



LECTURE ONE

DELIVERED BY FORREST C. POGUE

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RED LION INN AT THE QUAY

VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON

FORREST C. POGUE is the author of the four-volume authorized biography of General George Marshall. For many years, he was executive director of the George C. Marshall Research Foundation, as well as director of the Marshall Library in Lexington, Virginia.

During World War II, Pogue served as a historian with the U.S. Army. He chronicled the war from the front lines as the army invaded and swept across Western Europe into Germany. He began the war as a private and was discharged as a lieutenant colonel.

After the war, he worked closely with Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower on the official history of the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force. He holds graduate degrees in international relations and diplomatic history. During World War II, he received the Bronze Star and French *Croix de Guerre* for his frontline interviewing.

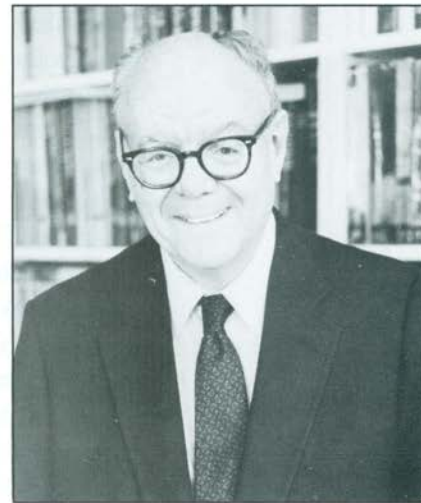
He has been awarded the Francis Parkman Medal for Special Achievement by the Society of American Historians, the Samuel Eliot Morison Prize for his outstanding contribution to military history and the Association of the United States Army Award for Distinguished Service for achievement as a historian, educator, author and soldier. ★

I T IS A GREAT PLEASURE for me to be here today. Twenty-eight years ago, at the beginning of the writing of the Marshall volume concerning the period that Marshall served here, I interviewed him in 1956 and 1957. In one of those interviews he said, "I want you to go to several of my posts and see something of the conditions under which I lived and see something of the people among whom I worked." Among the chief places that he wanted me to see was this particular place, because he probably had the happiest two years of his career before World War II at Vancouver Barracks.

I came out here for another reason in that year, 1960. I was told that there was a meeting here (and we figured out that it probably was on the second floor of the restaurant that stood here) of Civilian Conservation Corps boys, now grown up, who had been here at the time that Marshall commanded the Fifth Brigade covering Oregon and Washington, including the supervision of 27 of those camps. As they talked that evening, they brought to light not only the importance of this post to them, but also the importance of the work that George Marshall had done to carry out his ambition, as he told his advisors and staff people, to make these men, men, and second, to make them employables.

One of the people I wanted to see here was a famous area lawyer. When I told him I was coming to the west coast in 1960 to interview people from Los Angeles and San Francisco on north, he said, "Well, I'll be trying a case in San Francisco, so let us fly north together." And it was a wonderful way to hold an interview. To have him bring to life again, the kind of place that Marshall knew and loved. I remember as we came in view of the mountains he said, "Now you look out there and you could see what he could see from his house in Vancouver Barracks."

I remember that I was here about 28 years ago, because I heard the results of the Kennedy-Nixon election while staying at the Hotel Benson.



Forrest C. Pogue



This is the first time I've been back to this particular place since that time, but it's always stayed in my mind and in my heart. If you read the chapter I devote to Marshall's time here, you will understand why — not only he, but I, have a particular place in my heart for Vancouver Barracks.

I'm glad to be a part of this celebration. I think it is a tremendous thing that you have done. As a veteran of World War II, I share the feeling that many of you share — that all of you, whether you were a veteran of that war or not, from seeing various groups that took part in this thing today. I think that all of us get a great pleasure out of recalling what we owe to organizations such as those represented today and could understand why General Marshall would have been so pleased if he could have been here today to see what took place.

Keep in mind what Marshall had done before he came here. He had served as the Chief of Operations of First Army in the victory of the Argonne fighting in World War I. After that war, he became Pershing's Chief Aide for five years. He then served three years in China. Afterwards, he became the head of instruction at Fort Benning — the infantry school, in which he either trained or had as instructors, 169 future generals, who had a tremendous impact on the army. From there, he served at Fort Screaven, Savannah, for a short time in Charleston, and went from there for two years to the Illinois National Guard in Chicago.

From '36 to '38, he came here to Vancouver. From here he went east in '38 for a short time as Chief of War Plans, and for a slightly longer time, as Deputy Chief of Staff. Finally, in 1939, he became head of the Army and the U. S. Army Air Force, which he headed for more than six years. Almost immediately after the end of World War II and the conclusion of his term there, he was sent to China to try to bring peace among the various factions there.

At the conclusion of that mission, Truman asked him to serve as Secretary of State and, in that undertaking, he put through the Marshall Plan. He helped to start NATO. He said, "That the people who helped win the peace — win the war, would now help to win the peace." He held that out again and again as a challenge to young people throughout the United States.

