

So, where in the world *is* Rapidan Camp? It's on Earth...north of the Equator...west of the Prime Meridian...on the continent of North America...in the United States of America. It's in the Blue Ridge Mountains in the Commonwealth of Virginia, in Madison County within the boundary of Shenandoah National Park. The camp was built between two mountain streams: the Mill Prong and the Laurel Prong at the headwaters of the Rapidan River. To be precise Rapidan Camp is at 38 degrees, 29 minutes, 29 point 4 5 seconds north latitude and 78 degrees 25 minutes 14 point zero two seconds west longitude. [**Latitude: +38° 29' 29.45"**, **Longitude: -78° 25' 14.02"**]

So what was so special about this particular spot? Well, President Hoover wanted three things, which he instructed his secretary, Lawrence Richey, to find: Hoover wanted the camp to be within easy driving distance of Washington, DC, perhaps about 100 miles or less. He wanted the camp to be at 2500' elevation or greater so it would be cooler. Remember, air conditioning had not been invented! And, perhaps most important to Hoover, the camp had to be near a great trout stream.

So, in January of 1929, after lots of study, correspondence, and travel, Richey took President and Mrs. Hoover to explore an area he had found that fit the President's criteria.

"My husband's idea was to have a camp down on one of the tree-covered flats beside a stream or at the junction between two streams. He likes to be near enough to hear the water murmuring."

And there, at the headwaters of the Rapidan River, the Hoovers found exactly what they were looking for.

"This is where I am going to build a cabin. This is just what I want. Here is peace and quietude. I know it's going to be infinitely cooler here than in Washington...I can indulge myself happily in trout fishing. Here I will establish my camp of retreat, far removed from the confines of the White House."