**Waite Phillips’ New Mexico for Fish Camp and Hunting Lodge**

Rich Loosbrock, Ph.D.

rdloosbr@adams.edu

@DrRichLoos

 Feel free to email or message on Twitter any questions you may have over the summer, or any insights into the camps and roles that you play.

**Fish Camp**:

 Summer of 1927: For a great read, get Bill Bryson’s *One Summer*; it thoroughly covers that eventful summer and provides a good coverage of the 1920s; I assign it in my graduate class.

 The 1920s are one of the more misunderstood periods in history. Most popular conceptions involve flappers, gangsters, and speakeasies. It was actually a decade full of cultural tension, with the Ku Klux Klan reaching its pinnacle and focused on suppressing immigrants and Catholics. In the urban areas, the “modern temper” was taking root, with a more permissive attitude towards sex and personal behavior.

 Many Americans were deeply disillusioned by participation in World War I and in general they turned their backs on the world during the decade. Overall, the decade was one of prosperity if one looks at overall growth as measure by GNP. However, the growth was wildly uneven as the American economy straddled the gap between a modern economy based on technologies such as the auto, radio, and appliances versus one rooted in 19th century extractive industries such as coal and farming.

 Of course, we have Philmont for the reason that Waite Phillips was on the right side of the economic equation. The 20s economy was carried by spectacular growth of a few major industries: automobiles, radio, synthetics and chemicals, appliances, and petroleum. The US was shifting from coal to oil, so it was the golden age of exploration and oil field development. He played it well and made a fortune.

 Three events of note were in the front of the public discourse that summer. One, Charles Lindbergh’s flight in May captured the imagination like nothing before, and radio ensured that all Americans could share in the glow of the event. Lindbergh’s enjoyed a status as national hero was almost unprecedented right up until September 11, 1941, when he gave a speech in Des Moines opposing US drift towards war in which he was seen as anti-Semitic and pro-Nazi.

 Two, the New York Yankees blew through a record setting season, with Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig chasing the home run record. Many consider the ’27 Yankees, known as Murderer’s Row, to be the best single team in sports history.

 Third, the lower Mississippi River basin had the biggest flood, and perhaps the biggest natural disaster, in American history. It had huge ramifications for the future, from the growth of government to the migration of African-Americans to the north.

**The Hunting Lodge**:

 In the description of the context for the Summer of 1941, I would correct some of what is in the camp profile. The Blitz was over by early May of 1941, although Americans may have been expecting it to resume. But Hitler ended the bombing of England because he then launched the largest military operation in history: the invasion of the Soviet Union. Many Americans were fascinated by this and really didn’t know who they should favor, as both were seen as mortal threats to the West and the U.S.. Also, as the profile indicates there was division in the U.S. but not as much as there was in 1940. American public opinion shifted dramatically in June of 1940 with the fall of France in just 40 days; if anyone thought Hitler was not a threat before then they could not possibly continue to think that after. That fall, the U.S. instituted the first peacetime draft and began a rapid program of mobilization. By the summer of 1941 Americans were already well on the road to war, even if they didn’t know when or where it would begin. There was tension and anxiety and a sense that the world was about to change. Later, the summer of 1941 would be bathed in nostalgia as an innocent and carefree time but no one could see it at the time. Memory is not history, and it has a Doppler effect, changing with distance from an event.

 One thing Americans could feel in 1941: an end to the crippling, decade-long Great Depression, that had done so much to shake their faith in the system.