

Alcan Highway Builder Heads New Unit Here

The man who built the Alaska Highway is now on duty at Fort Devens as commanding general of the Army Service Forces Unit Training Center.

Brigadier General James A. (Patsy) O'Connor arrived here this week, straight from Whitehorse, famous old Yukon River settlement on the edge of the Arctic Circle, where for 22 months he directed the construction of the 1,600-mile Alaska Highway.

General O'Connor, who is 53 years old, has served as an engineer officer throughout the world. Prior to his position in Alaska, he was chiefly known as the engineer who had charge of the tunnels and fortifications on Corregidor Island in Manila Bay, where American soldiers held out for so long against the Japanese invaders.

General O'Connor graduated from the U. S. Military Academy at West Point in 1907. He is a native of Bay City, Mich. At present his home is in Los Angeles. He and Mrs. O'Connor have four children, two daughters and two sons. Both daughters are married to Army officers, both now full Colonels.

General O'Connor was accompanied to Fort Devens by his aide-de-camp, Capt. Richard L. Neuberger, who recently wrote a series of articles for The Saturday Evening Post on their experiences in the Arctic.

General O'Connor not only had charge of constructing the Alaska Highway, but also of such corollary projects as the airports between Edmonton and Fairbanks and the narrow-gauge White Pass and Yukon railway, now under military operation.

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BRIG. GEN. JAMES A. O'CONNOR



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Under General O'Connor's direction, seven U. S. Army Engineer regiments pioneered the Alaska Highway through a vast unexplored wilderness of forests and mountains.

"I am very glad to be here at Fort Devens," Gen. O'Connor said. "I feel that the training program offers an opportunity of contribution not only to the war effort but

to the general leadership of our youth after the war. The units of the Army Service Forces are vital to the success of the air and ground forces. We saw that clearly in Alaska."

General O'Connor's executive officer is Col. Ben Stafford, who is acting commander of the Unit Training Center while General O'Connor is away this week at Fort Warren, Wyoming.