

# INDIAN LODGE

## DAVIS MOUNTAINS STATE PARK



### HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORT

## HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE

Lonn Taylor, Historian  
Joe C. Freeman, Architect

2007

Prepared for  
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
Austin, Texas

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Cover photograph of the Indian Lodge courtesy of Archives of the Big Bend, Wildenthal Library, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	vii
PART I: A HISTORY OF INDIAN LODGE .....	1
Introduction .....	3
Beginnings: Park and Scenic Loop.....	3
A Mountain Resort .....	6
The Civilian Conservation Corps .....	6
Camp Washington Seawell.....	8
Getting Started.....	12
Designing Indian Lodge .....	13
Sources of Materials .....	15
Building Indian Lodge.....	18
Continuing Problems.....	21
Operating Indian Lodge.....	23
Indian Lodge in Wartime .....	24
Postwar Problems .....	26
Renovation and Expansion.....	27
Increasing Visitation.....	30
Evaluation of Significance.....	33
Endnotes .....	34
Bibliography .....	39
PART II: ARCHITECTURE OF THE INDIAN LODGE .....	43
Architecture of the Indian Lodge .....	45
An Indian Lodge in the Davis Mountains .....	45
Pueblo Revival in the American Southwest.....	45
Architectural Precedents—Origins of the Pueblo Revival Style .....	46
Landscape and Cultural Identity .....	46
Characteristics of Pueblo Architecture.....	46
Characteristics of Pueblo Revival Architecture .....	47
Architectural Description of the Indian Lodge.....	47
Original Construction 1933–1935.....	47
The Architects .....	47
The Design .....	48
The Drawings.....	48
Construction .....	62
Foundation .....	62

Exterior Walls—Adobe and Stone.....	62
Roofs.....	67
Terraces and Paving.....	67
Doors.....	68
Windows.....	68
Fireplaces.....	68
Lounge, Foyer, and Dining Room.....	69
Guest Rooms.....	69
Ornament.....	69
Furniture.....	71
Furniture Schedule.....	71
Electrical Lighting.....	72
Water System.....	72
Septic System.....	72
Major Additions and Renovations 1935–1966.....	72
Roof Repairs.....	73
Hot Water System.....	73
Window Screens, Screened Doors, and Fireplaces.....	73
Septic System Modification.....	73
Butane Heating System.....	73
Lounge Terrace.....	74
Exterior Stucco.....	74
Additions and Modifications 1966–1968.....	74
Addition.....	74
Original Guest Rooms.....	76
Interim Improvements 1968–2001.....	76
Bond-Funded Improvements 2000.....	77
Unfinished Work.....	77
Recommendations for Future Work.....	77
Conclusion.....	78
Construction Chronology.....	79
End Notes.....	81
Bibliography.....	83

## ILLUSTRATIONS

### PART I: A HISTORY OF INDIAN LODGE

Map of the proposed Davis Mountains State Park and Scenic Loop, c. 1934.....	5
Map of the Davis Mountains State Park, 1935, showing Indian Village.....	7
CCC camp at Davis Mountains State Park, January 1935.....	9
CCC Company 879 a Davis Mountains State Park, January 1935.....	10
Elevation and floor plan of Indian Lodge, c. 1935 .....	16
Floor plan of Indian Lodge, 1938.....	17
Oil painting of CCC camp at Davis Mountains State Park, 1935.....	19
CCC enrollees laying adobe bricks at Indian Lodge, 1934 .....	19
East side of Indian Lodge under construction, 1934–1935.....	20
West side of Indian Lodge under construction, 1934–1935.....	20
East side of Indian Lodge after completion, c. 1936 .....	22
Indian Lodge patio and pergola, c. 1936.....	23
Indian Lodge before 1967 remodeling.....	27
Indian Lodge after 1967 remodeling and expansion.....	29
Cinder block construction of dining room building, 1967.....	30
View of Indian Lodge from east after 1967 expansion and remodeling.....	31

### PART II: ARCHITECTURE OF THE INDIAN LODGE

Site Plan .....	49
Floor Plan.....	50
Floor Plan.....	51
Floor Plan.....	52
Exterior Elevations.....	53
Cross Sections.....	54
Lounge Details.....	55
Fireplace Plans and Elevations .....	56
Door Elevations .....	57
Furniture Details .....	58
Oblique view near entrance looking north.....	59
Oblique view from the pergola looking north.....	60
Oblique view from the patio looking east toward the lounge.....	61
Oblique view looking toward the southeast during construction.....	63
Oblique view looking toward the southeast during construction.....	64
Oblique view looking toward the west during construction .....	65

Oblique view looking toward the west during construction .....	66
Interior view from the patio looking east toward the lounge.....	70
Oblique view of a portion of the 1960s room addition from the courtyard looking north .....	75

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The architectural portion of a historic structure report on the Indian Lodge at Davis Mountains State Park near Fort Davis, Texas, was prepared by Joe C. Freeman, Architect, for the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department under Contract No. 169036 and designated Project No. 101287. Work was initiated in October 2006 with a review of drawings and documents in the files of the Infrastructure Division at the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department's Headquarters Building in Austin. A site visit was made to the Lodge on October 16–18, 2006, to observe aspects of the building from the original construction to recent rehabilitation work. Douglas S. Porter, Jr., P.E., then Project Manager for the Phase III Rehabilitation of the Lodge, provided drawings, documents, a detailed tour of the site, and other useful information and guidance. Dennis Cordes, Architect of Record for the Phase III rehabilitation, also provided good and useful information about the building and its material history. Lonn Taylor, an independent historian, wrote a thorough and insightful history of the Indian Lodge and provided continued guidance and assistance as the architectural portion of the report was being prepared.

Where practical, end notes are provided for reference, and a bibliography is included at the end of Parts I and II of the document. In preparing a narrative based largely on review and analysis of architectural drawings, however, comparative analysis is difficult to reference. In many cases, information from the drawings such as names, dates, and approvals is included in the text. In other cases it is inferred. In most cases, this document parallels the information in Taylor's history. In some, this document duplicates in the narrative facts established in Mr. Taylor's history in an attempt to discuss aspects of style and construction from an architectural perspective. Mr. Taylor should receive any credit due for original historic research, the interpretation of the research, and the establishment of an historical context.

Lonn Taylor is especially grateful to James Steely, historian of the Texas parks system, for unselfishly sharing his research notes on Indian Lodge and his unpublished history of the first years of the Texas Parks Board and for his helpful comments on this manuscript; to Cynthia Brandimarte for locating and copying hundreds of Civilian Conservation Corps and National Park Service documents in the National Archives; to Doug Porter for his insights into the details of Indian Lodge's peculiar construction and for his guidance through the files of the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department's Infrastructure Division; to Melissa Laneman for her highly professional assistance at the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department's Records Division; to Linda Hedges and Brian McMurray for locating crucial documents at the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department's regional office in Fort Davis; to Al Tobola for finding a box of historical files that had been squirreled away at Indian Lodge for a decade; and to Angela Ernhart for the unflagging interest in the Lodge's history that led her to assemble that box of files in 1996.

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**PART I**

**A HISTORY OF INDIAN LODGE  
IN  
DAVIS MOUNTAINS STATE PARK  
1933–2000**

**BY**

**LONN TAYLOR, HISTORIAN**

## INTRODUCTION

The Texas Parks & Wildlife Department's Indian Lodge is a 39-room hotel built in the Pueblo Revival Style on the north slope of Keesey Canyon in Davis Mountains State Park in the Trans-Pecos region of West Texas. The older 16-room adobe section was built in 1934–1935 by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) under the supervision of the National Park Service; a 24-room addition with a dining room, meeting room, and swimming pool was added by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department in 1965–1966, at which time the older section was modernized, and two of its rooms were combined into one. In 2004–2006 the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department undertook a project whose goal was to restore the original section to its 1935 appearance. The hotel is historically significant as an artifact of automobile tourism, an example of Southwestern regional romantic architecture, an example of a Civilian Conservation Corps project, and the location of World War II activity.

## BEGINNINGS: PARK AND SCENIC LOOP

Indian Lodge, the surrounding 1,869-acre Davis Mountains State Park, and the 75-mile Scenic Loop through the Davis Mountains that gives access to the park have their common origin in a campaign by ranchers and businessmen in the nearby town of Fort Davis to promote the Davis Mountains as a destination for automobile tourism in the 1920s. Fort Davis was established in 1854, and until 1891, its economy was almost entirely dependent on the military post that gave the town its name. In the 1880s, when nearly 600 soldiers were stationed there, the fort's military payroll was about \$16,000 a month, most of which was spent locally. Contracts for forage and wood added another \$50,000 or so annually to the local economy, and opportunities for civilian employment of carpenters, masons, painters, blacksmiths, and teamsters brought in additional dollars. In the early 1880s, the completion of the Galveston, Harrisburg, and San Antonio Railroad 25 miles south of Fort Davis and the Texas and Pacific Railroad 70 miles north of town had stimulated the growth of a local ranching industry, which generated additional economic activity in Fort Davis, but the closing of the fort in June 1891 was a severe blow to the local economy. As local resident Charles Mulhern succinctly reported to a correspondent, "The bottom is out of Fort Davis now."<sup>1</sup>

In the 1890s, however, affluent families from Galveston and Houston began to discover that the cool summer climate of Fort Davis, which at an altitude of 5,200 feet above sea level, offered relief from the heat and humidity of the coast. By 1910, Court Street was lined with large homes built by families like the Truehearts and the Adriances from Galveston and the Wallises, the Knoxes, and the Hackneys from Houston, who arrived at the end of May and stayed through the summer. Other families, like that of Thomas B. Love of Dallas and Maco Stewart of Galveston, rented the town homes of local ranchers for the summer. In 1912, a group of local ranchers and businessmen, cognizant of the economic benefits of summer tourism, built the 12-room Limpia Hotel on the town square to house the "summer swallows," as the vacationers were called. The hotel was so popular that in 1917 a 12-room annex was built. The manager of the hotel from 1921 until his death in 1936 was Walter S. Miller, who was also the principal shareholder of the Union Trading Company next door and the major stockholder in the Fort Davis State Bank across the square. Miller and his associates in these two enterprises, who included J.W. Merrill, J.P. Weatherby, Warren Bloys, Edwin Fowlkes, and J.W. Espy, became the principal proponents of tourism in the Davis Mountains and, eventually of a Davis Mountains State Park. In 1910 they organized the Commercial Club, which a few years later became the Fort Davis Chamber of Commerce, and they published brochures advertising the area's attractions and lobbied in Austin for public improvements that would attract tourists. State Senator Thomas B. Love of Dallas, who started vacationing in Fort Davis in the early 1900s when he was a member of the Texas House of Representatives, aided them in their efforts. Love became a great advocate of the recreational opportunities of the Davis Mountains, and often climbed Mount Livermore, which he once described as "the second highest peak between the Rockies and the Alps." In the 1920s, Love was one of Texas's most powerful political figures, having served as Democratic National Committeeman from Texas before being elected to the State Senate in 1926.<sup>2</sup>

