

Ogden City, Utah, WWII Heritage City

A series of lessons from the [World War II Heritage Cities Lesson Collection](#)



Figure 1: Men and women using mechanical loading to handle supplies at the Utah ASF Depot, also known as the Ogden Defense Depot. (Credit: Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University, ID 98994)

Introduction

The three lessons, and culminating fourth lesson, support the development of understanding the significance of [Ogden City, Utah, World War II Heritage City](#). The first lesson examines the role of the Ogden Defense Depot and those who worked there in supporting home front war industry and transportation of wartime materials. The second lesson teaches about the contributions of civilians to home front volunteer efforts and war financing. Examples include Ogden's Junior Red Cross chapters and the Ogden Red Cross Canteen. The third lesson shares on the prisoner-of-war camp in Ogden, which held Italian and German prisoners of war who worked locally, such as at the Defense Depot and in agriculture. All lessons highlight specific contributions but connect to larger themes and understandings of the U.S. home front during wartime. A mix of primary and secondary sources are used, along with photos and media.

Lessons (with World War II home front topics):

The first three lessons listed can be taught individually or collectively, in any order. The final lesson is to support students in combining learning across the three lessons, and/or comparison to other World War II home front cities in a culminating activity.

1. The Ogden Defense Depot in Ogden City, Utah, World War II Heritage City (p.5)

- Wartime industry and transportation
- Military logistics
- Women in the workforce
- Prisoners of war
- African American history
- Economic growth

2. Home Front Volunteerism in Ogden City, World War II Heritage City (p. 20)

- Junior Red Cross
- Red Cross Canteen
- War bonds
- Material drives
- Civilian volunteerism

3. Prisoner-of-War Camp in Ogden City, Utah, World War II Heritage City (p. 33)

- Prisoner-of-war (POW) Camps
- Italian and German prisoners of war
- Oral histories

- Ogden Defense Depot
- Civilian perspectives

4. [Ogden City, Utah: Comparing and Connecting WWII Home Front Cities \(p. 47\)](#)

Positioning these Lessons in the Curriculum:

The standards listed beneath the lesson links are a collection of standards covered in the lesson collection. The lessons have been aligned to national standards and topics, as well as to strands within the Utah Core Standards for Social Studies (as of 2016). Objectives for each lesson, materials, and resources are listed within the lesson.

Time period: World War II

Topics: World War II, women's history, workforce migration, science and technology

United States History Standards for Grades 5-12

This lesson relates to the following [National Standards for History](#) from the UCLA National Center for History in the Schools:

Era 8: The Great Depression and World War II (1929-1945)

Standard 3: The causes and course of World War II, the character of the war at home and abroad, and its reshaping of the U.S. role in world affairs

Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

This lesson relates to the following [Curriculum Standards themes for Social Studies](#) from the National Council for the Social Studies:

- Theme 2: Time, Continuity, and Change
- Theme 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- Theme 8: Science, Technology, and Society
- Theme 9: Global Connections

Relevant Common Core Standards

These lessons relate to the following [Common Core English and Language Arts Standards for History and Social Studies](#) for middle and high school students:

Key Ideas and Details

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-12.1
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-12.2

Craft and Structure

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-12.4

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-12.7
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-12.9

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-12.10

Utah Core Standards for Social Studies

The lessons align to the following strands within the Utah Core Standards for Social Studies (as of 2016).

Utah Studies

UT Strand 3: Utah in the Union

United States History II

US II Strand 4: Traditions and Social Change

US II Strand 6: Another Global Conflict and the Beginnings of the Cold War

World History

WH Strand 6: Global Conflicts

The lesson series was written by Sarah Nestor Lane, an educator and consultant funded by a National Council on Public History's cooperative agreement with the National Park Service.

Lesson 1: The Ogden Defense Depot in Ogden City, Utah, World War II Heritage City

About this Lesson

This lesson is part of a series about the World War II home front in [Ogden City, Utah, World War II Heritage City](#). The lesson includes readings and photographs that help students understand the Ogden Defense Depot, including its background and role in meeting critical wartime needs such as storage, shipping, and logistics. The materials also highlight women and prisoners of war working at the depot.

An additional extension reading explores African American history in the region during the war. While not all content in the extension reading is connected directly to Ogden City, it connects to the city through local railroad history and people who had a regional impact.

Objectives:

1. Explain the purpose of the Ogden Defense Depot on the home front and its contributions to the Allied forces.
2. Describe how a multifaceted workforce, including service members, women, and prisoners of war, contributed to the home front at the Ogden Defense Depot.
3. Compare local, historical perspectives on service to synthesize and connect to larger wartime perspectives and themes.

Materials for Students:

1. Photos: Figures 2-6 (*can be displayed digitally*)
2. Readings 1, 2, 3 (and additional extension reading)
3. *Recommended:* Map of Utah with Ogden City marked



Getting Started: Essential Question

How did the Ogden Defense Depot and the people who worked there contribute to the war effort?

Photos

Teacher Note: Some photos and texts refer to the Ogden Arsenal. The Ogden Arsenal was located south of Ogden City and specialized in manufacturing and storing ammunition. The surrounding Weber and Davis counties had strong military logistics contributions closely related to Ogden City. The Ogden Defense Depot in Ogden City served as a supply and distribution center.



Figure 2: Aerial view of Defense Depot Ogden (Credit: Utah Historical Society, Photo No. 255 - "Defense Depot Ogden P.7," Utah Department of Cultural & Community Engagement)



Figure 3: Negative of a photograph showing unidentified workers at a warehouse at Defense Depot Ogden. (Credit: Multimedia Archives, Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Photo ID 1744887)



Figure 4: A woman working at Ogden Arsenal's Shipping Department. Ordnance supplies pass through the warehouses on their way to the military overseas. (Credit: Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University)

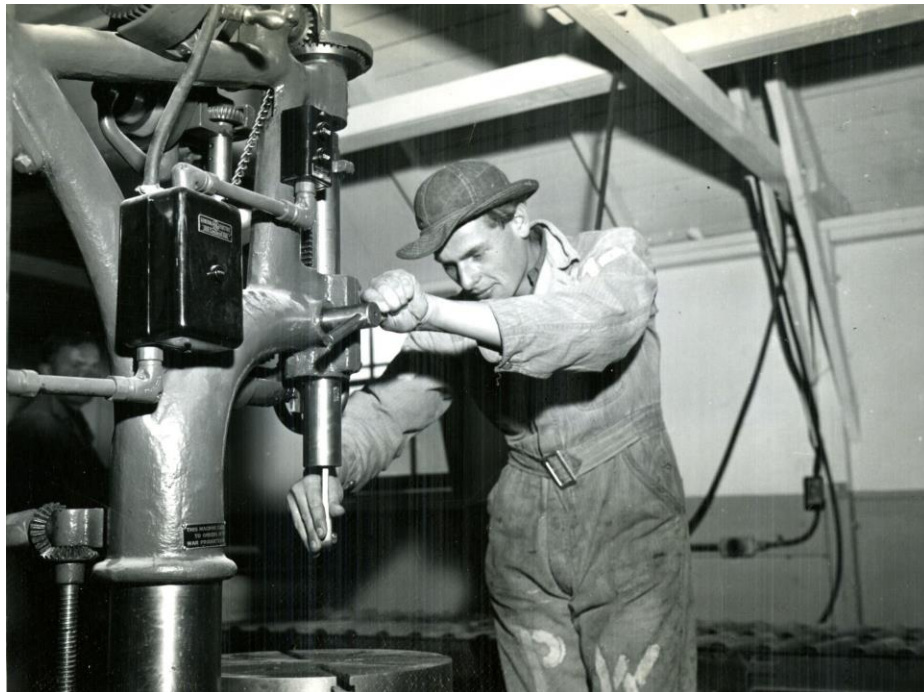


Figure 5: "German POW at Work in the Utah Repair Sub-Depot, 5th Echelon Range Repair Department. (Prisoner setting a riveting machines which is electrically operated and is used in repairing field ranges.)" "PW" painted on uniform. Photo by U.S. Army Signal Corps. (Credit: Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University, Photograph No. 99154)



Figure 6: Negative of a photograph showing unidentified workers in warehouse at Defense Depot Ogden, Utah during World War II. (Credit: Multimedia Archives, Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Photo ID 1744895)



By the numbers:

- The Ogden Defense Depot, once named the Utah general depot, was originally built as a \$7,000,000 supply center. This is valued at around \$155 million today.
- In July 1941, a \$516,990 contract was issued for two large warehouses to be constructed, building on to the established center and 11 warehouses already under contract at the time. The warehouses measured about 600 feet long and 180 feet wide. The warehouses were finished within 210 days. Other contracts included ones for locomotive sheds, equipment buildings, and fencing. (“Ogden Company Obtains Supply Base Contract,” July 12, 1941, *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*)
- The depot reached peak employment in 1943 with about 7,677 workers.
- In 1945 alone, some 32,407 freight cars were used to ship over 1 million tons of supplies.



Quotations to consider:

“In the vast network of rail facilities serving the United States in completing its defense preparations, the Ogden Union Railway and Depot company is the most strategically important terminal west of Omaha. Besides directly serving an army supply depot, an arsenal and Hill field [Army Air Corps Base], the depot company represents a direct doorway to the west coast, north, west, and south and is also a natural gateway for freight and passenger transportation to all points in the western territory.”

- R.E. Edens, Superintendent, O.U.R. & D. Co., “Ogden Most Important Railroad Center,” February 8, 1942, *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*

“During that time, I was in the Ogden Chamber of Commerce, and I was on the Military Affairs Committee of the Ogden Chamber of Commerce, and we were trying to rehabilitate the Ogden Arsenal. Now the Ogden Arsenal had been originally built after World War I, and we had a bad windstorm come down Weber Canyon and cut across the sand ridge there and blow down most of the magazines they had constructed. . . . So, a group of us got together, and we decided that we were going to try to use it for some kind of benefit to the community and state. So, we got permission from the Works Progress Administration to start the reconstruction of the magazines and rehabilitate the Ogden Arsenal. . . . And that led from the Ogden Arsenal to Hill Field and then the Defense Depot and the Davis Supply Depot down at Clearfield. . . .

I was president of the Chamber of Commerce then and afterward when Hill Field was being activated, and our first officer was Colonel Burman in charge, and then later on the Defense Depot came up, and we were working hard to get it. I got a telegram from the Secretary of War Stimpson, and he said, 'If the OCC will raise \$100,000 to help buy the land there, you can get the site there in Ogden. But you have to have information back to my office by 10 am.'

Well, I called a meeting, and we got all the directors of the Chamber of Commerce, the city commissioner, and county commissioner, and other prominent people around here, in Ogden to pledge \$100,000. That's how we got the Ogden Defense Depot."

