

To Guy D. McKinney, Ass't to Director RCB--For Release  
From Biological Survey  
May 7, 1936

Please send 25  
copies to Zahner,  
Biological Survey

CCC BOYS ON FEDERAL BIRD  
REFUGE LIVE IN HOUSEBOATS

A squad of the CCC boys who have been assigned to work for the U. S. Biological Survey on the White River Migratory Waterfowl Refuge in central Arkansas live as CCC boys do nowhere else. Their sleeping quarters are a group of houseboats transferred from a flood-control project on the neighboring Mississippi.

Used as a base of operations by army engineers in their long struggle on the big river, the CCC boys' floating homes are equipped with every convenience. Modern bath tubs, however, are not preferred by the present occupants to a morning leap from a window. The White River curls below and is cool in the steamy Arkansas weather. Breakfast may be caught out of the same window with a hook and an old piece of string. White River is famous for its fish.

Not all of the several hundred CCC workers on the White River bird refuge are lucky enough to be assigned to houseboats. Most of them live in CCC camps of the usual type in other localities on the big area. Members of the houseboat squads are boys who have proved their skill at boat building.

Boat construction is a new departure for CCC workers anywhere. Four barges were needed to carry a huge mud scoop from place to place on the area's waterways. Because all of the CCC boys are young and none has ever been apprenticed to a trade, Work Superintendent Hiram Bakes outlined the technical job with some misgivings. Then, he called for volunteers. Under his direction a squad set to work the next day on a shipment of Oregon fir. One 16 by 40 foot barge is now tested and ready for launching. Another is on the way, and

two more are begun. So professionally has the job been carried out that a Mississippi boat builder has promised places in his shop later on to three of the CCC leaders.

#### Minnows Control Mosquitoes

Not all days run smoothly in CCC camps. Some feuds have small beginnings and surprising endings. At White River a dose of quinine started a chain of circumstances that began as a messroom grouch and finished as a mosquito-control project, accomplished by minnows introduced into the pools where mosquito larvae were found.

Quinine to ward off malaria was deemed necessary by the camp doctor. Even from some of the officers meals were withheld until the dose was swallowed. One or two CCC boys muttered, refused quinine, and went without a meal or two. Then they wrote home. Parents wrote to the newspapers. A congressman was heard from. When the snowball of rumor was big enough to threaten the camp with a national scandal, the authorities took steps to find out whether, in fact, the malaria cases in the infirmary had originated at White River.

Nearly all were found to be recurrent, imported from elsewhere.

Then began a chase of the Anopheles mosquito, carrier of malaria. One CCC officer had figured that if the scandal of a sick camp is not dealt with before it occurs, the scandal may break out whether the sickness does or not. A medical dictionary said that the Anopheles breeds in old tin cans, old automobile tires, and in stagnant pools. A search was made. True enough, some infested refuse was found on the refuge and several pools containing Anopheles larvae.

The remedy first suggested, a dose of kerosene thrown into the breeding places, only brought up another hurdle to leap. The Biological Survey administers the White River refuge so as to provide as many clear pools as possible for the visiting wildfowl. Kerosene in excess would kill the aquatic plant food needed by the migrants that haunt the area.

The scandal perished when the knowledge that mosquito larvae are natural minnow food suggested a suitable remedy. Minnows were dumped into each pool. On wildlife refuges the Biological Survey has found that in such cases biological remedies are best.