The first summer visitors to arrive in Fort Davis by automobile came in 1906, driving a White Steamer from Houston to Fort Davis and camping by the roadside along the way. The trip took two weeks, and when they returned to Houston at the end of the summer they shipped the car back on a railroad flatcar. By 1920, when the number of automobiles registered in the United States had reached 8,000,000, tourists of a new type were coming to Fort Davis: middle-class families who did not intend to stay the entire summer but who wanted to spend their vacation exploring the countryside in their car. It was this type of tourist that Walter Miller, who took over the management of the Limpia Hotel in 1921, and his associates wanted to attract to the Davis Mountains.<sup>3</sup>



In 1921, when Governor Pat Neff announced to the State Legislature that he intended to respond to the growing needs of automobile tourists by creating a state park system for Texas, the Fort Davis boosters established a Davis Mountains State Park Committee, which included State Representative W.W. Stewart of Balmorhea, to lobby for a state park in the Davis Mountains. The legislature, at the urging of Stewart and Senator Richard Dudley of El Paso, created a 13-person interim committee to explore the proposal. In September 1921, the committee traveled by train to Pecos and then by car to the William Kingston ranch in the northern Davis Mountains. Kingston, who was a county commissioner in Jeff Davis County, took the group on a 4-day horseback trip across his 30,000-acre ranch, and they returned to Austin in such an enthusiastic mood that they recommended that the state acquire "not less than 500 square miles" for a park in the Davis Mountains.<sup>4</sup>

The 1923 legislature did not act directly on the recommendation, but at Governor Neff's request, it did create a five-member State Parks Board that was authorized to accept donations of land for state parks. The only park referred to by name in the bill was the Davis Mountains State Park: the board was "especially directed to inspect the Davis Mountains in Jeff Davis County, to determine its feasibility as a park . . . , if said Board should conclude that the Davis Mountains area is feasible as a great park they are hereby authorized to outline said park; take options or easements and outline a policy to finance the said Davis Mountains area as a park." The legislature did not, however, appropriate any funds to purchase land for a park in the Davis Mountains; in fact, it did not appropriate any funds for the operations of the newly-created Parks Board. It would be 10 years before Texas had a state-funded park system, but the Davis Mountains State Park was a major component from the very beginning, thanks to the aggressive lobbying of local ranchers and businessmen.<sup>5</sup>

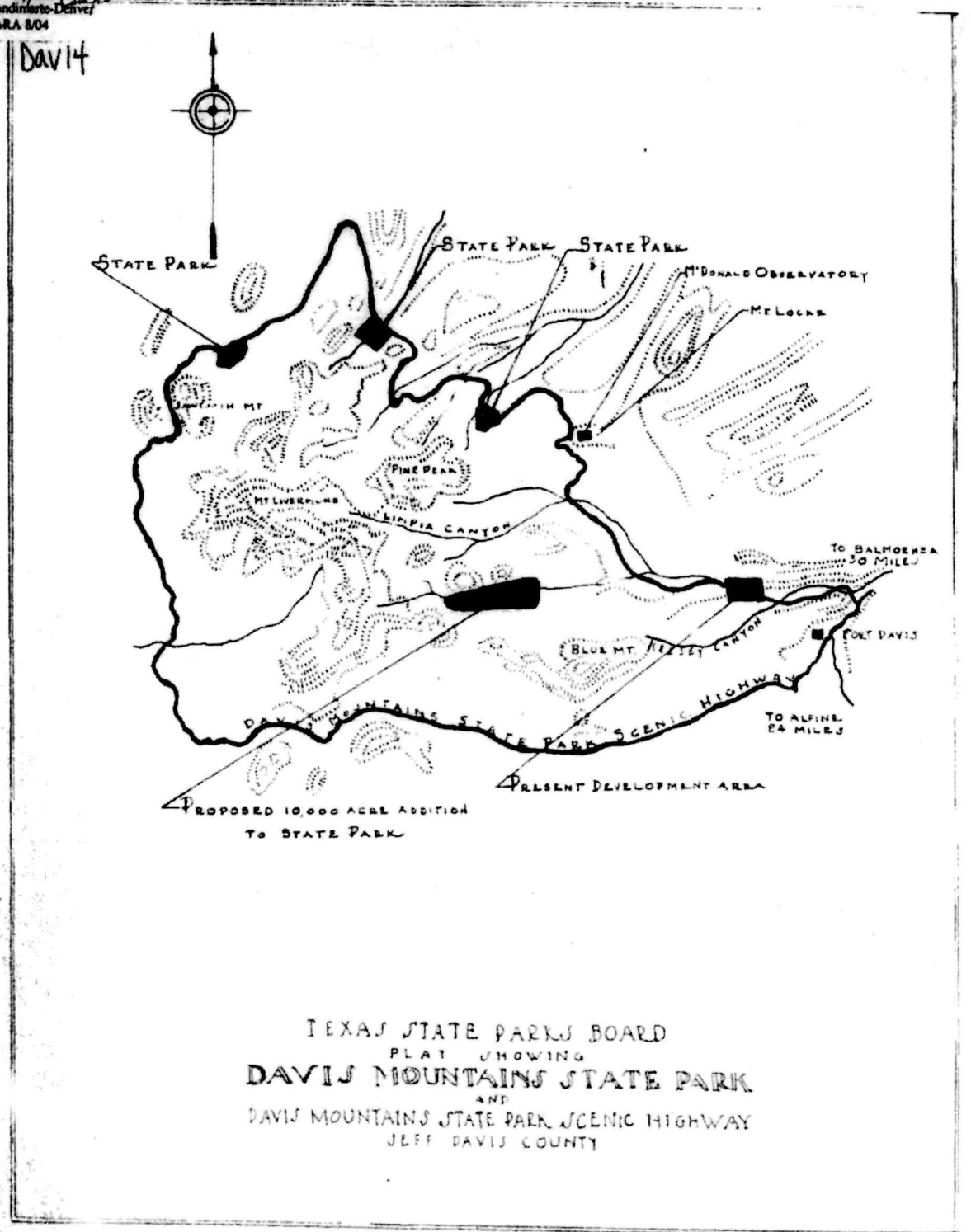
D.E. Colp, the chairman of the Parks Board that was created in 1923, evolved a plan for a statewide park system that included several large "destination parks"—places where visitors could camp for extended lengths of time—and a chain of small parks along state highways where tourists could camp overnight. Because the state depended entirely on donations of land for the parks, it was easier to create the small roadside parks than the larger parks, and despite several well-publicized visits to the Davis Mountains by Governor Pat Neff and other state officials, no offers of large tracts of donated land were forthcoming, although several ranchers offered to sell their ranches to the state.<sup>6</sup>

The next concrete step toward creating a Davis Mountains State Park did not come until 1927, when Senators Thomas B. Love of Dallas and B. F. Berkeley of Alpine introduced a bill in the legislature that appropriated \$7,500 to survey an 80-mile "Davis Mountain [sic] State Park Highway" through the Davis Mountains. The bill provided that the state could accept up to 8 sections of land (5,120 acres) of land abutting the highway "for camping accommodations and park purposes." For several years, tourists had enjoyed taking their automobiles over the network of single-lane, unpaved ranch roads that circled the bases of Mount Livermore and Sawtooth Mountain, climbing in and out of Elbow Canyon and Madera Canyon and affording spectacular views from Indian Hill and Nunn Hill. Walter Miller recalled that he "wore out three cars" taking visitors on these roads. When Parks Board Member Phebe K. Warner visited Fort Davis in 1924, Miller and Warren Bloys organized a 10-car caravan that took her on a day-long trip over this route, and Love himself had undoubtedly driven over it during his summer sojourns in Fort Davis. Love's and Berkeley's bill would widen and pave this route to create what the Alpine Avalanche described as "the longest scenic drive in America," 5 miles longer than the widely acclaimed scenic Columbia River Highway completed 5 years earlier. Love, Berkeley, Colp, and the Fort Davis boosters hoped that the new highway would encourage donations of land for a Davis Mountains State Park.<sup>7</sup>

By January 1931, 2,000 acres of right of way for the new highway had been donated by ranchers along the projected route, and in December of that year, a Texas Highway Department survey party started to run the line for the first section, which ran 16 miles west from the Fort Davis-Balmorhea road to Fowlkes Hill. Construction on that section started on January 9, 1932. As Love and Berkeley anticipated, the actual construction of the Davis Mountains State Park Highway encouraged donations of land for the park itself. Walter Miller and his associates in the Union Trading Company tried to prime the pump by donating 214 acres along the highway's projected route in Madera Canyon, and rancher Jess Fisher donated an adjoining 100 acres. This land eventually became the Lawrence Wood Picnic Area on the Scenic Loop. One of Fort Davis's leading citizens, rancher Jesse Merrill, then donated 160 acres straddling Limpia Creek, within the boundaries of the present park. Merrill was the ruling elder of the Fort Davis Presbyterian Church, secretary of the Bloys Camp Meeting Association, former county judge, and county commissioner for Precinct 1. Shortly afterwards, his fellow-rancher Joe Espy donated an adjoining 169 acres, with the condition that the land would revert to him if it ever ceased to be used for recreational purposes. Merrill and his son R. K. Merrill then bestowed 200 acres in Keesey Canyon just west of the Espy donation. Indian Lodge was

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*Map of the proposed Davis Mountains State Park and Scenic Loop, c. 1934. Only the portion marked "Present Development Area" became part of the park. The other areas marked "State Park" were turned over to the Texas Highway Department for roadside parks, and the area marked "Proposed 10,000 Acre Addition" was never acquired. National Park Service Papers.*

built on that donated 200 acres. Merrill and his son also agreed to lease an additional 1340 acres on both sides of the donated tract to the State of Texas for 99 years, with the provisions that the Merrills would retain grazing rights on the land for sheep and cattle for 9 months each year and that the State would drill two wells on the property and build two windmills and water tanks. (In 1983 the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department acquired this leased acreage from the Merrill heirs.) The Texas Parks Board voted to formally accept Davis Mountains State Park into the state park system at its September 11, 1933 meeting.<sup>8</sup>

### **A MOUNTAIN RESORT**

It is not clear where the idea of building a resort hotel in the Davis Mountains State Park came from, but it was in the air by 1930, when State Senator Edgar Witt of Waco introduced a resolution in the State Senate calling for the use of convict labor to build roads in and beautify a state park in the Davis Mountains. One provision of the resolution read:

Whereas, there could be established in the territory somewhere near the Madero [sic] Canyon as delightful a summer resort as it is possible to be conceived of which if said park and roads were established would cause thousands of our citizens to visit said park and spend their vacations instead of going to summer resorts outside of Texas.