- Samuel C. Powell (*Interviewed in the 1960s by Mack S. Taft, Weber State University, Stewart Library Oral History Program. The full interview can be [accessed here.](#)*)



Read to Connect

Background: The Utah General Depot is another name for the Ogden Defense Depot. The main purpose of the depot was to store and ship wartime supplies, such as military equipment, artillery, clothing, and rations. The following text, along with By the Numbers and Quotations to Consider, provides background on the depot.

Reading 1: Newspaper Article

"Utah General Is One of Best Supply Centers"

The Ogden Standard-Examiner, February 8, 1942

Utah general depot, a major storage and distribution center of the army quartermaster corps, is one of the 'finest layouts of any of the army's great depots,' in the words of Brigadier General Frank F. Scowden, deputy general quartermaster, U.S. Army.

This big establishment, located at Ogden where it has perfect rail and other transportation facilities, also is almost equi-distant from major points on the Pacific coast, the Pacific Northwest and the Mexican and Canadian borders, a fact which make it of great strategic importance.

Leaped to Action

Construction at the \$7,000,000 establishment started 13 months before Pearl Harbor – and but a few hours after the first bomb fell on U.S. Pacific outposts on that memorable Sunday. Lt. Col. William L. Mays, quartermaster and commanding officer at Utah general depot, and

his executive officer, Lt. Elmer Ward, had their full force at the depot responding to needs of our fighting forces.

Like other vital army establishments in the Ogden area, Utah general depot has been on a 24-hour-per-day basis since.

Land for the Utah general depot, some 1768 acres, was acquired at a total cost of \$309,632, of which \$99,632 was contributed by the Ogden chamber of commerce. Construction was started under direction of Col. Elmer G. Thomas, then constructing quartermaster for Ogden and vicinity.

Officers Named

Lieutenant Colonel Mays is now assisted in administration of the depot by the following officers:

Lieutenant Colonel R.C. Vickers, signal corps supply officer; Major T. F. McGovern, chemical warfare supply; Captain James V. Corkery, medical supply officer; First Lieutenant Marcos Freeman, engineer corps supply.

Questions for Reading 1, By the Numbers, Quotations to Consider, and Photos

1. What was the purpose of the Ogden Defense Depot?
2. How did Ogden's location and railroads impact the decision to build a defense depot there?
3. Review the list of military officers who helped administer the depot (in Reading 1, last paragraph). What clues does this provide about the types of materials processed at the depot?
4. Using evidence from the newspaper article and the "By the Numbers" section, describe some of the costs and scale of the depot.
5. How does Samuel C. Powell's quotation (in "Quotations to Consider") help explain why the depot was built in Ogden? What interest did the city have in this?
6. How do the photos show the logistics of military sites working to support troops overseas? Note how one photo is of a woman working at the Ogden Arsenal. How would this work be related to the work happening at the depot?
7. Based on the sources you have read so far, do you think the decision to build the depot in Ogden was influenced more by local infrastructure or community action? Support your answer with evidence.

Reading 2: Oral History

Teacher Tip: You can use the video titled [“Talking with the Past #2: Oral History”](#) from the National Park Service to support students in analysis of oral histories.

Use [Lesson 3](#) in this series with students to learn more about the local prisoners of war whom Eleanor Painter refers to. Also, African American service members are briefly referred to in the oral history. You can use the lesson extension’s additional reading to connect to this.

Oral History Excerpts: Eleanor C. Painter

Interviewed by Sarah Langsdon, January 30, 2006. This work is the property of the Weber State University, Stewart Library Oral History Program. The full interview can be [accessed here](#). (Note: Harrisville is a city within the Ogden metropolitan area, and the location of the Ogden Defense Depot.)

Eleanor Painter (EP): “. . . When they put the defense depot in Harrisville, I was in the last part of my high school years. We were very upset that they were taking all of the farms on the west side of the road and putting an Army depot there. We were very leery about having soldiers and Army personnel there. We didn’t know how the community would handle it.

Sarah Langsdon (SL): Did you work at the depot first or the arsenal?

EP: I graduated from high school in 1942. The war had already started. First they started drafting the men that were 20 to 45. After I graduated from high school they started drafting the men that were 18 and 19. My first year out of high school I worked at the Ogden Arsenal where we were putting together 35mm shot gun shells. They were cement buildings with no air conditioning, and we had to take salt tablets. About once or twice a month they had air-raid bomb drills; when the sirens sounded, we had to go to bomb shelters.

In the fall of that year, my friend, Lucille, and I decided we wanted to go back to college. We had to go through a lot of red tape because everyone was frozen on their jobs. We finally got released so that we could go to school. We went up to Weber State College; it was on 25th Street at that time one and a half blocks above Washington Boulevard. There was gas rationing and tire rationing, so we just rode with my father as he went to work with the state road commission and sometimes with her father, then we would walk up the hill to the school, and they would pick us up on their way home from work.

There were a lot of boys that left school that year going into the Service because they were drafted. In the spring there was a big group of about 25 or more that left at the same time, so everyone from the college went down to the train station to see the train off to tell the

boys goodbye. They were concerned about the college next year wondering if there would be any boys to be student body president or to keep the sports going. The Army trained a lot of the boys at the college in technical skills, so they had quite a few of them that were there.

After spring quarter, instead of going back to school again, we went to work first at the knitting mills sewing W.A.C. uniforms for the ladies that were in the Army. We only stayed there about two weeks and then we decided we wanted to go to the defense depot and work, mostly because the work wouldn't be so tedious and also we would get paid more. We got released from that job. They wouldn't let you go from one job to another unless the job was more essential to the war efforts, and they considered the depot work was.

We trained for two weeks as forklift operators. They trained us in a warehouse. We had to learn how to go in and out of the aisles and pick up the pallets. There were two different forklifts, so we had to learn to use both of them. One of them you sat on, the other one you had to stand on and press a lever with your foot up and down to make it go. It took us awhile to get used to them, but by the time the two weeks were over we felt like we were pretty good at it.

PU: What year did you start at the depot?

EP: That was in the summer of 1943, after we had the one year of college. We didn't start working at first with the Italian prisoners, but we hadn't been there for very long when they started bringing them over to the warehouses to work and load the boxcars. There would be an Army sergeant that would bring a group, then the Italians would have a sergeant over them and they would come in groups of about five or six. The Italian sergeants usually spoke some English. The guards would sit there with their guns and watch them work. Sometimes they kept a close eye on them, and sometimes they just sat there like they were daydreaming.

We had to take supplies out of the boxcar. If we were unloading a boxcar we would take them into the warehouse and stack them. If they were loading a boxcar a group would be loading the pallets, or we would take a pallet that was already loaded. They had iron ramps between the dock and the boxcars and we had to go into the boxcar, then the prisoners would unload the materials and stack them in the boxcar.

It was a rule that we only talked to them concerning our work. If we encouraged them at all, they would try to talk to us about other things. . . .

SL: What caused you to stop working on the forklifts?

EP: I had a pallet stacked with rubber wire in long, square boxes. Instead of crisscrossing them, they stacked them all in the same direction. So, when I went to put them up on the stack, the whole first row fell. I had to put them about a story high, and as I tipped the pallet back, the whole first row fell on me. I was in an alley so I couldn't get off the lift and it didn't have a guard on it, I was on a lift that you sat on a seat, so all I could do was to put my hands over my face and lay back until the boxes stopped falling. Then I managed to back the lift back out. I had to go over to the infirmary to be checked. I ended up with a stiff neck and bruises across my legs and stomach, but other than that I wasn't hurt bad. But, there had been girls that had gone off the ramp with their forklifts. One went between the boxcars when the steel plate slipped, and she was hurt very, very badly. So, we decided that there were other jobs open and that we would apply for some of those.

We applied for a different job, and they gave us a job being supervisors over the packaging where they dipped the packages into hot wax. We had to have a training period for that. We had to learn how many items could be put in a box, how much silica gel could be put in there to keep the moisture out, and how it was to be wrapped and labeled. At that time the German prisoners were there. So, in that area we worked with the German prisoners of war. The gentleman that was over his group of the German prisoners was, I would say, in his late thirties or early forties. He told us that he had a big two-story farmhouse, and the Nazis came and took over his farm for their offices and for their use. He had no idea where his wife and his children were.

I got married in February, 1944, on Valentine's Day while my husband was home on leave from the navy boot camp. They would ask me about my husband, where he was and what he was doing. If I didn't get a letter for a month or two then they were very concerned. They kept asking. They were real interested, I think because they were going through the same thing, not knowing where their families were. I worked there until the fall of 1945.

My husband was in the Navy. His ship came into port at San Diego, and he got a leave after being out in the Pacific for over a year. He was on a baby aircraft carrier. He had a two-week leave at home then we went to California for two months, and that is when I quit working at the supply depot. A lot of times when the prisoners were given a lot more freedom, in the fall of 1945 and into 1946, I understand that they were allowed to go into town more often.

When the soldiers first came to the supply depot, we used to see them march down the road in their platoons or groups. We were kind of nervous about it. There were some of them that were Black soldiers, and we were not used to seeing a lot of the Black soldiers around. If we saw any of the service men coming, we would go around the back of the house or inside, but we were curious enough to watch them. When they first brought the Italian prisoners, there was a group of us that climbed a tree to look over the fence because

we were curious to see what their barracks looked like and what they were doing, and to see if we could see anything. We didn't really see very much. We just saw a few of them walking around outside their barracks. It was quite a change for our community, because it was just a little community with almost like a country lane for a road, and it really changed the whole area.

Some of the farmers moved to Idaho and Oregon we knew everyone that lived in Harrisville and a lot in the surrounding communities. We hated to see them leave”

Questions for Reading 2

1. How does Eleanor Painter's account show a different perspective on the feelings of the community on the depot being built?
2. Describe how supplies moved through the depot, from unloading to packaging, based on Painter's description.
3. What defense jobs did Painter do? How do these jobs show opportunities and risks for women?
4. How does Painter describe the work and arrival of prisoners of war? Does their work at the depot surprise you? Why or why not?
5. How did the war affect life for Painter? Consider even her day-to-day life.
6. Reflection: This oral history is only one perspective and lived experience. What other oral histories would you be interested in reading or listening to from the depot, and why?

Reading 3: Newspaper Article

Teacher Tip: At the time of lesson publication, \$7.80 in 1942 is the equivalent of over \$150 today, and \$15.60 is the equivalent of over \$300 (2026). You may recalculate this to share with students based on current rates.

Official Lauds Patriotism of Extra Workers

Part-Time Helpers at Utah Depot Give Aid to Armies

The Ogden Standard-Examiner, September 13, 1942

Major Lloyd M. Mathes, in charge of the motor transport division at Utah quartermaster depot, is delighted with the response to his appearance for part-time workers, and gave high praise Saturday to the spirit of patriotism evinced by Ogden people who answered the appeal.

At the same time Major Mathes emphasized that he can use all the extra part-time workers he can get.

