

RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION

San Francisco, Calif.

August 3, 1936

IN REPLY REFER TO

To Mr. Jonathan Garst,  
Regional Director

From Eric H. Thomsen,  
Assistant Regional Director  
in Charge of Management

Subject: Preliminary Report on Arvin Migratory Camp

By your order of July 1st, the Management took over this camp and "complete responsibility with regard to the camp managers, procurement and business of running the camp."

Two objects were chiefly involved: (1) The functional task of keeping the camp in top running order in regard to capacity and usefulness, and (2) the incidental matter of completing records of the camp: how it came to be, its legal status, its functional relationship to other agencies, improvements and expenditures, etc. etc. The past month has been devoted chiefly to the first and most immediate task and only incidentally to the secondary task of records. The following, consequently, is intended to be only a preliminary report for your information and consideration.

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1. LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION: Arvin Migratory Labor Camp is located about seventeen miles southeast of Bakersfield, California, 1½ miles southeast of Weedpatch, and is described as follows: "All of the Northeast quarter (NE¼) of the Northwest quarter (NW¼) of Section Nineteen (19), Township Thirty-one (31) South, Range Twenty-nine (29) east, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian, in the County of Kern, State of California."

2. AREA OF LAND: 40.24 acres

3. DATE ACQUIRED:

- (a) Land: July 29, 1935 (Leased with option to purchase)
- (b) Buildings - Construction started August 1, 1935, and completed February 15, 1936.

4. HOW ACQUIRED:

- (a) Land: The use of this land was acquired by lease from the County of Kern for a period of five (5) years commencing on the 29th day of July, 1935, at a total rental of one

dollar (1.00) and for other valuable consideration, with option to purchase the said property free and clear of any and all encumbrances at any time during the existence of said lease, for the sum of eight thousand forty-eight (\$ 8,048) dollars.

(b) Buildings: Construction was started by the S.E.R.A., continued by the California Rural Rehabilitation Corporation under authorization dated May 17, 1935, by Col. Lawrence Westbrook, and under the following additional authorizations:

1. Letter Dr. Carl Taylor to W.E. Packard dated 10/12/35
2. Letter C.B. Baldwin to W.E. Packard dated 10/10/35
3. Letter of Application CF-1.
4. Application CF-2, Authorization No. 196
5. Application CF-3, Approved by Acting Regional Custodian, 1/17/36

5. COST:

- (a) Land: To date, \$ 2.00.
- (b) Buildings: Buildings and improvements cost \$ 27,716.22 (as of March 31, 1936). This represents only expenditures by the Corporation, excluding salary and travel expenses of officials, Wood, Drobish, Beaudry, and several thousands of dollars expended by the S.E.R.A. for materials and labor, and by Kern County for water, electricity, etc.

6. PROVISIONS OF THE LEASE between the S.E.R.A. and Kern County include the following:

- (a) The County must grade and fill in the camp tract;
- (b) Build good and sufficient roads from the main highway to the Camp,
- (c) Deliver to the Camp without cost to the S.E.R.A. an adequate, continuous and healthful supply of water under pressure, in an amount not less than fifty gallons per day per occupant;
- (d) Furnish power, electricity and light necessary and required for the operation and maintenance of the camp, including pumping; and construct or cause to be constructed such installation lines as may be necessary to transmit the power;
- (e) Make accessible without cost a sufficient fuel wood supply for the requirements of the camp and its occupants;
- (f) Provide all necessary health and medical services for the camp, including hospitalization, the services of nurses and physicians, at the expense of the County which will also pay for all burial expenses when necessary.

On August 1st, 1935, the S.E.R.A. assigned this lease to the

California Rural Rehabilitation Corporation which assumed the lease on the same date. On February 1st, 1936, the option within the lease was reassigned by the California Rural Rehabilitation Corporation ~~xxx~~ to the Resettlement Administration, but this assignment was not delivered and was later cancelled, so that the California Rural Rehabilitation Corporation still holds the option to purchase.

#### 7. IMPROVEMENTS TO PROPERTY:

The campsite at present is developed to accommodate 96 families, divided into twelve blocks of eight tent lots. Each Utility Building serves thirty-two tent lots. This development is on the east twenty acres of the forty acre tract.