As early as 1924 Parks Board Member Phebe Warner had suggested creating a "Texas Chataqua ground as an educational center" in the Davis Mountains, and in 1926 J. B. Odell of Balmorhea tried to persuade Parks Board Chairman D. E. Colp to purchase his 4-section Davis Mountains ranch in Little Aguja Canyon for a state park and then lease it back to him so that he could establish "an all-year camp" with scenic trails, riding stables, a trout stream, a museum, a herd of longhorns, and "many other clean wholsom [sic] attractions that would take the old back to child-hood and cause the young to wonder."<sup>9</sup>

In April 1933, when Governor Miriam Ferguson forwarded a list of 26 proposed projects for Civilian Conservation Corps work in Texas to Robert Fechner, the Federal Director of Emergency Conservation Work, the list included roadwork, dams, and the construction of 25 "cottages" in Davis Mountains State Park. Texas parks historian James Steely feels that the governor's list was largely the result of legislative log-rolling and that D. E. Colp and the Parks Board had no role in compiling it; it may well be that Thomas B. Love, who was serving his final term in the State Senate, placed the Davis Mountains cottages on the list.<sup>10</sup>

### **THE CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS**

The Civilian Conservation Corps, which was created by a presidential executive order on April 5, 1933, was part of the New Deal's response to the problem of unemployment during the Great Depression. Its purpose was to use federal funds to put 250,000 men between the ages of 18 and 25 to work on conservation projects on both federal and state lands. Corps enrollees received \$30.00 per month, \$25.00 of which was sent to their families. The remaining \$5.00 was turned over to the enrollee for spending money. The projects themselves were developed by the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior. The young men were enrolled in the Corps for 6-month periods by the Department of Labor and lived in project camps administered by the Department of War, and their work was supervised by employees of the appropriate agencies of the Agriculture and Interior Departments. Some camps also received artists from the Treasury Department's Public Works of Art Project, who were assigned to make a pictorial record of the CCC's work. For budgeting and authorization purposes, the projects were organized into six-month periods, which were designated First Period, Second Period, and so on.<sup>11</sup>

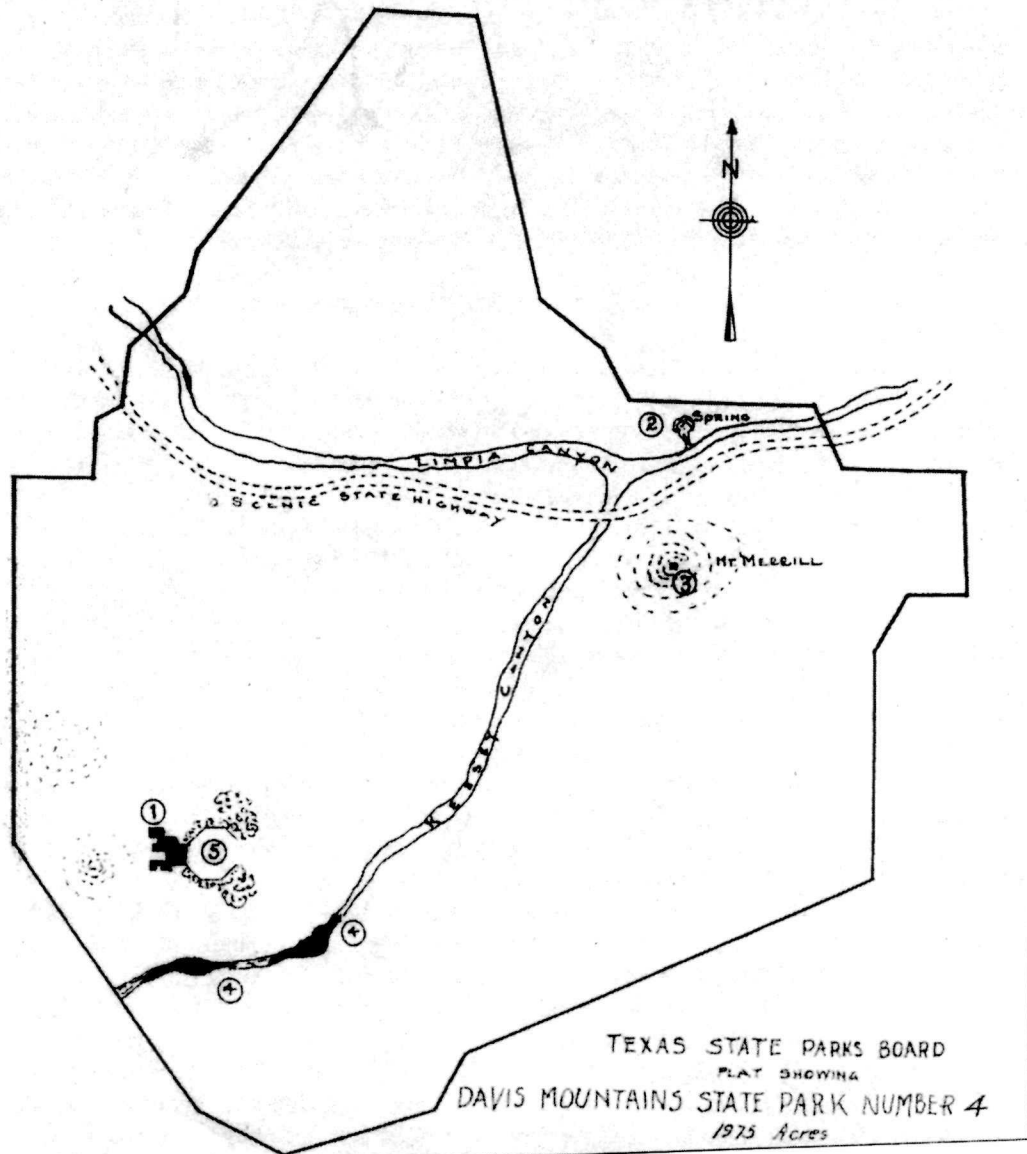
The Army, of course, had a long experience in housing and feeding young men and teaching them to work in a disciplined manner. To oversee the CCC camps effectively, the War Department divided the country into nine Corps areas, each supervised by a major general or a brigadier general. The Corps areas were divided into districts comprising one or more states, with headquarters at various army posts; the Texas district was administered from the Eighth Corps headquarters in San Antonio. The camps' commanders were usually Army Reserve captains or lieutenants, assisted by one or more officers, who were supposed to serve in their posts for six months but often served longer. Most camps also had a camp physician who was on contract to the army. Food and clothing was supplied by the Army Quartermaster Department. Each camp housed one company of enrollees, usually about 200

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Project numbers indicated thus ①  
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Map of Davis Mountains State Park, 1935, showing Indian Village (1) and proposed entrance drive on east side of Village (5), which was never built. National Park Service Papers.

men, who lived in barracks, ate in a mess hall, and were expected to conform to military discipline.<sup>12</sup>

To meet its new responsibilities with the CCC, the National Park Service opened a new Rocky Mountain District office in Denver (it was later moved to Oklahoma City) headed by architect Herbert Maier, who had been designing rustic buildings for the Park Service since 1920. Maier's district stretched from the Dakotas to Texas, but he gave close and careful supervision to every project within it. His eyes and ears in the field were traveling National Park Service inspectors, who made frequent visits to each park site within their area. In the Park Service's Austin office, the inspectors were Frederick Dale, an engineer, and George Nason, an engineer with a Harvard master's degree in landscape architecture. The Austin office also included several architects. In addition, Maier's budget included funds for a supervisor and various specialists—architects, landscape architects, wildlife experts, and historians—at each park site where a project was underway, as well as funds to hire local craftsmen, known as Local Experienced Men (LEMs), to supplement the work of the CCC enrollees.<sup>13</sup>

When Maier made his first inspection trip to Texas in June 1933, he discovered that, although the National Park Service was to be responsible for disbursing funds for work in Texas state parks, the Texas Parks Board had no office, no staff, and no machinery for administering funds. Governor Miriam Ferguson assigned initial responsibility for cooperating with the National Park Service on the state park work to the Texas Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, a state agency created in March 1933 under the direction of Texas National Guard Colonel Lawrence Westbrook to receive and distribute Federal relief funds. Westbrook was a former state legislator from Waco and a close associate of Ferguson's. It was not until November 1933 that a newly funded Texas Parks Board took over the responsibility for working with the National Park Service on state parks work.<sup>14</sup>