Last week it was announced that the depot would welcome part-time workers either three or six days a week, to work between six and ten p.m. They are paid \$7.80 for three shifts a week and \$15.60 for six shifts. The appeal was made particularly to people already employed, who wish to aid in the war effort by working evenings at the depot.

The response was wonderful, Major Mathes declared. Most of the people who have applied are obviously imbued by patriotic motives, rather than the money involved, he said.

In response to a question in the minds of many people, it was pointed out that these volunteer workers may terminate their work at any time, and that they may also be excused if other duties and obligations call upon them.

It was gratifying, the major said, to note that so many people realized the importance of the work. American armed forces are waiting for supplies being issued at the depot, it was pointed out, and the sooner they obtain them, through the help of patriotic citizens, the better it will be for all concerned.

About 50 civilians were working Friday evening, and about 100 are now signed up.

Questions for Reading 3

1. What does the flexibility offered to part-time workers suggest about the local wartime labor needs?
2. Why does the article emphasize the connection between the depot work and the military receiving needed supplies?
3. Consider Mathes' opinion on the motives of those signing up for part-time work. Do you agree or disagree with his opinion? Why?
4. How does this article connect to what you have learned about the depot and its workforce in the other sources?

Lesson Closing

Answer the essential question: How did the Ogden Defense Depot and the people who worked there contribute to the war effort?

Extensions

Additional Reading

African Americans in Ogden During World War II

By Sarah Nestor Lane

During World War II, Ogden was a segregated community where African American residents faced discrimination in housing, employment, and daily life. While they played important roles on the home front and in the military, their contributions were often overlooked or undocumented. Images taken at the Defense Depot, at community wartime events, and other spaces rarely show racial diversity. The U.S. Armed Services were also segregated until 1948, further shaping their local experiences.

Ogden's African American population grew from 1900 to 1950. The population increased from 51 to 1,106 at the time, while the city's total population in 1950 was slightly over 57,000. Much of this growth was connected to the railroads. Ogden was nicknamed "Junction City" since it was a major rail hub with the transcontinental railroad and branch lines.

Erec Stene explains that before the war, many African Americans traveled to Ogden specifically for railroad work. In *"The African-American Community of Ogden, Utah: 1910–1950,"* Stene writes, "The availability of jobs with the railroads brought many African Americans to Ogden in search of steady employment." However, these jobs were limited by racial discrimination. African American workers were often restricted to service positions such as porters, waiters, cooks, boiler washers, or engine wipers, and were typically supervised by white managers. Despite these limitations, the railroads brought new workers to the area and played a critical role during the war by transporting troops, ammunition, and supplies.

Segregation, Community Life, and Wartime Opportunities

Housing was segregated, forcing many African American families to live in a small area of the city. Because of wage differences and discriminatory practices, most African Americans could not afford to buy homes, and newspapers included housing advertisements specifically for non-white residents.

Public spaces and entertainment were also segregated. African American service members stationed nearby, including those serving at Hill Air Field (now Hill Air Force Base), faced limited and separate recreation options, such as a segregated USO facility. Although Hill Air Field was located just south of Ogden, it was closely connected to the community and was

the largest wartime employer in Utah. The base brought new families to the area, including African American service members and their relatives, many of whom worked on the base or nearby, such as Anna Belle Weakley and Ruby Timms Price.

Anna Belle Weakley moved to Ogden from Louisiana in December 1942. After arriving, she worked on unpacking shipments at the airfield, took a typing class, and passed a civil service exam to become a typist. She worked at the base cafeteria and at the Officers Club coat check. Later, she became the owner of the Railroad Porter's and Waiter's Club, an important social and economic space for Ogden's African American community. During the war, the club thrived because of its proximity to Union Station and the railroad employees who worked there. At the time it was also one of only two places that provided lodging to African Americans, and the only place where they could cash checks outside of a bank.

Ruby Timms Price moved to Utah and worked at Hill Air Field. Price worked as an embarkation specialist, helping manage the movement of supplies and service members. Although she had hoped to become a fighter pilot to search for her missing brother, discrimination based on both her race and gender prevented her from doing so. In addition to her work, she volunteered in recreation programs on base, advocated for equal recreation opportunities for African American families, and helped teach literacy skills. In early 1944, Ruby Timms Price became one of the first chapter presidents of the NAACP chapter founded in Ogden.

Despite the barriers they faced, African Americans in Ogden built strong community networks and made lasting wartime contributions. As Stene notes, the limited records from this period are themselves revealing: "The lack of documents about Ogden's African-American community between 1910 and 1950 is in some ways as informative as existing documents." The gaps in historical records reflect the segregation and barriers local African Americans faced, while evidence shows they had filled crucial roles in the region's home front war efforts.

Questions for Additional Reading

1. What type of work originally motivated African American workers to move to the region? How was this work impactful during the war as well?
2. Describe how segregation and discrimination impacted African American workers and families in Ogden and surrounding communities during the war.
3. How did Anna Belle Weakley and Ruby Timms Price contribute to the local wartime efforts and community?

4. What does Stene mean when he suggests that the lack of historical records is “informative”? What does this tell us about stories and voices that may be missing in the telling of local histories?

Resources and Supporting Texts for the Reading

[“Anna Belle Weakley, The Queen of Ogden’s 25th Street,”](#) by Katherine Kitterman, Utah Women’s History

[“NAACP Founding in Ogden, 1944,”](#) from Weber State University

[“Ruby Timms Price, Lifelong Educator and Organizer”](#) by Sophie Dau, Utah Women’s History

[“The African American Community of Ogden, Utah: 1910-1950,”](#) Erec Stene, Utah State University (1994) *[Note: This source includes historically accurate but sensitive language and content related to racism and segregation. Previewing is recommended prior to classroom use.]*

[“Utah’s earliest black pioneers almost forgotten, but not completely,”](#) by Mark Saal, Standard-Examiner (February 26, 2018)

[“Utah Women In World War Two,”](#) by Katherine Kitterman, Utah Women’s History (May 7, 2020)

Lesson 2: Lesson: Home Front Volunteerism in Ogden City, World War II Heritage City

About this Lesson

This lesson is part of a series about the World War II home front in [Ogden City, Utah](#), [World War II Heritage City](#). The lesson contains readings and photos to support students in learning ways local civilians, including children, contributed to war efforts. The lesson shares information on the local Junior Red Cross chapters, the impact of the Ogden Red Cross Canteen, and an example of a material drive.

Objectives:

1. Identify examples of ways local civilians, including children, in Ogden contributed to home front causes.
2. Explain how home front volunteer efforts in Ogden supported the armed forces during the war.
3. Compare local, historical perspectives on service to synthesize and connect to larger wartime perspectives and themes.

Materials for Students:

1. Photos: Figures 7-11 (*can be displayed digitally*)
2. Readings 1, 2, 3
3. *Recommended:* Map of Utah with Ogden marked



Getting Started: Essential Question

How did civilians in Ogden support the war effort through volunteering and other home front activities?

Photos



Figure 7: "General Talbot presents war bonds to civilian employees in ordnance supply section." Three Army personnel are pictured with eight women workers from the Defense Depot Ogden ordnance supply. This photo was from the "Victory News" newsletter produced at Defense Depot Ogden. (Credit: Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University, ID 99055)



Figure 8: "Arsenal Using Rolling Bond Dispensary," a photo from *The Ogden Standard-Examiner* on September 24, 1943. A guard shelter was mounted on a truck traveling around Ogden Arsenal to make cash sales of bonds. Lieutenant Colonel Strohecker purchases a bond. Several women workers are in line behind him.



Figure 9: The Junior Red Cross chapter at Madison school in Ogden (32 students) learning how to knit and weave items such as sweaters and blankets for civilians in war areas overseas. This photo was one alongside Reading 1 in *The Ogden Standard-Examiner* on April 13, 1941.

Read to Connect

Teacher Tip: This text shares examples of Ogden Junior Red Cross wartime efforts. For an extension to this reading, students can compare Junior Red Cross contributions from other home front cities across the country. Examples of cities with connections to the Junior Red Cross include [Hastings, Nebraska](#), [Paterson, New Jersey](#) and [Bedford County, Virginia](#).

Reading 1: Newspaper Article Excerpts

Boys and Girls Forming Ties of Friendship

Appealing Notes Come from Youngsters in Foreign Lands

Thanks is Returned

Ogden Schools Backing Junior Red Cross

By: William F. Smiley, *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, April 13, 1941

The American Red Cross heard of a plan, 10,000 Ogden school children contributed nickels, dimes and quarters to become a part of the plan, and here is the result:

Down in the state of Georgia there is a book, prepared by boys and girls of Lorin Farr school in Ogden. The book tells the youngsters of the southern state what Ogden, Weber County and Utah are like. It tells, and shows pictures, of the great sugar beet, mining, livestock raising and fruit and vegetable processing industries of Utah. It describes the rail, auto and aerial routes into, through and out of the Beehive state. It tells of the beauties of national

parks and monuments, the grandeur of mountains, canyons and lakes which contribute to the full and pleasant lives of Utahns.

Greater Purpose

But the book does more than tell of these things. Its preparation made the Lorin Farr boys and girls realize the multitude of things for which they could be thankful. Reading it, or even just looking at the pictures, makes the boys and girls of a state about 2000 miles away realize that their fellow Americans in Utah are much like themselves, with daily activities to keep them busy and natural beauties to make them happy in their work. The book carries a message of the brotherhood of man under all climates and conditions.

‘It’s very kind of you American citizens to think of us Londoners,’ wrote Willie James to ‘Jane.’ His letter arrived in the United States along with many others from Britain. He forgot to put Jane’s full name and address on the envelope, so the ‘Jane’ to whom he was writing will probably never receive the letter.

But it might have been an Ogden girl who drew his thanks, because another phase of the great plan conceived by adults and executed by boys and girls of Ogden found hundreds of boxes of Christmas packages reaching England. Clothing and candy and toys were in the boxes. In some cases the toys were a bit late in arriving in England, of course, but that was all right – the children celebrated St. Valentine’s Day with them.

Perhaps the most eloquent letter received in thanks for the boxes came from ‘Jennie, five years.’ She couldn’t write, so just drew pictures, added a long line of X’s for kisses at the bottom, and sent them along.

Three hundred large cartons, packed with small gift boxes in some instances, were sent from Ogden school children to Britain and France during the Christmas season. Washington, Dee, Wilson and Grant elementary, Washington and Lewis high schools and Ogden senior high school contributed the major number of boxes.

True Humanitarianism

Surely a plan with such results must be a great movement, and an organization which can foster such worthwhile activities must be operated by a heart far greater than the collective hearts of its members.

