

= James C. Marshall =

Brigadier General James Creel Marshall (15 October 1897 ? 19 July 1977) was a United States Army Corps of Engineers officer who was initially in charge of the Manhattan Project to build an atomic bomb during World War II .

A member of the June 1918 class of the United States Military Academy at West Point that graduated early due to World War I , Marshall saw service on the Mexican border . Between the wars he worked on engineering projects in the United States and the Panama Canal Zone . In January 1942 , shortly after the United States entered World War II , he became District Engineer of the Syracuse District , and oversaw the construction of the Rome Air Depot .

In June 1942 , Marshall was placed in charge of the Manhattan Project , then known as the Laboratory Development of Substitute Materials . Although superseded as head of the project by Brigadier General Leslie R. Groves , Jr . , in September , he was Manhattan District engineer from 13 August 1942 to 13 August 1943 . In November 1943 he became Assistant Chief of Staff (G @-@ 4) of the United States Army Services of Supply (USASOS) in the Southwest Pacific Area , serving in Australia , New Guinea and the Philippines .

Marshall left the Army in 1947 , and moved to Riverside , Connecticut , where he worked for M. W. Kellogg . He later joined Koppers , building a coal loading facility in Turkey , and worked on mining projects in Africa . He was Commissioner of Highways in Minnesota from 1961 to 1965 .

= = Early life and career = =

James Creel Marshall was born in Plattsburg , Missouri , on 14 October 1897 , the son of Walter Scott Marshall and his wife Cora Sutphen née Creel . He was appointed to the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1915 . His classmates included Hugh John Casey and Lucius D. Clay . The entire class graduated early on 12 June 1918 due to World War I , and Marshall , who was ranked 24th in the class , was commissioned as a substantive first lieutenant and temporary captain in the United States Army Corps of Engineers . He was posted to Camp A. A. Humphreys from 8 to 15 July 1918 , and then was sent to the Engineer Officers ' Training School at Camp Lee , Virginia , for additional training . While there , he married Mabel Estelle Wolff from Brooklyn . They had two children , Beryl , born in 1919 , and Robert Creel , born in 1921 .

On 24 August 1918 , Marshall joined the 8th Engineers at Fort Bliss , Texas . He returned to Camp A. A. Humphreys as a student officer from 10 February 1919 to 12 June 1919 . Young officers like Marshall who had not served overseas during the war were sent on battlefield tours . From 20 June to 30 August 1919 , he toured the battlefields of World War I , visiting Britain , France , Belgium and Germany , before returning to Camp A. A. Humphreys on 10 September 1919 . After service at Camp A. A. Humphreys with the Reserve Officers ' Training Corps , Marshall was posted to the 13th Engineers as its adjutant on 10 February 1921 , but attended the Engineer School Basic Course from 6 June 1921 , graduating on 15 August 1921 , after which he became an instructor there . On 25 June 1922 he became Assistant District Engineer of the 2nd District , based in New York City .

Like many of his fellow officers , Marshall was reduced to his substantive rank of first lieutenant on 18 November 1922 . On 4 August 1923 he took charge of the Engineer Office of the 3rd New York District , located in Fort Hancock , New Jersey . He then served in the Panama Canal Zone as a company commander in the 11th Engineers from 9 April 1926 to 14 June 1928 . He became an instructor in the Department of Engineering at West Point on 24 August 1928 . He was posted to Fort Belvoir , Virginia , on 10 August 1932 , where he was promoted to captain again on 1 June 1933 . There followed duty in the Office of the Chief Of Engineers in Washington , DC , as Assistant Chief of the River and Harbor Section from 21 January 1937 to 3 September 1939 .

= = World War II = =

Marshall attended the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth , Kansas , from 11 September 1939 to 3 February 1940 . He then became executive officer of the 1st Engineers . With

the outbreak of World War II in Europe , promotion accelerated , and he was promoted to major on 1 March 1940 . He became District Engineer of the Binghamton District on 25 May 1940 , with the rank of lieutenant colonel in the Army of the United States from 12 June 1941 . On 31 January 1942 , he became District Engineer of the Syracuse District , which covered New York and part of Pennsylvania , with the rank of colonel from 1 February 1942 . At Binghamton and Syracuse was responsible for a number of major projects , including ammunition and explosive plants , and the construction of the Rome Air Depot . He also had to attend to flood control measures on the upper Delaware River .

On 18 June 1942 Marshall was called to Washington to take over the reorganised atomic bomb project , then known as the DSM (Laboratory Development of Substitute Materials) . Marshall read the 13 June 1942 report from Vannevar Bush and James Conant and recalled that :

I spent the night without sleep trying to figure out what this was all about . I had never heard of nuclear fission , but I did know that you could not build much of a plant , much less four of them , for ninety million dollars . At the moment among other construction projects in the Syracuse district , I had one for a TNT plant in Pennsylvania estimated to cost one hundred twenty eight million dollars .