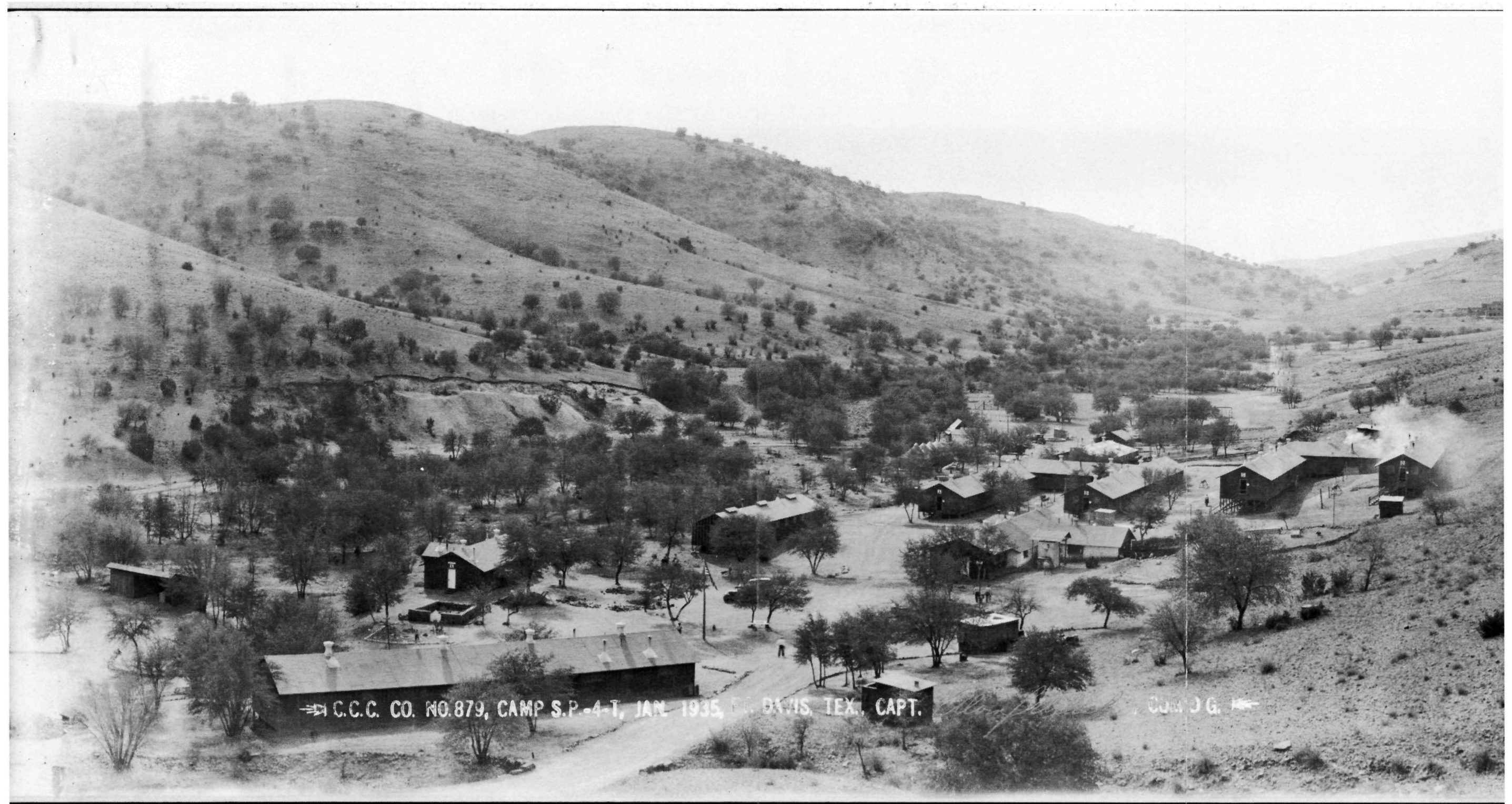
### **CAMP WASHINGTON SEAWELL**

The CCC camp in the Davis Mountains State Park was one of the first established in Texas. Four hundred enrollees, formed into CCC Companies 879 and 881, arrived in Marfa by train on June 15, 1933, and were brought the 25 miles to the park in trucks and cars driven by Fort Davis citizens. Fort Davis newspaperman Barry Scobee described them as "boys from college campuses and cotton rows from city streets and open plains . . . and having the time of their young lives." He added that they included "a score or so of Mexicans and twice that number of colored men." Company 879 went into tents in Keesey Canyon, and Company 881 encamped on the tract of land in Madera Canyon that had been donated to the State Parks Board by Jess Fisher and the Union Trading Company and was known as the Upper Park. No potable water could be found there, however, and Company 881 moved down into Keesey Canyon; it was transferred to Roswell, New Mexico in October 1933, but Company 879 remained in Keesey Canyon until June 1935, when it was transferred to Garner State Park near Uvalde, Texas. In August 1933, the camp commander, Lieutenant M. L. Skinner, officially named the Keesey Canyon camp Camp Washington Seawell, after the 8th Infantry lieutenant colonel who established Fort Davis in 1854. However, it was usually referred to in documents by its CCC designation, Camp SP-4.<sup>15</sup>

The men at Camp Washington Seawell lived in 8-man army wall tents while a local contractor built the wooden barracks and other buildings that constituted the camp, and the contractor was slow in doing this. Six months after the camp was established CCC inspector M.L. Grant wrote, "This camp got started very late in getting their wooden buildings started and are not complete yet. They have their electric light system about half completed . . . ." But by the summer of 1934 the camp consisted of two large board-and-batten barracks with U-shaped floor plans, each housing 100 men; an adobe mess hall and an adobe recreation hall with a rock fireplace and chimney; a dispensary; a long building that contained offices and quarters for the Army and Park Service personnel; an office for the park architect; a blacksmith shop; and several subsidiary buildings. A well, windmill, and cistern were located about 75 yards west of the recreation hall.<sup>16</sup>

A sharp insight into daily life at the camp came from CCC veteran Victor Douglass, who was interviewed by Texas Parks & Wildlife staff members in 2003. Douglass arrived at Camp Washington Seawell in January 1934 and was there until his discharge in June 1935. He was a senior foreman, a job he compared to being a first sergeant, and was responsible for much of the camp paperwork, with an office in the same building as the camp commander. Douglass recalled that the first thing that the enrollees did in the morning was make their bunks up army-style. "You had to cut the corner at the back and tuck it," he said. He then assembled the company with a whistle and called the roll, after which everyone went to the mess hall for breakfast, eating out of their army mess kits, which they washed in barrels of water heated over oak fires behind the mess hall. At 8:00 AM there was a second formation, and then everyone broke up into work parties and went off to work. At 5:30 PM there was a third formation, followed by





CCC camp at Davis Mountains State Park, January 1935. The long building in the left foreground is the camp commander's headquarters; just behind it is the dispensary. The small square building in the center foreground is the officers' latrine. The T-shaped building behind it is the mess hall, and the two large U-shaped buildings are the barracks. The roof of the recreation hall is visible just behind the first barracks on the left, and to the left of it, almost hidden in the trees, is the architect's office. Photograph from Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin, E. O. Goldbeck Collection, Accession #879-C.



CCC Company 879 at Davis Mountains State Park, January 1935, with barracks and mess hall in background. Photograph from Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin, E. O. Goldbeck Collections, Accession #879-B.



supper, and after that the men were free until lights out at 10:00 PM. “They’d usually go to the recreation hall,” Douglass remembered. “We got a bunch of domino tables . . . we had an old-worn out pool table which didn’t do much good. We had a little PX in there, and a little barber shop.”<sup>17</sup>

Several daily menus from the Camp Washington Seawell mess hall have survived in the CCC archives, and they indicate that the meals were substantial. On January 5, 1934, breakfast was milk, cereals, bacon, hot cakes, butter, syrup, and coffee; noon dinner was vegetable soup, boiled beef and dumplings, boiled cabbage, boiled potatoes, bread, artillery pie, and ice water; and supper was railroad steak and gravy, boiled potatoes, creamed peas, fried hominy, stewed peaches, bread, and hot tea. The groceries for the mess hall were shipped from Fort Bliss by train to Fort D. A. Russell in Marfa. The weekly order arrived in Marfa at 2:00 AM and would be picked up by a truck from the camp which met the train. The mess hall had a separate officers’ mess partitioned off from the main eating area, where the army officers assigned to the camp, the National Park Service personnel stationed there, and their guests could dine in privacy and relative comfort at tables set with tablecloths and plates and served by mess stewards.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to the domino tables and pool table that Douglass recalled, a second room in the recreation hall contained a 110-volume library and served as a classroom for an ambitious education program, which in 1935 was operated by Educational Advisor Davis Hopper and his assistant W. E. Hord. Hopper and Hord, assisted by the camp doctor, Alfred Pfitsch, and the company clerk, Frank White, taught 20 evening classes at the elementary and high school levels. The classes included basic subjects such as reading, writing, arithmetic, and spelling, but enrollees could also take geometry, algebra, public speaking, first aid, bookkeeping, typing, art, and astronomy. A radio club, a scouting club, a discussion club, and an astronomy club also met in the recreation hall, and educational films and slide shows were sometimes shown there.<sup>19</sup>

A group of enrollees published a mimeographed camp newspaper, *The Checker-Upper*. The first issue, dated November 20, 1934, included cartoons, caricatures of the camp officers, camp gossip, jokes, and a sly dig about the availability of sotol at the cane-cutting camp in Boquillas. Subsequent issues reported on basketball games between camp teams and teams from Alpine and other CCC camps and carried official camp bulletins and short essays on subjects such as “The Boy Scout Movement” and “Self-Improvement.”<sup>20</sup>

The enrollees had Saturday afternoons and Sundays free, and they often used that time to go to town. Cecil McMeans, who was in Company 881, said in a 2006 interview that when the camp was first established and the men were still living in tents a group of families in Fort Davis each adopted a tent. His tent was adopted by the W. O. Miles family, and on Saturday afternoon he and his tent-mates would ride burros into Fort Davis and spend the afternoon at the Miles house. “We would go to their house, raid the refrigerator, cook a meal, clean up, and leave a note,” he recalled. “Mrs. Miles suggested that if we wanted to be on good standing we should attend church on Sundays, so we did,” he added. Local ministers also held services in the camp on Sundays. Victor Douglass remembered that he and his friends would take the camp trucks and drive to Fort Davis, Marfa, and Alpine to go to afternoon movies and evening dances. Fort Davis resident Vivian Grubb, in a 2006 interview, recalled that her uncle, Herbert Bloys, opened the first movie theatre in Fort Davis in the fall of 1933 to accommodate “the CCC boys,” and remembered them attending dances with Fort Davis girls in the courtroom of the Jeff Davis County courthouse. She also remembered visiting the camp on horseback with her teen-age friends from town, “because that’s where the boys were. We would ride up there and show off our abilities.” In December 1933, the men from the CCC camp put on a Christmas entertainment at Fort Davis High School and raised \$19.75, which they used to buy Christmas candy for distribution to 260 children in the Fort Davis area. They also made and repaired toys to give as Christmas presents to local children, and a photograph in the Civilian Conservation Corps papers in the National Archives shows a pyramid of dolls, toy cars and trucks, a tiny windmill, and a miniature banjo arranged on a rock pile.<sup>21</sup>

A Saturday night dance in Marfa in February 1934 led to a fatal stabbing at Camp Washington Seawell when two enrollees, Jack Montgomery from Marfa and Michael Hesbrook from Edinburg got into an argument over a girl at the dance. They argued again in camp the next day, and Montgomery fatally stabbed Hesbrook with a mess kit knife. Montgomery was tried for murder in Fort Davis and acquitted on grounds of self-defense. The Hesbrook stabbing provides an interesting window into relations between Anglo-Americans and Hispanics at Camp Washington Seawell. Although newspaper reporter Barry Scobee said that “a score or so” of the 400 enrollees who arrived in July 1933 were “Mexicans,” Alfred Pfitsch, the camp’s resident doctor, estimated in December 1935 that “one-half of our camp is of Mexican extraction.” W. R. Bowers, a CCC veteran who was enrolled in the Chisos Mountains camp in the Big Bend from 1934 through 1937, recalled in a 1997 interview that there was “segrega-



tion as we know it now” between Anglo-American and Hispanic enrollees in the Chisos Basin camp. He explained that by “segregation” he meant that “all of the officers, all of the foremen, all of the assistant leaders, and all of the leaders were all Anglo-American,” and he recalled “two or three gang fights between Mexican-Americans and Anglos.” One of the leaders at the Chisos Basin camp, “tried to get the Mexican-Americans to talk American, but it didn’t go over with the Mexican-Americans, and it wasn’t enforced . . . They talked their Tex-Mex most of the time.” Except for comments on the Hesbrook killing, there is no evidence about Anglo-Hispanic relations at Camp Washington Seawell, but since the July 1934 Camp Report says that 120 of the 196 men enrolled there came from within a 100-mile radius of Fort Davis, it is safe to assume that most of the Anglo-American members of that group shared the same assumptions about Anglo-American cultural superiority that Bowers recalled at the Chisos Mountains camp and that were common among Anglo-Americans in Texas at that time. What is interesting is that in both the official report of the Hesbrook murder and in Victor Douglass’s interview, Hesbrook and Montgomery are identified as Hispanics. The July 1934 camp report, filed by J. S. Billups, says, in answer to the question, “Has there been any trouble of any nature since camp was installed?” “One killing February 4, 1934 between two boys of Mexican extraction, over a girl at Marfa, Texas, private dance hall, renewed in camp the next day.” Douglass, recalling the incident 60 years later, said, “A boy from Marfa named Jack Montgomery, who was part Mexican, and Mike Hesbrook, were apparently arguing over a girl. I’m not sure what they were arguing about. But Mike Hesbrook was also half Mexican.”<sup>22</sup>