And that, too, is true. The plan was the organization of the Junior Red Cross. Ogden school children, like most of those in the nation, responded 100 percent to the call for enrollment in the Junior Red Cross. Like true Americans they answered the plea of the world’s greatest welfare organization to contribute their share toward easing the burdens of less fortunate

people. And proverbially, their kindnesses were rewarded. That is another and equally interesting story.

Because the average American schoolroom is a cross section of the families in the average American city, the Red Cross, in organizing the junior branch, realized some of the children would be hard pressed to contribute so much as a nickel to the organization. Therefore, instead of making each child pay local and national dues and subscribe to the magazine which helps weld the widespread chapters to the parent group, the Red Cross organized the program so that the school pays the dues, so much per classroom, and so much per copy of the magazine, pro-rated among the classes.

In that way, and by having the contributions voluntary and of any amount the children can give, most schools can build up a surplus fund. For instance, Madison school contributed \$18 more than was required for membership dues and magazine subscriptions this year.

Extra Projects

There must have been some families, with three, four or five children in school, who made a sacrifice to send the nickels to school.

But in at least five individual cases the sacrifices were well repaid.

The mothers of those five children, dipping into their slim reserve and wondering how they could replace the five-cent pieces their children were asking for to 'join the Junior Red Cross,' probably were thinking more of allowing the kiddies to 'keep face' than they were of the ancient quotation about casting bread upon the waters.

Bus Tickets Bought

But out of the funds left over in the Ogden city school chapter of the Junior Red Cross when magazines and pamphlets, national and local dues were paid, the chapter officers, with the approval of school sub-chapters, allotted enough money to pay bus fare to and from school for five children over a seven-month period.

Madison school, which had an \$18 surplus handed in, later drew \$15 out again to purchase yarn, and with Miss Packer as instructor, 32 students, including a goodly number of boys, from the sixth grade began to knit sweaters and afghans [blankets] for civilians in war-torn countries.

The knitters at the Madison meet half an hour before school takes up and stay half an hour after school to learn their stitches. Many of them take their work home to continue it.

Similar knitting projects are under way at Mound Fort and Lincoln schools.

At the Lincoln, money for the knitting project was raised by popcorn and candy sales. Proceeds were used to buy yarn.

Yarn Gathered

At Mound Fort school, the project began by Junior Red Cross members collecting odds and ends of yarn to be given to the Red Cross and Bundles for Britain. Collections were so successful that someone had to be found to knit the yarn into sweaters and other clothing articles. The supply of yarn exceeded the supply of workers.

So the students asked to be taught how to knit and weave the yarn. They made simple squares for afghans, scarfs, caps and sweaters. In time, their increased skill reversed the demand, and again the cry was for yarn to be worked.

Money ordinarily spent for valentines was used at Mound Fort to purchase yarn, and a number of old sweaters and other knitted articles were brought to school and unraveled.

Miss Grace Boyle, in charge of the work at Mound Fort, reports that 20 crocheted afghans have been made at the school, and one class, unable to obtain yarn, made quilt tops from outwork suits and coats. Both the Red Cross and Bundles for Britain are now supplying yarn for the better knitters at the school. Altogether more than 75 articles have been produced at Mound Fort by 140 pupils and their teachers with cooperation of their parents.

'Save the Wrappers'

Hopkins and Pingree school Junior Red Cross members are recalling the World war days when gum and candy wrappers and cigarette packages were pounced upon whenever they were found lying on the street.

The two schools are collecting tinfoil, to go into the chapter collection and later be sent away. . . .

Scrapbook Provided

Children's and veterans' hospitals all over the country have received scrapbooks on hundreds of subjects from these three schools. And a number have been exchanged with boys and girls of foreign lands.

One of the foremost points of the big idea the American Red Cross had in organizing the Junior Red Cross was to foster peace through the establishment of friendships between the children of the United States and other countries. This could be done best, it was believed, by making the children acquainted with the customs and ideas of the other countries, and to exchange, through letters, scrapbooks and gifts, philosophies of the different peoples.

While such a program might be branded by some as propagandizing, it was built on a broader and firmer foundation than any propaganda scheme can utilize.

On Use of Mind

It was planned to take advantage of the latest in educational beliefs, that every boy and girl has a mind, and that education in itself is the teaching of how to use that mind, rather than giving the mind ideas already formulated. Thus, boys and girls would see the ideas of other people in picture and print, and would be able to compare them with their own ideas and select those closest to their own desires. Unfortunately, democracy is today the only philosophy which permits the making of that choice.

But democracy, America and Ogden can be thankful for the Junior Red Cross, which preaches the doctrine of doing for others, and which inculcates in American youth the quality which made civilization and which alone separates mankind from the other animals – humanitarianism.

Questions for Reading 1 and Photos

1. What kinds of projects did the Ogden Junior Red Cross chapters take part in?
2. How might receiving a book from students in Ogden have changed the way children in Georgia thought about life in Utah?
3. What kinds of items did Ogden students send to children in Britain and France?
Why?
4. What was the yarn problem and how was it solved?
5. Why does the author argue that the Junior Red Cross program is different from traditional propaganda? Do you agree or disagree with the author, and why?
6. How does the author try to influence the reader's views in the last two paragraphs?
7. *Photos*: How does one of the photos connect to Reading 1? What other types of civilian home front contributions are shown in the other photos?

Photos: Red Cross Canteen



Figure 10: Women making cookies for the Red Cross Canteen – Mrs. Elizabeth Whitmeyer, Mrs. Ketchie, Mrs. Carrigan, and Mrs. Bartlett, pictured in *The Ogden Standard-Examiner* on December 6, 1942.



Figure 11: “Mrs. W.B. Kerr (left), Mrs. R.E. Edens, and Mrs. Milton H. White, canteen workers, serve a group of soldiers.” Featured in photos of the Red Cross Canteen in *The Ogden Standard-Examiner* on December 6, 1942. In the background a sign reads “Weber County Chapter A.R.C. Ogden Utah.”



By the numbers:

- In June 1945 alone, the canteen served about 50,000 service members. This was an increase of over 5,000 service members per month. For that month, the canteen was run by about 180 volunteers who provided food, baked goods, and over 20,000 half-pint bottles of milk.
- After nearly four years of operation (it had opened March 25, 1942), the canteen closed on January 2, 1946, with 170 regular workers and a total of 1,546,231 service members served by November 1945. (*The Ogden Standard- Examiner*, November 12, 1945).



Quotations to consider:

“I am sure I can speak for all the boys on the train with me that the Red Cross is one hundred percent O.K. Last month our regiment contributed to the drive and expect to contribute more later. My home is in Lincoln, Nebraska. I expect to get another furlough soon and to stop for coffee and doughnuts on my way through Ogden. Don’t lose the recipe for those hot rolls.”

- Letter from a service member from California, printed in “Travelers Send Thanks Notes to Depot Canteen,” *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, October 17, 1943

“That the Red Cross canteen at the Union depot is one of the bright sport [sic] in the travels of thousands of service men is attested again and again by thanks letters and cards received each day. . . . ‘Not all are from men either,’ stated Mrs. Porter, ‘for we receive thanks cards and letters from many women in the military service.’”

- Walter E. Mann, “Travelers Send Thanks Notes to Depot Canteen,” *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, October 17, 1943

“. . . We at Topper Bakery are very happy to have been able to furnish this worthy service organization over 30,000 donuts during June. . . and we’ll keep right on supplying donuts as long as needed.

We must ALL remember . . . the war isn’t over! A big hard road lies ahead in defeating Japan. We can each do a little more to help, by donating just a little . . . maybe some home-made jams . . . jellies . . . or fresh fruit . . . or if you haven’t the time, just a dollar or two to the Ogden Red Cross Canteen. Such assistance will help a lot, and when you see the smile on a soldier or a sailor boy’s face, you’ll feel many times repaid.”

- "A Problem at the Red Cross Canteen," an ad by Topper Bakery in *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, July 2, 1945

Reading 2: Newspaper Article

Teacher Tip: Address with students that the following text uses a historical race label, not appropriate for use today. For more information on the African American population in Ogden, see Lesson 1's extension reading.

Reporter Finds Depot Canteen Is Widely Known

By Dorothy Porter, *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, December 19, 1943

Your reporter's visit to the Ogden Union railroad station each morning is developing into quite a weighty problem. After a stroll through the various departments to ascertain the gist of the news, an irresistible pull toward the Red Cross canteen is experienced. And that isn't good.

The daily gravitation is resulting in a complicated situation. After sampling canteen handouts, a rapid walk to work off additional pounds is in order. After a rapid walk, a devouring urge is again felt. The whole thing could turn into a vicious cycle.

Canteen Well Known

The Ogden canteen is known throughout the United States and in several countries where our boys are now serving for its friendly service and delicious doughnuts, hot rolls and coffee. Women working there are all Red Cross volunteers, doing the job because of a desire to contribute to the war effort.

Hundreds of letters from service men and women have been received at the canteen, complimenting the women on their friendly attitude and delicious handouts. Considerable revenue for operation of the canteen is gained from miscellaneous contributions of money by casual visitors who are impressed with the service.

Contributions range from five and ten cents to dollars, and every cent is for a good purpose, women workers report.

Instance Cited

Typical of how people feel about the canteen is the case of a woman whose husband gave her money for a long-distance telephone call to him when he got on the train. The woman turned around and gave the money to the canteen and wrote her mate an airmail letter.

Other typical donations include the following: trainman, \$2; section foreman, \$1; soldier, 25 cents; Marine, \$2; soldiers who pooled change, \$1.30; train passengers, cigarettes; World war I veteran, 20 cents; young civilian, \$2, and similar amounts from various other visitors.

A colored man felt a strong urge to donate something to the canteen, but another emotion was stronger. He was the father of a newly-born son and told canteen workers he just had to buy cigars to celebrate the occasion.

Women volunteers become acquainted with actions in the various theatres of war and come to understand the problems faced by our men through conversations with those who have seen action overseas. Some of the men return, serious and grim about the whole affair, while others, with a mighty effort, cast off the horrors of the fight, and devote themselves to the gay and commonplace life which is theirs for two weeks or so.

Lesson on Tea

One British sailor who stopped here forgot war and everything connected with it and concentrated on teaching the American canteen women how to make tea – good tea, the kind they drink in England. Onlookers were considerably amused by the women's efforts and the sailor's disparaging remarks.

One letter received at the canteen was from an Ogden boy stationed at Camp Roberts, California. He wrote, 'Incidentally, Ogden is becoming famous. So many of the fellows coming from the east and south recall and refer to Ogden as the place where they were served the wonderful coffee and doughnuts by pretty girls. You'd really be surprised at the favorable publicity Ogden's canteen is getting. Most everyone is acquainted with it and praises it.'

Three army nurses stationed at Letterman General Hospital, San Francisco, wrote: 'Perhaps you don't remember the three nurses whose journey you made just a bit more enjoyable, but I am sending you this card to let you know that we remember. Thank you again.'