Street work was limited to grading approximately 6100 feet of road through the center of camp (100 feet wide with 30 foot strip for parking in center), eleven laterals bordering tent lots and utility buildings, and a sixteen foot street along eastern boundary of property. There is a bridge, 50', of 24" diam. # 14 gauge, corrugated iron culvert pipe with concrete abutments, at the entrance to camp.

1 Manager's House, size 18' x 38'6", frame construction, Flintkote roofing, 4 rooms, stall shower, lavatory and flushvalve water closet, kitchen sink with wooden double drain boards, two compartment cement laundry tray, hot water boiler with connections.

1 Warehouse and office building, 18' x 38'6", frame construction, Flintkote roofing, 2 rooms and toilet room with lavatory and flushvalve water closet installed, shower roughed-in but not completed.

1 Garage, 12' x 18', frame construction, Flintkote roofing.

1 First Aid Building, 14' x 18'6", frame construction, Flintkote roofing, toilet room with lavatory and flushvalve water closet.

3 Utility Buildings (sanitary units) each 20' x 66', frame panel construction, cement floors, Flintkote roofing, divided in center into two sections, one for women, the other for men, with the following facilities:

Women's section: 4 two-compartment cement laundry trays with swing spout double faucets for hot and cold water, 6 showers, hot and cold water and dressing rooms, 6 flushvalve water closets and one 16' galvanized iron wash sink with eight double faucets supplied with hot and cold water.

Men's section: Two laundry trays, 6 showers, 4 water closets, one 6' urinal trough and one 19' wash sink; one hot water heating system, capacity 300 to 450 gallons, which supplies hot water for bath and laundry purposes at a cost of about 2½ cents per person per day.

1 Assembly platform, 48' x 50', not roofed, with a 14' x 30' stage roof, and piano pit.

1 Tank House, housing the 5'x14' pressure tank for water system.

15 Tent Platforms, sectional wood platforms 12' x 15'.

3 slop water hoppers and garbage can stands, constructed of concrete with flushing rim, water faucet and trap, connected to septic tanks.

1 Flagstaff - 50' steel pipe staff with 6" copper ball, set in concrete.

1 Water Distributing System, consisting of 1000' of 4" hot petrolastic dipped wrought steel pipe main, 580' of 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " ditto branches to the three utility buildings, 420' of 2" galvanized pipe branches to Manager's House, First ~~Adm~~ Building and Warehouse, and fire-hose standpipes. 3075' of 1" galvanized pipe branches to supply water to tent lots. This system is connected to a water pumping plant which was installed by the County of Kern and consists of the following:

well - 120' of 14" casing

pump - Winthroth with 5 HP motor and 5 stages set at 80'

tank - 5'x14' steel pressure tank with automatic switch

1 Sewer System consisting of three 3' x 39' Redwood sectional septic tanks, one at each utility building; one 3'x9' Redwood sectional septic tank, opposite warehouse; one 3'x6' Redwood sectional septic tank, at manager's house, together with about 3000' of 4", 6" and 8" sewer pipes. One 12"x12"x182' Redwood Sewage Distributing box with eleven 90' rows of 4" open joint drain tile in subirrigation field.

1 Electrical Distributing System consisting of transformers, switches, panels, poles, wires, lamps, etc., and a separate service for pumping.

4180' of fencing (six strands of barbed wire on 4"x5"x8' # 1 split Redwood posts) including entrance arch of hand-adzed square legs and rustic gate to match.

4500' of clothes lines with posts and cross-arms installed at rear of tent lots.

O OPERATION OF CAMP:

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1. ORGANIZATION: The most antagonistic group I have had any contacts with concerning the camp program was the Imperial Valley group. All the more interesting that their joint amazement over the work of Tom Collins in the Arvin Migratory Camp concerned its daily function as a true democracy. Perhaps one can make no finer comment on Mr. Collins' capacity for organization than this: that he really has managed to bring about a sound functional democracy within the camp group. Not that he has no convictions or exercises no leadership; the very opposite is true; but he wisely keeps himself in the background with the result that such convictions as he expresses carry all the more weight and such leadership as he exerts becomes all the more effective ~~by~~ being unostentatious. The wide scope of this functional democracy is apparent even from a casual glance at the various committees by means of which the campers administer their own affairs, through representative delegates, one from each unit: The Camp Committee, the Child Welfare Committee, The Good