In November 1934, Max Bachofen, an artist from Alliance, Ohio, who had done landscape painting in San Antonio and Castroville, Texas, in the late 1920s, was assigned to Camp Washington Seawell by the Treasury Department’s Public Works of Art Project. In writing to inform him of his assignment the project’s director of painting and sculpture, Edward B. Rowan, said, “In choosing your subject I wish you would stress the life and activities of the camp proper, or any buildings or construction programs which may be in progress.” Bachofen set up a studio in one corner of the recreation hall and, taking his easel outdoors on sunny days, produced a large oil painting of several men standing in front of the barracks, with the Skyline Drive, the camp’s first project, winding up the hill in the background. Bachofen also did several other smaller paintings, including another of the camp and one of Blue Mountain, and a number of sketches before returning to Alliance in March 1935.<sup>23</sup>

## GETTING STARTED

When Camp Washington Seawell was established, the CCC work in Texas parks was being coordinated by Lawrence Westbrook’s Texas Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, and the first construction superintendent at the camp was P. A. Welty of Austin, a Westbrook appointee. Even before the camp buildings were finished, Welty put crews to work building a dirt road, called Skyline Drive, that ran up the slope on the southern side of Keesey Canyon to a lookout point, where a shelter, barbecue pits, and stone tables and benches were planned. Welty was at the camp for three months and was replaced in October 1933 by another Westbrook appointee, W. C. Yeager. The record is not entirely clear concerning the work that was planned in the park for the first six-month period. A news story in the *Alpine Avalanche* for July 7, 1933, says that F. A. Dale of Austin, representative of Lawrence Westbrook, “who is in charge of CCC park work in Texas,” has been in the Davis Mountains State Park and has approved “a six-month plan of work that includes a skyline drive, fireplaces, picnic tables, paths, cottages, and a dam in Keesey Canyon.” The dam was to be 65 feet long and 20 feet high and “impound a considerable little lake,” and the cottages were to overlook the lake. Because the soil in the canyon was unstable, the dam was never built, but it remained a bugbear to the Park Service and the Texas Parks Board throughout the 1930s. In March 1935, National Park Service Inspector George Nason, attempting to review the progress of the Davis Mountains State Park project, wrote that “The project list in the first period application . . . is somewhat indefinite, as at that time individual projects were not mentioned. There is a statement, however, on the bottom of the estimate as follows: ‘Materials include 500 barrels of cement for dam and masonry buildings, five tons dynamite, lumber for lodge house, bath house, cottages, three wells, piping, fencing, nursery stock, lodge equipment, paint.’ The total amount allotted for materials was \$16,850.” The fact is that the initial planning for the CCC work at Davis Mountains State Park, including Indian Lodge, was extremely haphazard, and a great deal of time and material was wasted. It took 10 months, until May of 1934, for substantial work to get underway. By then the Texas Parks Board had succeeded Westbrook’s Relief and Rehabilitation Commission as the coordinating state agency and Captain A. S. Lewis of Fort Worth, described by the *Alpine Avalanche* as “a builder,” had taken Yeager’s place as construction superintendent. He remained to see the job through to the finish.<sup>24</sup>

## DESIGNING INDIAN LODGE

The original plans for the “Indian Village,” as Indian Lodge was originally designated, were drawn up between July and October 1933 by J. B. Roberts, who is described in an October 1933 article in the *Alpine Avalanche* as being from Kingsville, Texas, holding a degree from the University of Texas, and having “worked in the East.” The *Avalanche* described the plans as calling for “a pueblo group of apartments, perhaps fifteen suites of two or three rooms, built in an artistic arrangement on a hillside . . . in a Pueblo-Hopi Indian-Mexican style of architecture of adobe and stucco, with protruding ‘vegas’ [sic] or rafters. There will be a great lounge room . . . a dining room, garages, porches, heating system for at least hot water.” The article went on to say that “the other portion of the village” would be 15 or 20 cottages built of stone or adobe facing Keesey Creek “near the pueblo,” and another group of cottages “down-canyon from the center.” The cottages were never built, and Roberts’s plans for the “pueblo group” have never been located, although 10 sheets of plans for a pueblo-like structure labeled “Indian Village, Texas State Park No. SP-4,” drawn by National Park Service architect Olin Smith and dated January 29, 1934, are in the Texas State Archives and may represent a re-drafting of Roberts’s plans. Smith was an employee in the National Park Service’s Austin office, where plans for CCC park structures all over the state were drafted. In August 1934, months before the Indian Village was completed, the *Alpine Avalanche* announced that a watercolor of its front elevation, painted by the project’s landscape architect, Roy Ferguson, from J. B. Roberts’s plans, had been sent to the Century of Progress Exhibition in Chicago. But, like the plans, the watercolor does not seem to have survived.<sup>25</sup>

Construction of the Indian Village, following Roberts’s plans, evidently started in the first week of December 1933, when the *Alpine Avalanche* reported that “Excavation work for the Indian Village has started. The lower parts will be of stone, the upper of adobe.” When Victor Douglass arrived in camp on January 6, 1934, he went up to the building site and saw berms being built and rock foundations being laid. The CCC application for Third Period funding for the project, which is dated February 12, 1934, says, “There is now under construction on this project an Indian Village . . . Walls are being constructed of adobe bricks made on the ground of clay and straw.” At that point, the plans for the Village included a stable; a rodeo arena in a natural amphitheatre with masonry and concrete seating and stalls, pens, and chutes; and a 5,000-watt electric plant in a separate adobe building, but these were later eliminated from the project. By early March, construction ground to a halt. Construction superintendent Yaeger resigned, and a spokesman at the camp told the *Alpine Avalanche* that the men “lacked plans and materials to proceed.” A delegation from Austin consisting of Robert O. Whiteaker and Norfleet Bone of the State Parks Board and A. H. Dunlap of the State Water Board visited the site along with Captain A. S. Lewis, who was installed as construction superintendent with orders to “push the building ahead industriously.” But in May 1934, National Park Service Inspector George Nason reported that he had been to the Indian Village and was not pleased with what he had seen. “While it is being built more or less in accordance with the sketches prepared last fall,” he wrote, “it is distinctly lacking in character and atmosphere.”<sup>26</sup>

Nason’s solution was to send National Park Service architect Arthur Fehr, who had been working with the CCC at Bastrop State Park, to the Davis Mountains State Park to try to improve on Roberts’s design. Fehr recruited his friend San Antonio architect William C. Caldwell, who was taken on by the National Park Service as the architect for SP-4, classed as a “skilled workman” at \$150 per month, and the two drove to Fort Davis on May 18, 1934. Fehr stayed for 11 days; Caldwell remained for several months. Captain Lewis provided them with quarters and a drafting room when they arrived at the camp, and they went to work. After examining the site and looking at buildings in Fort Davis, Marfa, and Alpine, Fehr wrote in his daybook, “WCC and I cannot quite see an Indian Village on the side of a mountain. We are very much in mind to convert the whole scheme to Mexican—probably we should call it just Texan.” Three days later, Fehr noted, “Decided on changes in plan,” and he and Caldwell spent the next 6 days working on sketches, elevations, and a celotex perspective model of their new concept. At one point, Fehr went to Alpine “to gather more historical information” and visited Sul Ross State Teachers College. On May 29, Nason arrived from Austin to see the results and, according to Fehr, was “personally . . . very much satisfied with Caldwell’s and my work.” But because the changes to Roberts’s plans were “rather drastic,” he wanted to send them to his superior, Herbert Maier in the Park Service’s Denver office, for approval. Maier evidently concurred with Nason, and when Fehr returned to Bastrop on May 31, Caldwell set to work to produce the 22 sheets of detailed drawings of the Indian Village that are now in the Texas State Archives. These drawings are dated October 31, 1934, but in a letter dated November 27, 1934, State Parks Board Engineer Robert O. Whiteaker wrote to Herbert Maier that “Superintendent Lewis and the Architectural Foreman, W. C. Caldwell at State Park #4 have developed, so

far, thirteen of the total of twenty-two sheets covering plans for Indian Village.” Since an Austin American reporter who visited the site in early September 1934 wrote that “the adobe brick hotel is about half complete at this time . . . [the adobe bricks] are being laid with native sandstone ground cement. Hewn timbers form the door pieces and the supports for the flat roof,” it would appear that construction continued while the drawings were being made.<sup>27</sup>

Without Roberts’s original drawings, it is impossible to say how extensive Fehr and Caldwell’s “drastic” changes actually were, but a comparison with Olin Smith’s drawings indicate that they retained the basic configuration of Roberts’s pueblo-style Indian Village but softened the geometry and rusticated the details by rounding the corners of the units, reducing the sizes of the window openings, adding casement windows and adzed pine lintels, pine *canales* (waterspouts), flat rock chimneys, and courses of flat rock trim along the roof parapets. Notations on Caldwell’s elevations call for “Chimneys to be laid up with flat granite stone—no mortar visible in joints,” “flagstone steps and terrace,” “hammered iron lamps,” and “poles [roof beams] project from 6 to 12 inches.” The floors of the 16 guest rooms were to be wood, and those of the public rooms flagstone. The roof construction consisted of “peeled pine poles adzed level on top,” supporting “two layers of river cane with top layer laid close together, surmounted by one layer of #15 felt and 6” to 4” adobe mud leveled with straight edge,” and then two layers of felt topped by a coat of hot tar and gravel. The roof, although picturesque, was to cause endless trouble over the next few years. All of the guest rooms had exterior entrances and the walkways, or “terraces” as Caldwell described them, leading to them were to be of flagstone. Each guest room had an adobe fireplace, which provided the only heat in the room, and the large lobby-lounge and the dining room below it had large fireplaces covered with plaster and trimmed with rock. The interior light fixtures in both the guest and public rooms were to be hammered iron two-bulb chandeliers, with the bulbs supported by a strip of iron bent into a square; the exterior fixtures were bulbs mounted behind a zig-zag strip of iron that resembled a stylized lightning bolt. The lounge opened onto a patio that was to be paved with flagstone, with a curbed artificial well in the center and a raised terrace covered by a pergola across the rear. The dining room below the lounge opened onto a flagstone terrace with a view down Keesey Canyon, a second flagstone terrace outside the lounge also looked down the canyon, and a “lookout tower,” a single room above the lounge reached by an interior stairway, provided guests with a loftier version of the same view.