A letter from a sergeant in an observation squadron, somewhere in England, wrote: 'A note of thanks for the courtesies and kindness extended to my friends and me during our short layover in your city.'

Informs Mother

An army private wrote from Grinnell college, Iowa: 'Please accept these few words of appreciation for the hospitality you show transient service men passing through your city. I

wrote mother telling her about the coffee and doughnuts, the best I've eaten since those she made.

'It does something to a fellow inside besides merely taking the edge off a late evening hankering for a snack. It makes him see that America is really with him. It brings out something that makes each of us feel closer to our fellow Americans. I know now I have friends in Ogden.'

Questions for Reading 2, Photos, By the Numbers, and Quotations to Consider

1. How does the author use humor at the beginning?
2. Why might travelers and service members feel motivated to donate to the canteen?
3. Some descriptions in the article focus on the appearance and friendliness of the women volunteers. How does this reflect social expectations and gendered language of the time?
4. How is the canteen presented as more than just a place to eat? (*Tip: Think of its symbolism or emotional roles.*)
5. *Reading 2 and Quotations to Consider:* How do letters from service members and wartime travelers show the canteen's impact?
6. *By the Numbers and Quotations to Consider:* Explain how the statistics and quotations work together to show the canteen's importance during the war.
7. *Photos:* How do the photographs connect to: 1) the roles of women at the canteen, and 2) its role in supporting service members?

Reading 3: Newspaper Article

Background: July 24 is Pioneer Day, an official holiday in Utah that commemorates the arrival of the first Mormon pioneers into the Salt Lake Valley in 1847. During the war, community celebrations like Pioneer Day were often paired with home front activities such as scrap drives. The term "Minute women" referred to women volunteers who supported the war efforts on the home front such as through civil defense and [material drive](#) participation. The name was a nod to Revolutionary War "Minutemen."

Tin Cans to Be Gathered Ere Pioneer Holiday

The Ogden Standard-Examiner, July 15, 1945

A tin can round-up is being held throughout the city Monday to clean out homes and grocery stores before the big July 24 celebration said Mrs. Garnett Littlefield, chairman.

City trucks will cover all 97 stores. Grocers are asked to have boxes placed outside the stores in convenient places.

Housewives and children are urged to take to the grocer every tin can they can locate, after washing them thoroughly, flattening them and removing labels.

‘Tin is so critical in the fight against the [Japanese] that it is considered sabotage to the war effort when a housewife tosses a tin can into the garbage,’ Mrs. Littlefield declared.

‘Minute women and other volunteers, city officials and grocers are cooperating in getting the cans shipped out of Ogden quickly, but it is the housewife who is most important in the whole effort. It is she who is the consumer, and she is the only one to reclaim the can from the refuse, prepare it properly, and get it on its way.

‘Every person connected with the salvage of tin is a volunteer who does his bit, so that the machines, packages, medicines, containers, etc., are supplied in the fight for life and privileges,’ emphasized Mrs. Littlefield.

Questions for Reading 3

1. What materials were Ogden residents asked to collect? Why?
2. How does the article describe the role of “housewives”? What responsibilities are placed on them?
3. Does the article motivate cooperation through encouragement, pressure, or guilt? Explain your opinion using examples.
4. If this article were written today, how might the language about responsibility and gender roles be different?

Lesson Closing

Answer the essential question: How did civilians in Ogden support the war effort through volunteering and other home front activities?

Connect: If you were on the home front during the war, which types of activities in the lesson would you have been most interested in, and why?

Lesson 3: Prisoner-of-War Camp in Ogden City, Utah, World War II Heritage City

About this Lesson

This lesson is part of a series about the World War II home front in [Ogden City, Utah, World War II Heritage City](#). The lesson contains readings and photos to learn about the prisoner-of-war camp in Ogden that held thousands of Italian and German prisoners of war. The lesson has a background text on the camp, an oral history, and a newspaper article. These readings include information on the founding of the camp and perspectives from a local civilian worker and a prisoner of war.

Objectives:

1. Describe the conditions and social dynamics of the local prisoner-of-war camp using primary sources.
2. Explain the benefits and obstacles of the camp to the local community, including to the Ogden Defense Depot.
3. Compare local, historical perspectives on service to synthesize and connect to larger wartime perspectives and themes.

Materials for Students:

1. Photos: Figures 12-19 (*can be displayed digitally*)
2. Readings 1, 2, 3 (and optional extension)
3. *Recommended: Map of Utah with Ogden marked*



Getting Started: Essential Question

How did the local prisoner-of-war camp affect Ogden City and impact home front efforts?

Photos



Figure 12: The POW camp, with the camp taxi in the photo. (Credit: Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University, ID 99067)



Figure 13: A POW operating tractor. Photo by U.S. Army Signal Corps (Credit: Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University, ID 99139)

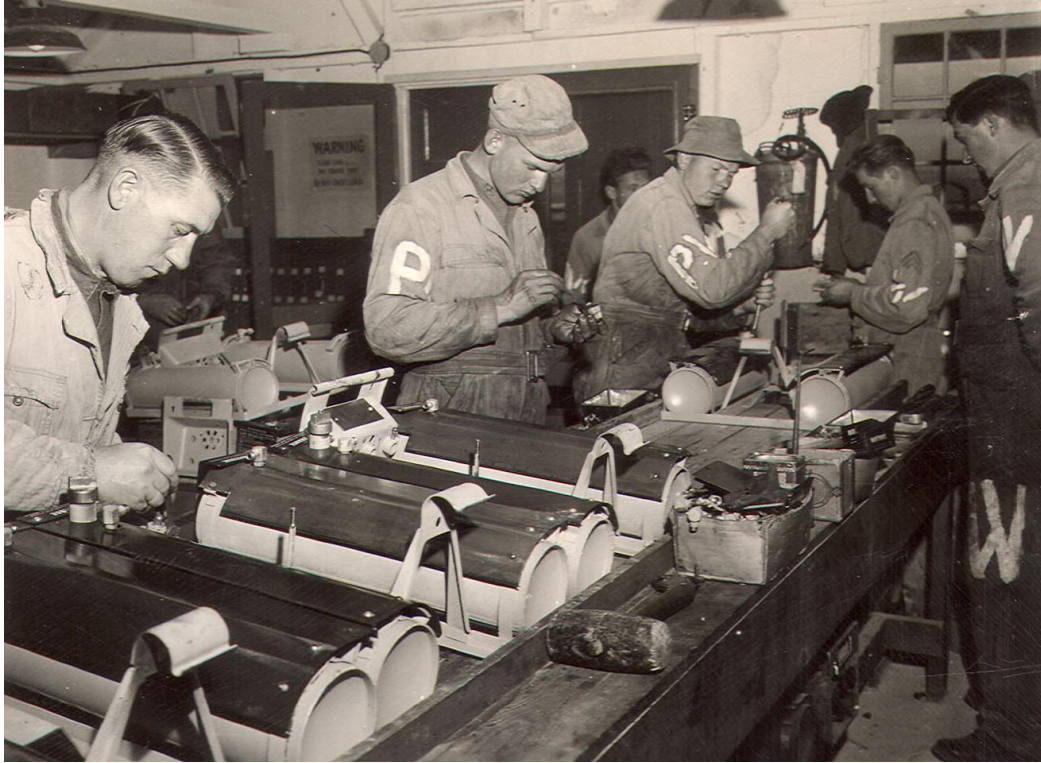


Figure 14: POWs at work at Defense Depot Ogden. Their clothing is marked with "PW" for identification. (Credit: Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University, ID 99042)



Figure 15: POW camp soccer team in Ogden. (Credit: Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University, ID 99077)



Figure 16: POW camp library. Italy patches on the arm sleeves designate the men as Italian POWs. (Credit: Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University, ID 99055)



Figure 17: Italian POW camp musicians play in band; a Christmas tree and holiday decorations are in the room. Italy patches on the arm sleeves designate the men as Italian POWs. ISU is an abbreviation for Italian Service Unit, organized beginning in April 1944 — see Reading 1. (Credit: Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University, ID 99050)



Figure 18: "The animals were used with women guards in patrolling warehouse areas at night and with enlisted men in guarding POW camp areas. At the Utah Depot it was found that one dog accompanied by a woman guard could patrol an area formerly requiring two men guards. The war dogs were employed at the Depot through 1945. -HUB Depot's Silver Anniversary Edition." (Credit: Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University, ID 99046)



Figure 19: "The typing classes proved especially successful for a number of groups of prisoners had previous office training or experience and some knowledge of English. These were organized into type training classes of 4 hours daily for a six-week period under the direction of Mrs. Spendlove of the Training Department." (Credit: Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University, ID 99044)



Read to Connect

Reading 1: Background Reading

Note: These excerpts are from “The History of the Prisoner of War Camp,” written between 1944 to 1945, from the Defense Logistics Agency – Defense Distribution Depot Ogden. The full text can be found [here](#) from the Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University.

Chapter 1: Establishment of Prisoner of War Camp

Background: World War II has presented to the United States Armed Forces a new problem, that of quartering, maintenance, and utilization of enemy prisoners of war in this country.

At the Geneva Convention 27 July 1929 provision was made for the utilization of prisoner of war labor by their captors.

The need of supplies for the combat troops in the various theatres of war has caused the volume of supplies passing through the Utah ASF Depot to increase rapidly. The labor agencies of the sparsely populated area of Ogden and vicinity were never capable of meeting fully the labor demands of the voluminous activities of the military installations established within it, and all of these installations demanded additional unskilled labor during the same period of time. Untrained managerial personnel and an extreme shortage of mechanical equipment for the handling of warehouse materials was a further hindrance.

Several major expedients were tried in an attempt to obtain the additional labor needed. United States Army labor battalions were utilized intermittently. During the school period of 1941 to 1942, several hundred high school and college students from northern Utah and southern Idaho were transported by train and bus to and from the Utah ASF Depot (a distance of 74 to 160 miles round trip) each Saturday and Sunday to unload the accumulation of incoming car loads not handled by the regularly available labor forces during the precious five days. Farm and ranch laborers from adjacent settlements and remote valleys, most of whom travelled long distances each day, were used daily during the winter months of 1941-42. (Local part-time laborers—mothers, students, business and professional men and women, are utilized regularly all during the year for the second shift operations.)

College and high school labor on a full time basis was utilized during the summer of 1942 to offset the loss of farm and ranch labor sustained during the spring to autumn period of 1942; the existing gap between the availability of these two groups during spring and fall seasons, however, was a handicap never overcome. The arrangements were not

satisfactory because they did not provide a constant flow of full time labor for daylight hours and failed to maintain the standard of labor efficiency necessary for the rapid movement of large quantities of supplies. Consequently, the labor shortage became critical.

Demand for Prisoner of War Labor—On 11 October 1942, an order was issued that authorized the establishment of the Prisoner of War Camp, Ogden, Utah, SCU 1938, for the purpose of supplying unskilled labor to the Utah ASF Depot. . . . The Prisoner of War Camp was activated in December, 1942. . . .

