for venereal disease. To further assist in keeping a healthy camp, rigorous food and water inspections were made to protect against epidemics and respiratory disease. Two instances of health problems are recorded. In December 1935, the entire camp was under quarantine for spinal meningitis and in 1937 a flu outbreak required the conversion of one entire barracks for victims.

As a safety measure, dynamite was not stored at camp but in a commercial magazine outside the Superior city limits. All blasting was done by a licensed blaster. There were no hard hats. Present day safety experts would shudder at the way work was accomplished. Yet the only serious injury resulted from the rollover of the camp’s crawler/tractor resulting in a 99-day hospital stay for one enrollee. The men of Company 3663 were to be commended.

**The Rest of the Camp**

The camp included a number of buildings in addition to those described previously. A 20-by-50-foot structure served the corpsmen for washroom, toilets and showers. It had hot and cold water and facilities for doing laundry. Even with hot showers, men at times would clean up below the nearby waterfalls. Water came from a natural spring on the west side of STH 35 and was pumped to a 1,500 gallon water tank.

The camp had four main barracks. For most of camp’s life they were identified as number 1, 2, 3 and 4. Later, however, they were named for famous hotels and were called the “Congress, Stevens,” “Drake” and "Blackstone." For awhile there was an additional small building used to house recruits. Each main barracks was 20 feet wide by 130 feet long and housed 50 men.

The barracks were wood structures with tar paper on the outer walls and fiberboard covering on
the inside. They were not very warm, despite having three stoves, one at each end and one in the center. At first the fuel was wood. Later coal was used. Campers would fill the stove to the top and wire the door shut to get as much heat as they could. Despite their efforts, men would find the socks they left lying on the floor stiff by morning. A camper there during the winter of 1938 tells of cracks in the wooden floor so large that corpsmen would drop their cigarettes and matches to the ground below. Others tell of trying to be the first to learn when someone would be gone for the night so they could borrow his blankets.

Barracks inspections were made Saturday mornings and occasionally more often. With the military running camp life, organization and cleanliness were of the highest priority. Bedding on bunks had to have military corners and made so tight, a dropped coin would bounce. Failure to pass inspection would mean extra duty after working hours.

A leader and assistant were assigned to each barracks. It was reported that the "toughest guys" were selected for these jobs to maintain law and order. Alvin Peters, who was barracks leader in 1939, described awakening Barracks 3 as follows: "I always slept at the end of the barracks. When they blew reveille, I would grab my soap and towel and rock each bunk as I went. Some of the guys didn't want to get up. When I came back, if anyone was still in bed, I would grab the sides of the bunk and poof - out they went!"

Military and technical service personnel had separate barracks of their own. Each had a lounge area and flush toilet facilities. A first sergeant and clerk appointed from the corpsmen also slept in the army barracks.

Administration of both the work projects and camp personnel matters for as many as 220 recruits was a big job. Both the Army and National Park Service had office buildings. Clerks and assistants selected from the recruits helped keep matters organized.

To provide for the material needs of the corpsmen, the camp had a supply building where clothing, shoes, bedding and other items were issued. Each man as issued two sets of fatigues, a jacket, and hat made of blue denim material for work. For dress, they were issued olive drab military-type clothing for the winter and khaki for the summer.
When inspections showed worn clothing, the recruit was ordered to merely turn in the used item at the supply building and get a new issue. On rare occasions corpsmen would find clothing missing. Dishonest individuals would steal items for less fortunate relatives, or sometimes, as in the case of shoes, for sale.

Several garages housed camp equipment. One for use by the army was 20 by 40 feet in size and was in the main camp area. It housed the one army truck, the camp ambulance, and two trucks used by the area inspectors who resided at the camp.

The site of the original tent camp became the technical service garage and maintenance area. Twelve trucks and a 35-horsepower Allis Chalmers tractor were stored in one long garage. The trucks consisted of two 1935 Ford pickups, three 1Y35 Reo stake body trucks, six 1935 Reo dump trucks, and a 1934 Chevrolet dump truck. The tarpaulin-covered stake body trucks were equipped to transport 30 men. The dump trucks had seats and guard rails and could carry 15. Stake bodies were the only vehicles used at night to carry personnel. All trucks were equipped with governors limiting them to 35 miles per hour. They were inspected by the camp mechanic daily and by the safety committee weekly. Other major equipment varied through the year but included rock crushers, graders, scrapers and cement mixers. Following complaints of no safe facility in a 1937 inspection, an oil storage building was built near the garage. Gasoline was stored underground.

Across the service area was the building housing the vehicle maintenance garage and tool room. Paul Mielke, one of the few people to stay at the camp for its entire existence, was the company mechanic. It was the toolkeeper's duty to maintain all the hand tools necessary to keep the work projects running.

With the closest fire department in Superior, fire safety was a prime concern. All enrollees were trained in fire fighting and drills were held twice monthly. For fire protection, buildings had water-filled fire extinguishers. Outside were barrels of water and sand. Ladders were on the roofs and others were available at the central fire gong. In the event the garages caught fire, each vehicle had a rope attached for the night that reached outside so they could be readily pulled out.

Spiritual Needs

The religious welfare of the enrollees was a concern of CCC Director Fechner, who had the strong support of Roosevelt on this matter.

Although not all camps had a resident chaplain, Pattison in the later years did. Chaplains, who were either Reserve Officers or contracted civilians, were assigned to minister to as many as eight
camps. A highly regarded assignment in the later years was that of driver for Pattison’s Chaplain, Lt. Charles Lever, as he made his rounds.

In his services the chaplain spoke to the entire company, after which he would mingle among the men in an endeavor to settle their personal problems. Clergymen from Superior would also hold services at the camp several times per month to minister to corpsmen of their faith. On Sundays, trucks made special trips to Superior so enrollees could attend the churches of their choice.

The End

The improving national economy, as early as 1937, prompted reductions in the CCC program. As the war in Europe stimulated American business, it became increasingly difficult to fill enlistment quotas. Eligibility standards were lowered, camps were closed and men reassigned to bring existing companies to full strength. At the beginning of 1942 the United States was at war, jobs were plentiful, and Pattison corpsmen were enlisting for military service at the rate of 25 per month. On March 25, 1942, Camp Pattison was closed. Forty-three enrollees were transferred to Camp Delta in Bayfield County. The remaining 67 went to Camp Riverside near Danbury, Wisconsin. These were the only camps left in the northern part of the state. All equipment was moved to Sparta for later use in the war effort.

The buildings remained for another decade and a half being used to house military police units assigned to guard the shipyards in Superior and later as quarters for prison inmates working in the park. Finally, as time and the elements were taking their toll, the site was cleared. Buildings that could be salvaged were moved. The NPS office became a workshop at the Pattison Ranger Station. Part of barracks 1 was moved to the Flambeau State Forest and used as a garage at the prison work camp. Barracks 2 was removed by the Wisconsin National Guard. Salvageable material was used to build picnic tables, tree nursery shipping crates, a building at the Plum Lake fish hatchery, for other park projects and as firewood. By 1956, all structures were gone.

Congress never officially ended the CCC program, but by refusing to provide funds after June 1942, they allowed it to quietly fade into history. It is impossible to measure the total benefits of the CCC. Altogether 2.5 million men were employed, fed, clothed and educated. Nearly $90 million was spent in Wisconsin alone.

Pattison State Park stands as a monument to the program and the men of Company 3663.
Camp Pattison  Pattison State Park - Superior, Wisconsin


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