The Lodge was to be landscaped with desert plants native to the Big Bend. A planting plan in the CCC Maps and Plans Collection at the Texas State Archives calls for yucca, sotol, agarita, ocotillo, Spanish dagger, Texas mountain laurel, madrone, and juniper to be used as foundation plantings around the buildings, and for yucca, sotol, Spanish dagger, ocotillo, candelilla, madrone, and pencil cholla to be planted in the patio, with wild grape vines adorning the pergola at the west end. The madrone tree was in the southwest corner of the patio, and it became a much-beloved feature of the Lodge, fondly remembered by many visitors. Its trunk grew to a diameter of nearly 2 feet before it became diseased and was cut down in the mid-1990s. The plan also called for a screen of red cedar trees on the west side of the building, a grove of oak trees on the north side, and a field of cholla on the slope to the east.<sup>28</sup>

The general configuration and details of the Village as designed by Fehr and Caldwell are squarely within the tradition of the romantic regional architecture that was being employed by architects like John Gaw Meem, Mary Colter, and Isaac and William Rapp for their patrons in New Mexico and Arizona in the 1920s and 30s, a style that combined Spanish Colonial and Pueblo forms with details derived from the Arts and Crafts Movement. Historian James Wright Steely thinks that Fehr and Caldwell might have been inspired by the Historic American Building Survey drawings of Acoma Pueblo, a complex of buildings that influenced the Rapp brothers’ design for the 1916 Fine Arts Museum in Santa Fe. Certainly Fehr’s and Caldwell’s use of flat stone in the chimneys, copings, large fireplaces, and floors and terraces and its contrast with the smooth plaster finish of the walls is reminiscent of Mary Colter’s Painted Desert exhibit for the Santa Fe Railroad at the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Diego, her remarkable buildings done for the Fred Harvey Company in Grand Canyon in the 19-teens and ‘20s, and her 1929 La Posada Hotel in Winslow, Arizona.<sup>29</sup>

Arthur Herman Kilian Fehr was born in Austin, Texas, in 1904 and graduated from the University of Texas with a B.S. in architecture in 1925. After graduation, he visited New York and Europe and worked in San Antonio as a draftsman for Harvey P. Smith, an architect with a romantic interest in Spanish Colonial buildings. In 1929, he became Smith’s designer with one-fourth partnership rights while Smith was involved in restoring the Governor’s Palace in San Antonio, where he worked with Peter Mansbendel, a Swiss-born woodcarver who became a lifelong friend. But he left Smith’s office, and as he put it in a short biography he filed with the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, “the depression led me to associate with the National Park Service as an architectural technician.” Because of his experience with Smith and Mansbendel, Fehr had a thorough grounding in the South-

western Arts and Crafts style, and it is not surprising that he would turn to this idiom in refining Roberts's plans for Indian Lodge. Fehr went on to have a successful architectural practice in Austin in partnership with Charles T. Granger, Jr. He died in Austin in 1969.<sup>30</sup>

William Calhoun Caldwell was born in Fort Worth, Texas, in 1909 and graduated from the University of Texas with a B.S. in architecture in 1933. While in school he worked in San Antonio in the summers as a draftsman for the Southern Cement Products Company, and in the summer of 1928 he was a draftsman in Harvey Smith's office. He must have made Fehr's acquaintance in San Antonio. When he joined Fehr to go to Fort Davis, he was working in the Office of the Supervising Architect at the University of Texas, a job to which he returned when he left the Park Service in 1935. In 1937 he joined the Houston architectural firm of John F. Staub and, except for Navy service in World War II and a brief period with Alden B. Dow in Houston, remained with Staub's firm until his death in 1962.<sup>31</sup>

### SOURCES OF MATERIALS

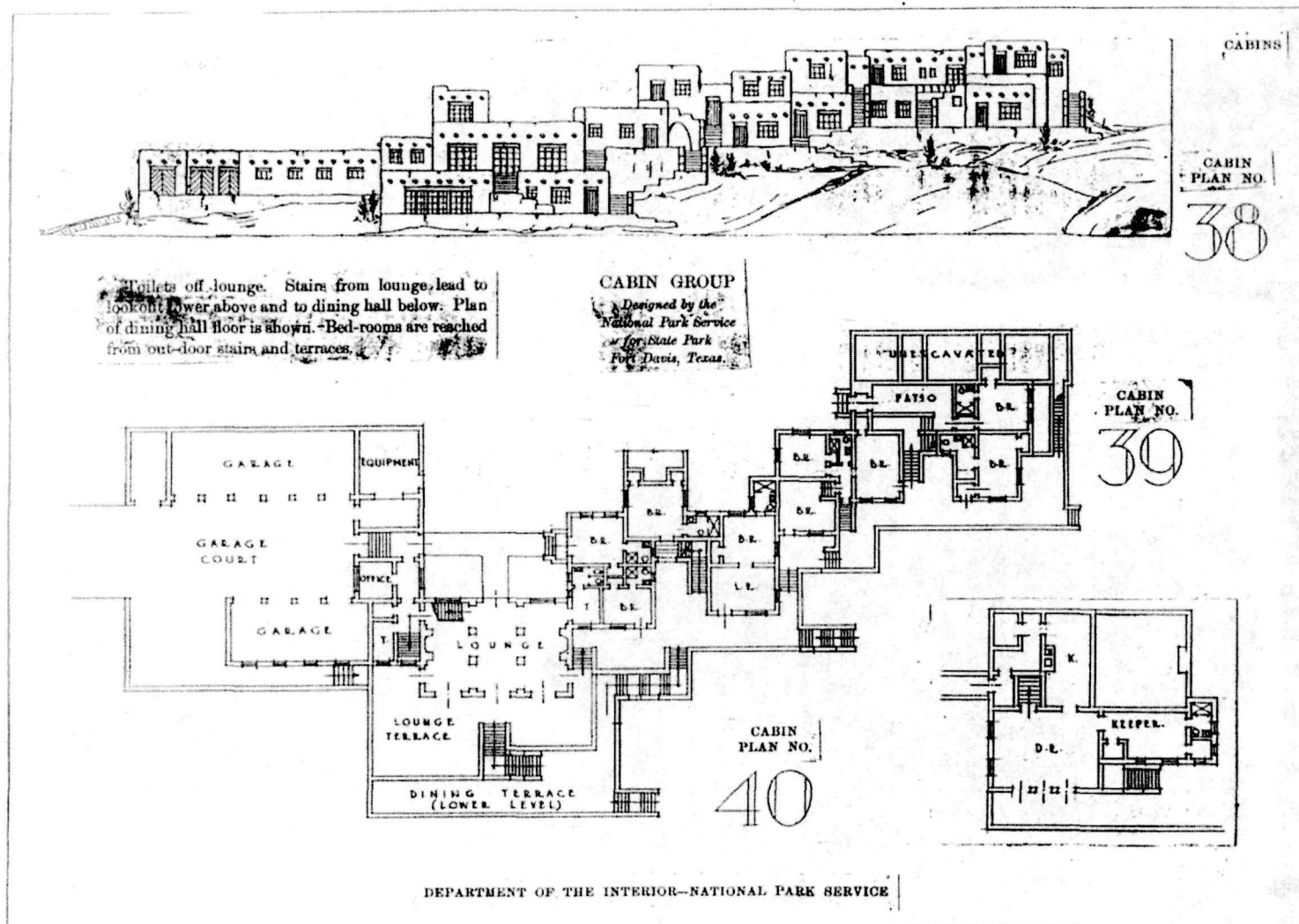
Indian Lodge was constructed by Civilian Conservation Corps workmen largely from materials available at or near the building site. The building was constructed of adobe bricks which were made on the site; when construction started in December 1933 the *Alpine Avalanche* reported that "About one hundred twenty thousand adobes are being made by Mexican boys in the camp under an experienced adobe maker for boss," and the application for funding for the project for the Fifth Period states, "This group [the Indian Village] is being constructed of adobe bricks manufactured on the ground with clay and straw . . . unlimited building stone and clay for the manufacture of adobe brick, sand, and gravel are available on the park property." Ernesto Rivera, a veteran of CCC Company 879 who was interviewed in 1993, recalled, "We made the adobes first, then the other guys started to make the foundation . . . And then we were ready to lay the adobes, I don't know how many thousands of adobes . . . they were heavy, heavy adobes. I don't know how many of those I made when I worked there. I know we made thousands and thousands."<sup>32</sup>

Rivera also remembered that the river cane in the ceilings of the rooms was cut near Boquillas Canyon on the Texas side of the Rio Grande, by men from Company 879 who went down there from Camp Washington Seawell and established a tent camp on the river. Victor Douglass pinpointed the cane-cutting site as Langford Hot Springs. He recalled that "ten men . . . would take a Park Service truck and a Park Service employee, and they would drive down to the Big Bend area, just beyond the Chisos Mountains, at a little place called Hot Springs on the river. They would cut cane—the river cane that grows up along the sides—strip the leaves and stuff, put it on the truck, bring it home." Douglass and Rivera also remembered that the pine logs that supported the roof were cut in the Davis Mountains. Rivera thought they came from Mount Livermore; Douglass thought that they were cut in Madera Canyon; and some may have come from Frank Jones's Maguire ranch (which included the southeast slopes of Mount Livermore) because there is a \$75.00 payment to Frank Jones for "pine trees" recorded on the camp's encumbrance record for March 1934. Other building materials such as lumber, lime, fire brick, nails, and cement were purchased from the Alpine Lumber Company in Alpine; the encumbrance records note total payments of \$10,352.00 to them between February 1934 and March 1935.<sup>33</sup>