Chapter 4: Reactivation of Internment Camp for German Prisoners of War

Objective in the Prisoner-of-War Program. -- Some of the difficulties arising from the citizen, press, and radio propaganda about coddling the prisoners of war in this country, while the atrocities are being perpetrated on the United States soldiers in enemy camps, may be somewhat attributed to a misunderstanding of the underlying laws governing conditions.

If the people of the United States could realize that the Geneva Convention, even though repudiated and ignored by our enemies, is not a mere code of courtesy, written and signed at Geneva, Switzerland, 27 July 1929, but is really a ‘Convention Between The United States of American [sic] And Other Powers,’ ratified by the Senate of the United States 7 January 1932, and proclaimed by the President of the United States, 4 August 1932, by which it has become one of the highest laws of our country.

The sole objective in the prisoner-of-war program has always been the proper utilization to the maximum of the services of the prisoners of war to relieve labor shortages.

New Demand for Prisoner-of-War Labor. -- After the Italian Prisoners of War became co-belligerents of the United States and were organized into the Italian Service Units, April 1944, certain types of supply operations, previously restricted by the Geneva Convention, now became part of the Italian utilization program. . . . Restrictions applicable to prisoners of war were removed for those who were organized into Italian Service Units. . . .

For several months a critical labor shortage had been developing and was expected to become increasingly acute as the Fall season approached and students and civilian labor withdrawn. The tonnage increase evidenced from 81,092 tons received and shipped in April 1944, to 121, 976 tons in June 1944 emphasized this crisis.

. . . A plan was submitted whereby 2,000 German Prisoners could be accommodated in Prisoner of War Stockade No. 1 – more if necessary – still allowing the prescribed ‘40 square feet per person.’ This quartering compound had been vacated by the Italian Service

Units who had moved into another area, and necessary Prisoner-of-War housing facilities were made available for independent operation without added structures. [*Note: Additional barracks were eventually constructed.*]

. . . The first German Prisoners of War sent to the Ogden Internment Camp were captured after D-Day, coming from Normandy, Toulon, and parts of Italy. . . . With the exception of one or two prisoners there was no conversation among them. Their eyes were on the ground and their somber attitude was that of beaten men, dazed from artillery fire. They were vermin-infected, filthy and starved, and it was 11 September 1944 before proper processing made paid utilization outside of the compound possible. The screening process revealed that many men from German-occupied companies were forced into labor battalions, later into military service, and are not in sympathy with Hitler.

In one group of approximately 250 men, 17 different nationalities are represented, including White Russians, Turkestans [sic], Uzbeks, Kirghizs [sic], Georgians, Kazkhs [sic], Tartars, Mongols, Romanians, Letts, Lithuanians, Poles, Ukrainians, Czechs, Austrians, Russians, and Germans.

All prisoners were of enlisted troop army status, except 108 from the navy and marines, who were sent 2 November 1944 to [Papago Park](#), Phoenix, Arizona, the camp designated for naval personnel.

The strength report listed four groups: army, navy, air force, and protected personnel (Medical, Red Cross, Chaplains, etc.)

They responded promptly to orders and were a striking contrast to the arrogant, goose-stepping, show-off prisoners taken in the African campaign. . . .

Welfare as Contributor to Better Work Attitudes. -- The policies governing the Prisoner of War program have been a combination of Fairness and Firmness. All leisure outlets, sufficient subsistence, and welfare in general, have, as a fundamental purpose, the creating of better mental attitudes and enthusiasm for the work to be done.

Questions for Reading 1 and Photos

1. What was the primary reason for bringing prisoners of war to the Ogden area?
2. What solutions were tried to address the labor shortage? Why were they ineffective long-term?
3. What did the Geneva Convention allow concerning prisoner-of-war labor?
4. Why were Italian prisoners of war reorganized into Italian Service Units in 1944?

(Hint: Consider the U.S.-Italy relationship at that point in the war. You can read more and compare here with [Italian Service Units of Boston from the National Park Service.](#))

5. The background shares many of the “German” prisoners were conscripted from other nations. How might this have affected their attitudes?
6. How does the author try to address public criticism about the treatment of the prisoners of war?
7. Photos: Do the photos showing life at the prisoner-of-war camps surprise you? Why or why not? What other details do you notice in the photos?



By the numbers:

- The camp was located within the cantonment area (permanent housing and administrative area) of the Depot. Each of the two compounds at the camp accommodated eight prisoner-of-war companies of 250 men each.
- The first Italian prisoners of war arrived between April 1943 and April 1944. In all, 4,657 Italian prisoners of war were interned at the camp.
- The entire Italian prisoner of war camp averaged a weight increase of 15 pounds per man. Some gained as much as 54 pounds (According to Major Hawkinson, Post Surgeon, June 2, 1944).
- At one point, the Labor Coordination branch allotted for more than 3,000 prisoners of war daily for labor, over a period of nine months (According to Lt. Sink, March 15, 1944).
- The first German prisoners of war were received August 25, 1944. By November 1944, there were 2500 German prisoners of war, ranging from 15 to 48 years old.
- An average of 300 German prisoners of war were working in sugar beet fields in Weber County for eight hours, daily in October 1944, as reported by *The Ogden Standard-Examiner* (Oct. 29, 1944). They had also supported peach, onion, potato, tomato and corn harvests.



Quotations to consider:

“Italian prisoners who have been employed by industrial concerns in the Ogden area have proved highly satisfactory, it was announced Saturday by the commanding officer of the prisoner of war camp. Employers have stated that the prisoners are ‘industrious and capable workers.’

Industries employing these men are required to pay the prevailing wage, which goes to the United States treasury department to help defray expenses of maintaining the prisoners. The prisoners themselves receive a credit for the usual prisoner wage of 80 cents a day in the form of coupons which they can use at the prisoner of war camp canteen.

The prisoners, generally, are in good health and are able to do heavy labor. Among them are many skilled workmen.”

- “Prisoners Declared Good Workers,” *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, December 19, 1943 [Note: The 80 cents in coupons per day was established under the Geneva convention.]

“The Italians have been thoroughly spoiled and should all be sent home. The more they get, the more they grumble. They are no better as laborers than they were as soldiers, and do not respond readily to military orders. The slogan seems to be, ‘Peace at any price.’

In handling the Germans the same mistakes will not be made, although the Germans have already been trained to the no-work-no-eat regime and are excellent workers.”

- Capt. Samuel T. Viviano, November 15, 1944, within “The History of the Prisoner of War Camp” (as used in Reading 1)

Reading 2: Oral History

Teacher Tip: You can use the video titled “[Talking with the Past #2: Oral History](#)” from the National Park Service to support students in analysis of oral histories.

Use [Lesson 1](#) in this series with students to learn more about the work at the Ogden Defense Depot with connections to the prisoners of war working there.

Oral History Excerpts: Robert Busico

Interviewed by Sarah Langsdon, December 1, 2005. This work is the property of the Weber State University, Stewart Library Oral History Program. The full interview can be [accessed here](#). For more interviews, see the lesson extension.

Robert Busico (RB): I was going to Washington Junior High School and I was able to get a part-time job down at DDO. They called it “Second Street,” mostly. I worked part-time: four hours at night and eight hours on Saturday. Most of the time on Saturdays we were involved working with these prisoners; in fact, they were helping us. At the time I didn’t tell any of those prisoners that I was an Italian. But one of my buddies made this statement one day and said, “Hey Bob, why can’t you talk to these guys?” Then they found out I was an Italian,

boy, they'd just jump on me. I could understand the language, but I didn't know enough to carry on a conversation with them. So, from then on, I got to be good friends with a lot of them.

Through all this, at the time they were the prisoners, they were pretty free. They could go off the base but they had to have an escort, which was a United States Army military man. In fact, we would invite them to our home to have Sunday dinner - there were four of them. They were very, very courteous and polite. They would do anything to help you. In fact, I would go pick them up in my little car and bring them home, of course they had to have an escort, and then take them back. So, we did this just about every Sunday.

The prisoners had a lot of talent. They worked in a bakery, put on plays, and prepared big, big dinners and would invite a lot of people here in Ogden to come, even the mayor. It was fun! We got acquainted with a lot of them. Well, this went on until I decided I wanted to join the Navy, so I joined the Navy and that was my time I spent with those prisoners. After that I wasn't in touch with them anymore. But, my mom kept in touch with a few of them because they were from her hometown in Italy, and she enjoyed talking to them because it brought back a lot of memories. In fact, they knew some of our relatives. So that was basically how I was involved with them. Those people made those cigarette cases I brought to you. They were all handmade. They were craftsman and very good at what they did.

. . . When Mussolini decided he wanted to join with Hitler, the prisoners surrendered by the thousands. They didn't want to fight with the Germans, so that's how they came to Utah. We also had the German prisoners there, too, but they were pretty-well separated from the Italian prisoners. But, they had their own little camp there – these barracks. They were very well kept. They kept them painted. Their kitchens and bakery were immaculate. It was an honor to go there. They were happy to be here, believe me! A lot of them didn't want to go back, but they had to. A lot of women went over there that had got acquainted with them at the base; they married them in Italy and brought them back to the United States and as soon as they got here they became a U.S. citizen.

. . . . Of course, there was always a military guard around. All the time I worked with them I never had any problems whatsoever.

Sarah Langsdon: What kind of work were you doing?

RB: I worked for the chemical department. Then I helped load ammunition out of those big "huts" they used to call them. See, the war was still going. We would work with the prisoners and take ammunition out of those huts, put them in boxcars and load them. But, I was only 16, so I just did what they wanted me to do. I appreciated the money. It was a good job for my age.

. . . . But, they were good people and they didn't want to fight so they gave themselves up so they could be a prisoner. A lot of them would have liked to stay here, but they wouldn't let them unless somebody would sponsor them and go over to Italy and do all the military paperwork that was necessary to bring them back. . . ."

Questions for Reading 2, By the Numbers, and Quotations to Consider

1. How did Busico and some of the prisoners work together at the depot?
2. Why might Busico describe the prisoners as "good people" rather than enemies? Consider the blurred lines between workers, prisoners, enemies, and neighbors.
3. Based on this oral history, would you have invited prisoners of war to your home for dinner, like Busico's family did? Why or why not?
4. How are oral histories helpful for understanding perspectives from the home front? What are some of their limitations?
5. *Quotations to Consider and By the Numbers*: In your opinion, does the information from across the lesson so far support or contradict Capt. Viviano's opinion (second quotation)?

Reading 3: Newspaper Article Excerpts

"Prisoners in America"

By Becky Cairns, *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, April 12, 1987

The passenger train that awaited Frederick H. Weber on his first 'visit' to the United States during World War II wasn't astonishing in itself. But to Weber, the fact that he was to board such a train in Hoboken, N.J. was a bit of a marvel. As a German prisoner of war, Weber wasn't expecting such lavish transportation to his destination – a prisoner of war camp near Muskogee, Oklahoma.