In a report to Colonel Leslie R. Groves , Jr . , the head of the Construction Branch in the Office of the Chief of Engineers , on 11 August 1942 , Marshall called for the creation a new district without territorial limits to administer the DSM project . His proposal was approved on 13 August . As district engineer of the new district , Marshall reported directly to Groves , and not the Chief of Engineers . He established the district headquarters on the 18th floor of 270 Broadway in New York City , with the innocuous name of the Manhattan Engineer District , following the usual practice of naming engineer districts after the city in which their headquarters area were located . He selected the Boston firm of Stone & Webster as the project 's principal contractor .

Marshall and his deputy district engineer , Kenneth Nichols , visited Tennessee on 30 June 1942 to examine the proposed location for the production plants in the Clinch River area , but Marshall chose to delay the actual purchase of the land until it was needed . Nichols felt that Marshall 's desire for orderly procedures ultimately told against him . By September , Bush was expressing dissatisfaction with slow progress and the lack of the highest priority for the project , going to the United States Secretary of War , Henry L. Stimson , and then directly to the President , Franklin D. Roosevelt . Groves was appointed to head the project on 17 September 1942 . Groves was also a colonel , and ranked below Marshall on the permanent list , although Groves was promoted to brigadier general before assuming command on 23 September . According to Nichols , Groves and Marshall " disagreed in a major way on how to handle personnel " , and Nichols " did witness several confrontations " .

Major General Wilhelm D. Styer , the Chief of Staff of the Army Service Forces , decided that Marshall would be replaced by Nichols . Marshall would be replaced given an overseas posting . He was informed by Nichols on June ; to him it seemed he was " getting fired " , although he had previously expressed a desire to Groves for just such an overseas assignment . Indeed , when first assigned to the project , both Nichols and Groves had also have expressed a preference for an overseas combat assignment . Nichols had " liked working for him and was happy to have him as a buffer between Groves and myself " , because Groves was " abrasive and often very critical " . Marshall asked Nichols to transfer his secretary , Virginia Olsson , to Oak Ridge when the Manhattan District headquarters moved there , leaving Nichols 's own secretary , Anne Phillips , in the New York office . " This concern for personnel " , Nichols noted , " was typical of Marshall " . Since the Manhattan District had been officially created on 13 August 1942 , Marshall chose to formally leave on 13 August 1943 , so that he had held the job for exactly one year .

Groves 's account says that :

shortly after , Nichols replaced Marshall as District Engineer ... the Chief of Engineers asked me if I could relieve Marshall for a key overseas assignment , which would mean his promotion to brigadier . Since the project was by that time well organized , I did not feel I should refuse , and appointed Nichols in his stead . This was an excellent choice and one I have never regretted .

Marshall was awarded the Legion of Merit for his service with the Manhattan District . He was posted to Camp Sutton , North Carolina , as commander of the Engineer Replacement Training

Center there until 26 November 1943 . He then had his sought @-@ after overseas service , in the Southwest Pacific Area , where he became Assistant Chief of Staff (G @-@ 4) of the United States Army Services of Supply (USASOS) . He saw service in Australia , New Guinea and the Philippines . He was promoted to brigadier general on 10 November 1944 , and awarded the Bronze Star Medal . He returned to the United States for medical reasons on 12 February 1945 . His final command was of the Boston Port of Embarkation , for which he received the Army Commendation Medal . On 29 January 1946 he became head of the Engineer Research and Development Laboratory at Fort Belvoir . He reverted to his permanent rank of colonel on 5 March 1946 , and retired from the Army on a disability on 31 March 1947 . On 29 June 1948 , he was promoted to brigadier general on the retired list .

= = Later life = =

After leaving the Army , he moved to Riverside , Connecticut , where he worked for M. W. Kellogg . He eventually tired of commuting to New York City , and took a job with Koppers , building a coal loading facility in Turkey . He then worked for the United Nations Korean Relief at the UN Building in New York . He was also involved in mining projects in Africa . He made his home in Skaneateles , New York , while working on various projects around the world . In January 1961 he accepted an offer from the Governor of Minnesota , Elmer L. Andersen , to become that state 's Commissioner of Highways . His four @-@ year term was marred by a change of government in the state in 1963 , and his final years saw a series of clashes with the new governor , Karl F. Rolvaag , and his attorney @-@ general Walter Mondale .

When his term as Commissioner of Highways ended in 1965 , Marshall returned to Skaneateles , where he became an engineering consultant and a professional engineering arbitrator . He served as mayor of Skaneateles for six years . His contributions included the addition of an ambulance squad to the fire department and the construction of an indoor ice skating rink . His wife Mabel died of cancer in 1976 . On 18 July 1977 , Marshall also died from cancer . The two are buried together in the West Point Cemetery .

Marshall 's son Robert Creel Marshall graduated from West Point with the class of 1943 , and served in Europe during World War II . He later served in Vietnam , and became Deputy Chief of Engineers in 1976 , with the rank of major general .