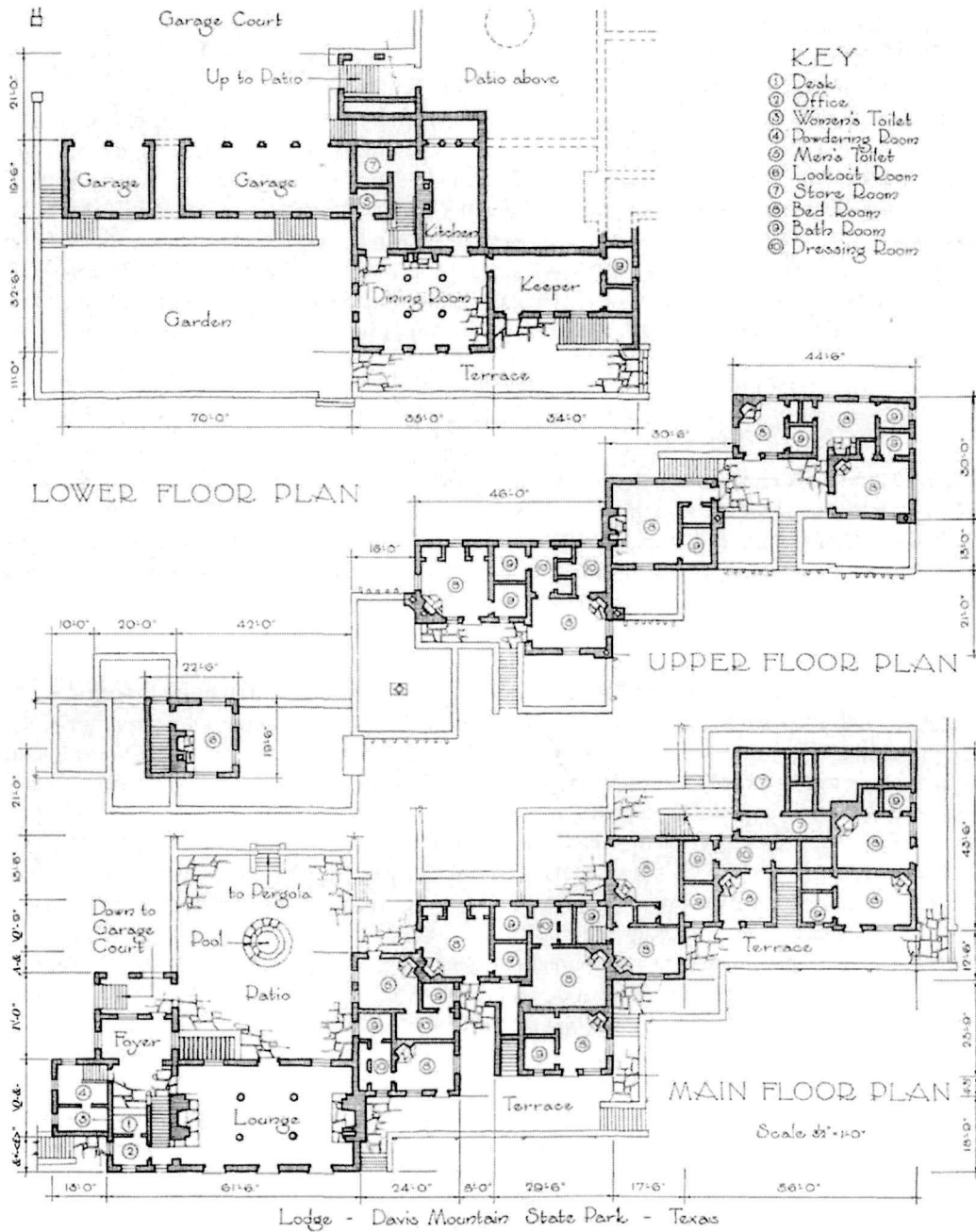
The exterior and interior doors for Indian Lodge were made to William Caldwell's design of white pine at the lumber mill established by the CCC at Bastrop State Park, and there is a lengthy memorandum in the Texas State Parks Board Papers from National Park Service Inspector George Nason concerning which project the man-hours involved in making them should be charged to. According to an August 1935 article in the *Alpine Avalanche*, the hand-wrought iron latches and handles were also made at Bastrop State Park. The casement windows were made of southern long leaf yellow pine and may have been made to order by the Davidson Sash and Door Company of Austin, Texas, as there is a payment of \$150.00 to "Davidson Sash & Door" listed on the February 1935 camp encumbrance record. The hammered metal exterior light fixtures were made at Camp Washington Seawell by the camp blacksmith, a Local Experienced Man named Burke from Alpine, who had been hired to make and sharpen the drills used in building the Skyline Drive.<sup>34</sup>

The furniture for the Lodge was made at the Bastrop State Park mill. There were actually two sets of furniture made at the Bastrop mill for the lodge. The first was delivered in August 1935, shortly before the Lodge was opened for business. But George Nason, the National Park Service inspector, did not consider it suitable. In January 1936, he wrote acting Texas Parks Board chairman Pat Neff, saying, "We have fallen into the error of manufacturing stock furniture [at Bastrop]. The design of this furniture is not bad. It is, however, of a somewhat colonial type and





Elevation and floor plan of Indian Lodge, c. 1935. National Park Service papers.



Floor plan of Indian Lodge, 1938. When this was published, the garage shown on the plan had been converted to the manager's apartment. From National Park Service, Park and Recreational Structures, 1938.

does not necessarily fit into all of our work projects. This is particularly the case at Davis Mountain [sic], where the colonial furniture does not look at all well in a building of Pueblo Indian architecture. We have ingenious architects who can prepare plans for furniture, and I do not see that it will increase the cost of that furniture . . . I am asking that no further furniture be constructed at Bastrop using the present designs, but that the architects be instructed to design furniture that is in keeping with the building in which it is to be used.”<sup>35</sup>

William Caldwell was asked to design furniture more appropriate for the Lodge, and in March 1936 the Lodge’s first manager, J. C. White, went to Bastrop to look at Caldwell’s designs and visit the mill. The designs were approved by the Parks Board at its September 1936 meeting, and the next month the board approved the purchase of 6,000 board feet of lumber for making it. Caldwell’s designs for tables, chairs, stools, chests of drawers, settees, and beds cover five drafting sheets. They are signed, “Drawn by Joe C. Jones,” but Arthur Fehr’s daybook makes it clear that Caldwell was the designer. The simple angular forms and the exposed mortise-and-tenon joints show the influence of the Spanish Colonial Revival furniture being made in the WPA-sponsored craft programs in New Mexico in the 1930s, but Caldwell decorated the flat surfaces with “Indian” designs apparently inspired by Navajo rugs.<sup>36</sup>

### **BUILDING INDIAN LODGE**

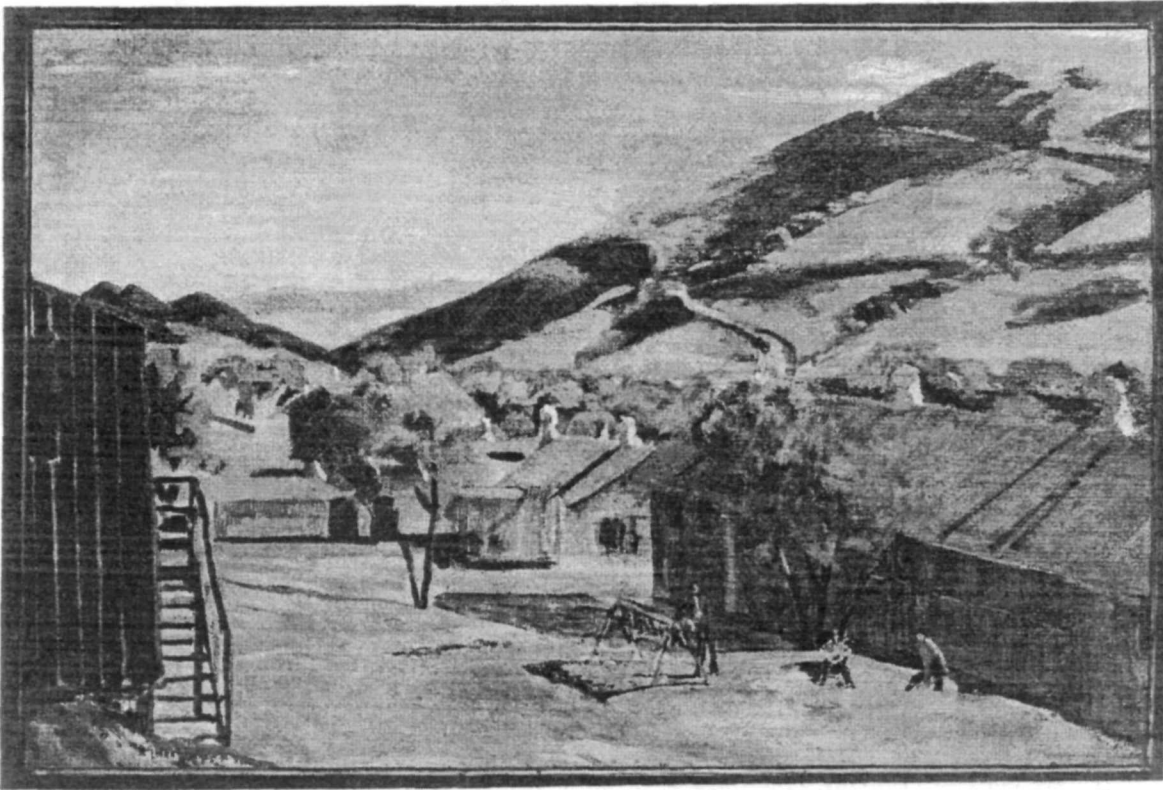
Construction work on the Lodge, following Fehr’s and Caldwell’s plans, started in the summer of 1934 and proceeded more or less on schedule through the fall and winter of that year. Two wells were drilled, one on the hill behind the Lodge and one in the drainage area below it, and water was pumped from them to an underground tank on the hill behind the building and fed to the building by gravity. The sewage disposal system consisted of 4-inch tile pipes that led from the rooms and the kitchen to a concrete septic tank, which was connected to a distribution box, from which eight 4-inch tile disposal lines 70 to 80 feet long fanned out.<sup>37</sup>

In early December 1934, it became evident that both Camp Supervisor A. S. Lewis and Texas Parks Board engineer Robert O. Whiteaker had underestimated the amount of time and materials required to complete the Lodge. On December 12, 1934, Herbert Maier wrote to the National Park Service’s Emergency Conservation Work office in Washington, saying that due to “another case of unreliable estimates in Texas” he was requesting a transfer of funds and man-hours to the Lodge from other projects. Conrad Wirth, the assistant director of the National Park Service, answered his letter, approving the transfer but adding, “This is a case of a structure which is quite outside the scope of the ECW [Emergency Conservation Work]. The labor cost alone comes to \$42,900. This, with \$6,800 for materials and \$1,360 for skilled labor, makes it a \$50,000 building. . . . We want to point out that this is one of the kinds of project that we want to avoid in the future.” Inspector George Nason, after reading a copy of Wirth’s letter, consoled Maier for the implied reprimand by writing, “I think you and I believe that the Lodge at Fort Davis was a larger project than should have been attempted. As you know, it was started under the control of the Texas Relief Commission at a time when the approval of a District Officer was not required . . . This is simply one of those leftovers from the super-ambitions of the first period of CCC.”<sup>38</sup>

But this was not the end of the matter. At the end of January 1935 Maier had to write a second letter to Washington requesting an additional transfer of \$2,145 to finish the Lodge. It seemed that the National Park Service procurement officer in Austin, J.T. Haile, had become concerned over the amount of material being ordered for the Lodge and had gone to Fort Davis to investigate. He found that some of the material ordered for the Lodge had actually been used on other projects in the Park, and consequently there was still a shortage of cement, lumber, plaster, wire mesh, and other materials needed to complete the building. Maier concluded his letter requesting the second transfer by saying, “We are exceedingly anxious to get finished at Fort Davis and get out. This has been another one of the unsatisfactory projects originating with the Texas Relief Commission.” Maier’s request was approved with the stipulation that the building be completed by March 31, 1935, but the project had acquired a black eye with the National Park Service.<sup>39</sup>

George Nason visited the site on February 4 and wrote to Herbert Maier, “Things look pretty good—I don’t know but that we will come out OK—in any case we are going to have an attractive building . . . In spite of the head-aches this building has caused I do think it will please everybody when finished.” While Nason was at the Lodge he talked with project artist Max Bachofen about painting “some kind of picture” above each fireplace in the lounge, but nothing came of this.<sup>40</sup>