'A passenger train - that was the first time we were amazed,' recalls Weber, who was captured by the Allies during fighting in North Africa. 'In Germany, prisoners were transported in box cars.'

The train ride to Muskogee was only the first of many surprises for Weber. Upon arriving in Oklahoma, there were more: a 'friendly' letter of welcome from President Franklin Roosevelt read to the prisoners by the camp commander, new blue denim clothes for all (clearly marked 'PW') and a sumptuous meal with everything from meat to dessert.

Weber was one of nearly 400,000 German prisoners captured during World War II and shipped to prison camps throughout the United States. After brief stays in Oklahoma,

Texas, Arizona and California, he eventually wound up in Utah at the state's largest prison camp, housed at Defense Depot Ogden.

Weber lived in barracks on the northwest corner of the military supply depot from 1944 to 1946. There, he and 4,000 other German prisoners worked and passed time in comradery until their release.

More than 40 years after his internment, Weber says he has a 'respectful remembrance' of the Ogden camp. His memories of prisoner life are mostly good ones, not 'hateful' or pain-ridden like those of his friends who lived under terrible conditions in Russian prisoner-of-war camps.

'This Ogden was a turning point in my life,' says Weber, whose conversion to the Mormon Church brought him back to live in Salt Lake City after the war. 'Every time I pass by (Ogden), I raise my hand in salute.'

Weber, a gray-haired, bespectacled man with a German accent 'so big you can saw it with a chain saw,' is one of the few known POWs from Ogden who returned to Utah to live.

. . . Weber characterizes his time at Defense Depot Ogden as strict but not unpleasant. The Germans were treated well and provided with good living quarters. They had clean clothes, which they laundered themselves, and plenty to eat.

'In Germany, you got some soup and some bread. Here you got your meat, your vegetables, your rice or potatoes and whatever else,' he says.

Many Italians were also imprisoned at DDO, but after Italy surrendered, they were granted freedom the Germans did not enjoy.

'We were envious of the Italians,' Weber says. 'They could go downtown and do whatever. We were under barbed wire until the last minute.'

The best thing about the Ogden camp, Weber says, was that the prisoners were put to work and paid for their labor. Besides doing various jobs on the depot, he worked in a local cannery, in sugar beet fields and in fruit orchards from Kaysville to Brigham City, picking cherries, apples and pears.

'Let me tell you, the work was a blessing,' he says. 'We loved it. You came out in the fresh air and you worked and you could eat as much (fruit) as you wanted to.' . . .

Questions for Reading 3

1. Who is Frederick H. Weber, and how did he come to the U.S. during the war?
2. What surprised Weber about his transportation and arrival in the United States?

3. How did work affect the prisoners' lives, according to Weber?
4. How might humane treatment of prisoners of war, as required by the Geneva Convention, benefit both the prisoners and the country holding them? Do you think this approach was effective in Ogden? Explain your answer using evidence from the lesson.

[Note and Extension Opportunity: Not all countries closely followed the rules of the Geneva Convention. Weber referred to terrible conditions in Russian (Soviet) camps. Research which countries adhered to the rules, and which followed some, or none, of the rules.]

Lesson Closing

Answer the essential question: How did the local prisoner-of-war camp affect Ogden City, and impact home front efforts?

Additional reflection questions: What messages about the prisoner-of-war camp do you think were intended for American audiences? What might officials have wanted the public to believe or understand?

What perspectives, experiences, or details may be missing or left out of these accounts, and why might those silences matter?

Extension

Exploring Additional Oral Histories

Provide students with the link to Weber State University's collection on [World War II Prisoners of War in Ogden](#). Have students select and read or listen to a new oral history to learn about other perspectives on the local prisoners of war. Have students share new details or viewpoints. (For example, [Carl Fernelius](#) was a military police officer there. [Beth Giordano](#) later married one of the Italian prisoners.) They may also use this research to support a final mastery project in [Lesson 4](#).

An additional resource you may share with students is the video "[Prisoner of War Camp in Ogden, Utah](#)" (2014) from C-SPAN.

Lesson 4: Comparing and Connecting WWII Home Front Cities

About this Lesson

This lesson is part of a series teaching about the World War II home front, with [Ogden City, Utah](#), designated as a [World War II Heritage City](#). The lesson has photos, readings and a culminating project. An optional media extension includes using digital archives to research more related sources. The first reading highlights the purpose and efficiency of the Ogden Defense Depot, a key center supporting the armed services on the home front. The second reading connects the region to the designation of a Heritage City. The culminating project allows learners to synthesize themes from the other three Ogden lessons while building a broader understanding of Ogden as a WWII Heritage City. This project is designed to summarize the city's contributions and encourage students to make connections to the broader home front effort.

Objectives:

In a culminating product:

- a. Describe World War II home front defense industry and transportation in Ogden, particularly the Ogden Defense Depot.
- b. Summarize the contributions and volunteerism of civilians to home front wartime efforts, including that of women and youth.
- c. Explain the role and impact of the local prisoner-of-war camp.
- d. *Optional:* Describe similarities and differences of Ogden and other Heritage city(s) or World War II home front(s).

Materials for Students:

1. Photos: Figures 20-23 (*can be displayed digitally*)
2. Readings 1, 2, & media activity links
3. Maps, project materials (as needed)
4. Student graphic organizers (See Figure 24 at end of lesson, for reference)
 - Create Comparison Matrices for your students to use. To compare two cities, create a one-page sheet with three columns and four rows. Label the left

column Theme/Topic and the other columns City 1 and City 2. For a Comparison Matrix for three cities simply add an additional column.

- Create two Single-Point Rubrics to assist students' self-assessment. One is for assessing proficiency in meeting teacher-selected standards. One is for assessing proficiency in meeting objectives.
- For the rubric on standards, create a one-page sheet with three columns and four rows of content. Label the first column "Areas for Improvement," the second column, "Proficient (Meeting Standard)," and the third column, "Areas of Exceeding Standard." Leave the first and third columns blank. In each row of the second column identify a Standard and indicate a space for noting the evidence for meeting the standard. Include a space at the bottom of the page for assigning points for each column.
- For the rubric on objectives, create a one-page sheet with three columns and four rows of content. Label the first column "Areas for Improving toward Objective," the second column, "Proficient (Meeting Objective)," and the third column, "Areas of Exceeding Objective." Leave the first and third columns blank. In the four rows of the second column identify these four objectives:
 - a. Describe World War II home front defense industry and transportation in Ogden, particularly the Ogden Defense Depot.
 - b. Summarize the contributions and volunteerism of civilians to home front wartime efforts, including that of women and youth.
 - c. Explain the role and impact of the local prisoner-of-war camp.
 - d. *Optional:* Describe similarities and differences of Ogden and other Heritage city(s) or World War II home front(s).

Include a space at the bottom of the page for assigning points for each column. See the last photo of this lesson for reference.



Getting Started: Essential Question

Why was Ogden City chosen as a World War II Heritage City, and what are its similarities and differences to other home front cities?

Photos



Figure 20: Men and women using mechanical loading to handle supplies at the Utah ASF Depot, also known as the Ogden Defense Depot. (Credit: Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University, ID 98994)



Figure 21: German POWs at work at Defense Depot Ogden under the supervision of a Corporal. They are cleaning field ranges with steam. Their clothing is marked with "PW" for identification. Photo by the U.S. Army Signal Corps. (Credit: Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University, ID 99153)



Figure 22: Titled “Mass Production Housing Units Are Mushrooming in Ogden Area,” *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, August 7, 1942. The picture shows the work by a California firm – erecting 1400 housing units in one area.

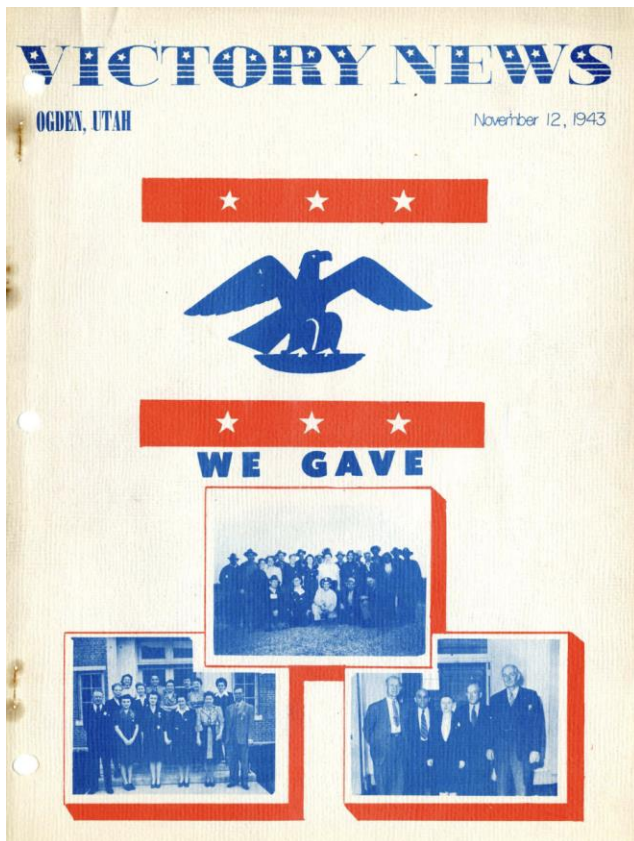


Figure 23: Cover of the “Victory News” for November 12, 1943. This weekly newsletter produced by the Defense Depot Ogden “included information on all the different operational departments at the depot, various recreational activities, and occasionally information about the Prisoner of War camp housed at the Depot.” (Credit: Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University)



Quotations to consider: Examples of Contributions to the War Effort

“..Take any package of Ordnance equipment reaching Great Britain, which has been shipped across from some port in the United States. It moves to a depot where bulk shipments are broken down, stored, binned, and then it moves to a port where equipment is put on a LST, LCT, or a barge, and then it moves across the channel to a beach. It is an extraordinarily difficult job to supply a large force of men who must eat, must fight, and must have a constantly adequate supply of guns and ammunition. Across the beaches, then in trucks and ‘Ducks’ (2 ½ ton amphibian trucks) move these large quantities of supplies, handled and re-handled until finally dumped in some French pasture surrounded by hedgerows, dusty today and muddy tomorrow.

And out of all of that turmoil of shipment and trans-shipment, we must depend on Army Ordnance civilian workers at Ogden and other Ordnance depots in the States to tell us what has been put in a box, how many in the box, and identify it in some way so that we can find it and use it. I am perfectly delighted with the results of the fine work being accomplished by Ordnance workers on the home front.”