Because he developed a bad kidney, which had to be removed, leaving him ill, he resigned. When Mr. Truman called him back shortly to head the American Red Cross, he worked as if he were raising an army. When that was finished, he was called back again to be Secretary of Defense in some of the darker days of the Korean War. He served for one year to help get the American Army back on the footing that it had enjoyed at its peak in World War II.

I had the privilege of going from Heidelberg, where I was working at theater

headquarters, in December, 1953, to Oslo, Norway to see Marshall receive the Nobel Prize for Peace. This man, who was known within the Army but not too well throughout the United States, had developed within him the capacity to do all those things before he left Vancouver. He'd shown in the years here the reasons why he was able to do the same sort of thing on the world stage that he did here on a smaller stage. Because what he showed here, in his first experience as a general officer, was the capacity to lead and inspire, the capacity to build, in the period when the American people were not inclined to have much of an armed force.

At the time he became Chief of Staff in 1939, we did not have the armed force that was permitted — 200,000 men. The first months that he was in office, he worked to build up that force. Before he finished, the U. S. Army and U. S. Air Force totaled eight and one-third million. Now, he never wanted to go back to a standing army. He never wanted to have a tremendous burden of taxes imposed in order to have a tremendous army. He felt that type of thing was Prussian or Japanese or totalitarian. What he argued for, in particular, was what he called the citizen-soldier. Universal military training--the training of all young men and women of military age, with a minimum amount of military training and refresher courses for a period of years so you had a pool of such men and women.

He drew inspiration from the type of experience he had here because a great part of what he taught and what he attempted to do here, was to help develop the sense of responsibility among young people.

One of the biggest jobs that he ever carried out — first in South Carolina and in Georgia, was helping to build the first Civilian Conservation Corps camps. The CCC camps were set up at Mr. Roosevelt's suggestion, in order to give unemployed young men, most often off the streets of the cities of the country, an opportunity to do useful work, particularly in preserving the forests and the soil. When he arrived in Vancouver, that was his chief responsibility.

The armed forces under his control were not numerous; the largest part of his work was the supervision of those 27 CCC camps. He said, "If I could have had a little military discipline and given a little military training, it would have been the greatest job I could want." The only military discipline he could impose was expulsion. Yet in his two years here, he managed to get a number of people, many of them reserve officers, called back into the service. He managed, by inspiring those people, or, sometimes, by getting inventive individuals who found ways to impose discipline without having the authority to do so. One man, as I discovered, found that he was able to have order in his particular CCC camp by putting at the head of it, a former champion of a Golden Gloves Tournament. (*laughter*) Another man wanted to stop a practice that some of the camps



had gotten into — throwing some of their instructors in the river. This man found that he could get a street fighter and turn him into a constructive type by putting him in charge. Marshall carried on a number of constructive programs, which made of those people the type of citizen that you would enjoy sitting down with, as I did here, and listening to.

Many of them had come from New York or from Chicago and had never seen a rural area. I think their work in the woods here helped to inspire them to a love for a different kind of society; many of them settled here. It was a pleasure to see these men stand up and say: “I had no background. I was in danger of going into prison and that experience caused me to want to do something else with my life.”

Among Marshall’s Vancouver officers was a Lieutenant Colonel Walton Walker, who ended up as one of Patton’s great corps commanders. Walker commanded the Twentieth Corps in Europe, and then became the Eighth Army Commander under MacArthur in Korea, where he served until he was killed in a tragic car accident. Others in Marshall’s group included men who went on to high positions and included some who were friends. One of his battalion commanders, for example, he had met in the Philippines in 1902. I talked again with four-star General Sam Walker, who likes to boast that as a nine-year-old, he was the only youngster of that age who was ever babysat by General Marshall. (*laughter*) General Walker remembered also that when Marshall went to Washington to serve as Chief of Staff, he spent a month as the guest of the Walkers.

When Marshall discovered that previous commanders of this post had not developed any sort of affinity for the local community, his goal was to work with the people of Vancouver and Portland. He spoke to every group that asked him to speak. He sent representation to parades like this — to take part in activities like this, with the result that for years thereafter, he had large and continuous correspondence with local people. I think that he had the longest correspondence with Erskine Wood, who took Marshall fishing down on the Metolius. Wood spoke often about the type of man that Marshall was until just a few years ago, because Wood lived to be over 100, and was one of our great supporters of the Marshall Foundation.

Marshall was interested in the history of Vancouver Barracks. He wrote numerous letters extolling not only the beauty of the area and its fishing, but also extolling the history he found here and the type of people he found here.

The point I would like to make is just this: he was on the very edge of rising to the height of his capacity at the end of the two years that he served at Vancouver Barracks. He drew from his experience here, and the knowledge he got of the civilians who would become the civilian soldier that he commanded later. He drew from his close association with the civilian community, which he would have to deal with as a soldier and later as Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense. And he drew from the healing qualities of

the outdoor life he was able to live, as well as a life free of many of the tremendous burdens that he had later. He drew an inner strength that I think helped him get through those next six years. So, I think you will be able to say on this Veterans Day that part of the work that went into the great success of George Marshall came of those two fine years that he spent in Vancouver Barracks. ★