- Major General E.S. Hughes on why “It is not true that the generals run the show,” in “Tribute to Ordnance,” [The Ogden Arsenal Family Day Newsletter](#), 1944 (Credit: Special Collections Department, Stewart Library, Weber State University)

“An anniversary which affected approximately 10,000 citizens of Ogden slipped by Tuesday without note. It was the twenty-first mark of the founding of the National Junior Red Cross. . . . Ogden chapters of the Junior Red Cross have made every school in the city represented in the activities of the organization, and the county chapters have done similarly for the country school setup. Utah last year was fourth in the nation in high enrollment among the schools in Junior Red Cross. This year, Ogden, David county, Weber county and Salt Lake City schools expect to be represented with 100 percent membership.”

- “Juniors Reach Anniversary,” *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, September 16, 1942

“For the eighth victory loan drive, Ogden high school has a quota of \$14,610, or \$10 for every person enrolled in the school. . . .We would like to urge all students to buy a bond and help Ogden high reach her quota. An effort will be made to have the pictures of each student purchasing a \$500 or \$1,000 bond printed in the yearbook and The Standard-Examiner.”

- LouAnn Toller, “Ogden High Has \$14,610 Quota in Bond Campaign,” *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, November 12, 1945

Reading 1: Newspaper Article

Depot Holds Half Million Different Items in Stock

By Earle L. Jester, Associated Press Staff, *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, June 30, 1943

A half million or so different articles – from a radio repair part to a giant bulldozer used to build airports – are stored at the Utah army service forces depot – and the army knows instantly where to lay its hands on each one of them.

Scattered over 1,678 acres of land on the western edge of Ogden, in the Marriott area, the depot stocks virtually everything the army uses except munitions and requirements of the army air forces.

A thousand undershirts needed for troops headed for New Guinea? The depot has them and will have them on their way in jig time. A huge dirt loader to aid in building a landing strip in the Aleutians? It's here, ready to go.

Nightly checkups on materials received and disbursed during the day are messaged to Washington, where the army services of supply keeps its inventories of every domestic depot up-to-the-minute.

'Every army service except the air corps is represented at this depot,' said Brig. Gen. Ralph Talbot, Jr., commanding general of the installation.

In Seven Divisions

In reality it is a cluster of seven depots, operated separately by the army's chemical, engineer, signal, transportation, quartermaster, medical and ordnance branches but coordinated by Gen. Talbot.

Railroad freight marshaling yards sort the carloads of equipment arriving and leaving the huge plant, shunting the cars to the warehouses. A labor pool provides employees for the various depots, with the fluctuating needs of each taken care of efficiently and economically.

The depot area occupies a site a mile wide and three miles long. There are 15 huge, permanent-type warehouses, ranging up to 1,440 feet long with a capacity of 268,000 square feet of storage space. There are nine wooden warehouses, temporary in nature but built well enough, army officer estimate, to last 50 years.

Altogether there is 6,500,000 square feet of roofed storage space. In addition there are many acres of outside storage space for construction vehicles, grading equipment, fencing, packing materials.

Gases in Igloos

Non-lethal gases are stored in igloos, so constructed that nothing less than a direct bomb hit in the loading area would destroy the door.

Civilian guards – both men and women – patrol night and day.

The women are an innovation. Attractive, trained in pistol marksmanship, many of them are mounted, riding daytime patrol.

‘We employed the women when we couldn’t obtain an adequate number of capable men guards,’ Gen. Talbot explained. ‘It has worked out very well – and has given a note of distinction to the depot.’

Trained dogs are used at night to assist guards in patrolling areas occupied by parked vehicles. Their keen sense of smell permits the dogs to detect intruders hidden among the vehicles.

Formal Greeting

The depot goes in for distinctiveness. Welcoming a tour of newspaper men arranged by the Ninth service command to acquaint the public with the intermountain region’s army installations, the guards – men and women – were lined up on review, the depot’s band playing.

A large proportion of the labor is supplied by civilians, with women predominating, and the depot is mechanized to as great an extent as possible.

‘We’ve doing everything we can think of to reduce hand labor,’ explained Col. Joe S. Underwood, executive officer. ‘This depot probably is mechanized to an extent greater than any other in the country.’

Pointing to a huge stack of barbed wire, he said: ‘Electric cranes pick up the spools of wire and place them in a chute, which carries them into a truck or a railroad car.’

Bookkeeping – a huge job – is done by electrical calculators.

Principal Duties

The depot has two primary functions, as a filler depot to forward stocks to depots located at ports of embarkation, and as a retail depot to supply equipment to army troops and installations in the intermountain region.

The turnover of supplies is rapid. ‘You’d be surprised,’ Col. Underwood said, ‘how little of what was here six months ago is still here.’

It's gone to troops in the field, with new supplies from manufacturers re-stocking the warehouses.

Questions for Reading 1, Quotations to Consider, and Photos

1. How did Ogden's geography and existing infrastructure, like the railroad, contribute to its ability to support wartime transportation?
2. What does the language used to describe women guards reveal about respect for their work and the gender expectations of the time?
3. How does the author use statistics and descriptions to show the efficiency and importance of the depot?
4. Why might the military have wanted the public to learn about the depot through newspaper tours and articles?

Quotations to Consider:

5. What does Major General Hughes's quotation show about the role of civilian workers at places like Ogden in supporting troops overseas?
6. What do these quotations show about how many different people, including students, in Ogden contributed to the war effort?

Photos:

7. Explain how each photo relates to Ogden's designation as a Heritage City. What local and national themes do the images represent? What people or topics are not shown?



By the numbers: Population Growth and Housing

The population of Ogden, Utah was 43,688 in 1940. By 1950 this had grown by over 30% to 57,112. This growth was heavily influenced by wartime industrial and military expansion in the area.

The Standard-Examiner reported on August 7, 1942 that some 2,000 housing units built in the Ogden area were being constructed at the rate of 28 units a day.

Reading 2: Heritage City Designation

Excerpt from: “[House Report 115-998](#), “*To Direct the Secretary of the Interior to Annually Designate at Least One City in The United States as An ‘American World War II Heritage City,’ and for other purposes*” (October 30, 2018)

“. . .PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 6118 is to direct the Secretary of the Interior to annually designate at least one city in the United States as an “American World War II Heritage City”.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

On December 7, 1941, military forces of the Empire of Japan attacked the U.S. Naval Fleet and ground bases at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. On December 8, 1941, one day after what President Roosevelt referred to as, “a date which will live in infamy,” the United States declared war against the Empire of Japan. Three days later, on December 11, 1941, Japan's ally, Germany, declared war on the United States. Sixteen million Americans, mostly young working-age men, served in the military during World War II, out of an overall United States population of 113 million.

While an unprecedented number of Americans served in World War II, the country drastically increased its war production on the home front, serving not only the needs of the armed forces of the United States but her allies as well--in what President Franklin Roosevelt called “The Arsenal of Democracy.” The combination of millions serving in the military, during a period of necessary and drastic increases in production, led to significant social changes on the American home front.

The World War II period resulted in the largest number of people migrating within the United States in the history of the country. Individuals and families relocated to industrial centers for good paying jobs out of a sense of patriotic duty. Many industrial centers became “boomtowns,” growing at phenomenal rates. One example, the City of Richmond, California, grew from a population of under 24,000 to over 100,000 during the war. . . .”

Questions for Reading 2 and By the Numbers

By the Numbers:

1. How did the local population and housing needs change? What does this suggest about the impact of the local wartime industries and military presence?

Reading 2:

2. What was the purpose of the bill (H.R. 6118) according to the report?

3. How did Ogden’s defense depot support the “The Arsenal of Democracy” on the home front?
4. Why do you think Ogden was designated as a World War II Heritage City? Connect details from the bill and evidence from the first reading, and/or other readings from the Ogden lessons.
5. Are there other cities you think of when considering home front contributions during wartime? Which, and why?

Media Activity

Primary Source Collection Research

Explore images, documents, and oral histories related to the home front in Ogden using [Weber State University’s collections](#). Support students as they navigate the digital archives, using key terms and search skills.

Students may also use materials from these collections for their culminating activity or mastery product. Images, readings, and oral histories from the university’s collections have been incorporated throughout the Ogden lesson series.

Students can also examine current, local interpretations of the home front, such as [Business Depot Ogden: History](#), to see how primary sources are used in modern interpretations and to help develop ideas for their culminating mastery product.

Culminating Activity/Mastery Product

To demonstrate student understanding, support students in creating a final product that meets the following objectives:

- a. Describe World War II home front defense industry and transportation in Ogden, particularly the Ogden Defense Depot.
- b. Summarize the contributions and volunteerism of civilians to home front wartime efforts, including that of women and youth.
- c. Explain the role and impact of the local prisoner-of-war camp.
- d. *Optional:* Describe similarities and differences of Ogden and other Heritage city(s) or World War II home front(s).

Mastery products should be:

. . . **student-led**; Students work as individuals or in collaborative groups.

. . . **student-directed:** Students are offered a variety of choices for product type.

. . . **student-organized;** Teacher facilitates by providing students with the comparison matrices and/or resource links from throughout the series of lessons.

. . . **student-assessed;** Teacher supports student self-assessment and reflection by providing students single-point rubrics to assess for meeting standards and/or lesson objectives.

Note: Depending on time and scope, the comparison of Ogden City, Utah to another WWII Heritage or home front city(s) within the mastery product (objectives) may be omitted. However, comparing cities is recommended, as it connects students to a deeper understanding of the WWII home front.

Examples of mastery product choices include, but are not limited to:

- **Written:** Letter (opinion or informative), essay, poem, narratives, biography, articles, class book or children's book, speech or debate (then presented orally), blog / website, plaque or historical displays, pamphlets or rack cards
- **Graphic Organizers:** timeline, flowcharts, mind or concept content maps, Venn diagrams, comparison matrices, posters
- **Artistic Expression:** song, dance, theater (ex. skits), 3-D models, dioramas, photo journal, stamp and coin designs, visual art, architecture/building or monument, museum design
- **Media design and creation:** podcast, historical markers, social media content, interactive virtual maps or tours, infographics, video, comic strips or graphics, game design, slideshows, digital scrapbook

Please view the [NPS Heritage cities lesson collection](#) for information and resources on other cities.

Single-Point Rubric

Areas for Improvement	Proficient (Meeting Standard)	Areas of Exceeding Standard
	Standard: _____ Evidence of meeting standard: •	
	Standard: _____ Evidence of meeting standard: •	
	Standard: _____ Evidence of meeting standard: •	
	Standard: _____ Evidence of meeting standard: •	
Points		

Figure 24: Single-Point Rubric (Standards; Blank) [Teacher selects priority standards for assessment.] Courtesy of Sarah Nestor Lane

Acknowledgment

The lesson series was written by Sarah Nestor Lane, an educator and consultant funded by a National Council on Public History's cooperative agreement with the National Park Service.