Nason went back to Indian Lodge two weeks later and, in the interest of “expediency in getting the area finished,” as he wrote Maier, made several significant changes to Fehr’s and Caldwell’s plans. Those plans had called



*Oil painting of CCC camp at Davis Mountain State Park by Max Bachofen, 1935. Present location unknown. Photograph in Records of the Public Building Service, National Archives, Washington, D.C.*



*CCC enrollees laying adobe bricks at Indian Lodge, 1934. Photograph from Museum of the Big Bend, Alpine.*





*East side of Indian Lodge under construction., 1934–1935. Photo from Archives of the Big Bend.*



*West side of Indian Lodge under construction, 1934–1935. Photo from Archives of the Big Bend.*

for the public entrance to the Lodge to be from stairs on the east side of the building, then across the dining room terrace and up a second flight of stairs to a set of large doors that opened into the lobby-lounge. Automobile access to the entrance was to be from a loop road on the east side of the building; patrons were expected to park their cars in two garages that extended from the building's south side and faced each other across a court, from which low stairs led into the patio behind the lobby. Nason moved the public entrance from the east to the south side of the building by eliminating the garages from the plan and turning the garage court into a walled entrance court. "The effect when one drives in," he wrote, "is going to be very satisfactory. As one steps into the [south] entrance of the building, one gets a view of the patio which faces the lounge room, and this is working out into a very charming thing." He had the doors to the easternmost garage walled in, with the idea that it could eventually be finished out as a dormitory for staff (a year later it became the manager's apartment).<sup>41</sup>

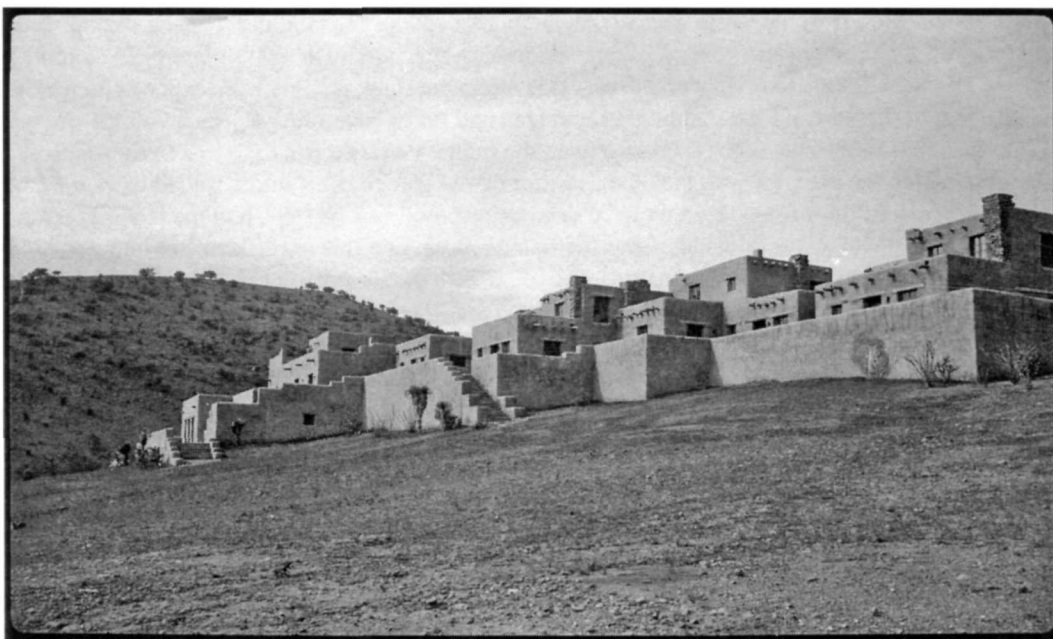
Nason also tampered with Fehr's and Caldwell's rustic effects by substituting concrete for flagstone on most of the exterior staircases and on the lounge and dining room terraces and gravel for flagstone on the patio and on the walkways that led to the rooms. He probably felt guilty about this because in his report to Maier he made the specious argument that "gravel is . . . more fitting in most of these cases than flags. It is far more primitive." The gravel walkways were to cause endless drainage problems and were eventually replaced with asphalt and later with concrete.<sup>42</sup>

Finally, on March 23, 1935, eight days before the Fourth Period deadline, Nason reported to Maier that "I visited Fort Davis last Wednesday and was very pleased to find that the building at Davis Mountains State Park was to all intents and purposes complete . . . one good day's work will about complete everything that really had to be done . . . I am writing this letter so that you will know that this white elephant is practically ready for burial." The Lodge was not immediately opened to the public; that would not happen until September 1935. But it was formally inaugurated on July 4, 1935 with a barbecue for 250 state legislators, newspaper editors, and other dignitaries who were on a four-day visit to the Big Bend to inspect the recently created Big Bend State Park. Not everyone who was aware of the building's sporadic construction history was enthusiastic about it. An undated clipping in the Texas State Park Papers quotes Alpine wit Al Kensey as saying, "You sure ought to see that Indian Village just as quick as you can. It's liable to fall down if you wait too long."<sup>43</sup>

### CONTINUING PROBLEMS

Indian Lodge was deemed completed by the Park Service on March 31, 1935, and CCC Company 879 was transferred to Garner State Park, near Uvalde, Texas, on June 10 of that year. There were, however, several problems that required attention over the next three years. For some unaccountable reason, no provision for hot water had been included in the plans, and the building had not been piped for a hot water system. Although it had been wired for electricity, it was not connected to the electric system that served Fort Davis, and no generator had been installed. Neither the exterior nor interior walls had been painted; water penetrated the gray cement plaster exterior walls and damaged the interior walls, which also showed the marks of nearly two years of construction. Most serious of all was the faulty construction of the flat roof, which leaked profusely during the July and August rains that bring most of the Davis Mountains' annual precipitation.

The lack of hot water and electricity were the most pressing problems when the Lodge opened to the public in September 1935 under the management of concessionaire J. C. White. The rooms were lit by kerosene lamps, and, according to visiting Dallas art teacher Velma Davis, guests were told that there was no hot water "because Indians are not supposed to have taken hot baths." But the unheated well water was about 60 degrees, and the concessionaire stated that "Parties arrive daily, are charmed with the setting, architecture, etc. but when told that there is no hot water, they get back in their cars and go on." The absence of electricity was the result of a misunderstanding between the National Park Service and the State Parks Board; the Park Service thought that the State of Texas would supply the generator, but the state had no funds to purchase it. In August 1935, the Park Service requested CCC funds for a 110-volt gasoline-powered Kohler generator, but the request was delayed because it was confused in Washington with a request from Balmorhea State Park for swimming pool lighting. The generator finally arrived in December and was installed in a room built into the space that had been intended for a garage. A hot water system was finally installed with CCC funding by a crew from the Balmorhea CCC camp in August 1936, after the Lodge had been open to the public for nearly a year. The heater was a gas heater obtained from the Big Spring CCC camp, operated from a hydro-gas plant, and the pipes were chased into the adobe walls and covered with lathe and plaster.<sup>44</sup>



*East side of Indian Lodge after completion, c. 1936. Photo from Archives of the Big Bend.*

The roof repairs seemed to present innumerable difficulties. The roof leaked badly during the summer rains in 1935, and in the summer of 1936, the leaks made the operation of the Lodge as a hotel problematic. An inspection in June 1936 showed that "flashing and spout connections were in bad repair . . . several roof sections had no metal flashing whatsoever. All of the wooden spouts are improperly connected to roofing and flashing." Water was pooling on the flat roofs rather than draining through the spouts, and 56 new spouts had to be installed. The National Park Service attempted to do the needed repair work that summer by sending CCC crews down daily from Balmorhea State Park, 30 miles away, but heavy rains and high water in Limpia Creek, which had to be crossed 17 times between Fort Davis and Balmorhea, prevented the work from being done. A more concerted effort was made the next year. The Lodge was closed to the public in March 1937, and in May National Park Service architect G. T. Patrick drew up plans that called for adding metal scuppers to the wooden spouts and resetting them at a sharper angle, replacing the stone coping designed by Caldwell with 2.5-inch cement coping, adding galvanized iron flashing where needed, and building up the roof with four layers of sheathing paper interspersed with layers of hot tar. On June 13, 1937, a side camp of the Company 1855's Chisos Basin CCC camp consisting of about 50 men was established at the Lodge. The men slept on cots in the lobby and the guest rooms until February 1938, when they moved into the old adobe CCC recreation hall that had served Camp Washington Seawell. When the CCC closed the Chisos Basin camp on December 15, 1937 the men at Indian Lodge were transferred to Company 1856, based at Balmorhea State Park, and the Indian Lodge camp became a side camp of the Balmorhea camp. The CCC men stayed at Indian Lodge until June 30, 1938. The side camp superintendent was Elmer Davenport, who had been a foreman at the Chisos Basin camp.<sup>45</sup>

The roof repair work was actually divided into two jobs: the repairs on the roof itself and the replacement of the lounge terrace, which served as the roof for the dining room and leaked badly. The old terrace slab was replaced with one that was covered with a layer of tile. Rather than hoisting the new materials to the roof, the CCC men built a timber bridge from the hill behind the Lodge to the roof and rolled the materials across in wheelbarrows. In addition to rebuilding the roof and the terrace, the men at the side camp ran a 2.2-mile-long electric power line from the lodge to Fort Davis and removed the gasoline-powered Kohler generator, rewired the Lodge's electrical system and installed conduits under the new roofs and new outlets in the rooms, rebuilt some of the fireplaces, took up the gravel walkways leading to the guest rooms and replaced them with asphalt, built and installed 75 new window screens and 33 screen doors, and painted both the exterior and interior of the Lodge.<sup>46</sup>

The final job done by the side camp was to paint the Lodge, which had been left with its gray plaster surfaces unpainted when work stopped in 1935. The colors chosen for the exterior by National Park Service architect

G. T. Patrick were Murale Company's cement-based #76 buff for the walls and a mixture of A. C. Horn's Stilwell Brand colors for the trim: 20 parts seal brown, 5 parts light buff, 5 parts white, and 3 parts maroon. For the interior walls, Patrick instructed the job superintendent to use Murale Company's cold water paint and to order 150 lbs. natural white, 150 lbs. cream #180, 100 lbs. bisque #141, 75 lbs. light tan #119, 50 lbs. topaz yellow #134, 50 lbs. sea green #130, and 25 lbs. fawn #121. He wrote, "the colors may be applied as packaged or mixed to create various colors—would suggest using light colors in those rooms having a small amount of natural light. . . . Color to be used in each room can best be determined on the job." For the bathrooms, Patrick called for 30 parts of A. C. Horn Streamlite Brand ivory #201w mixed with 2 parts of Streamlite white #200w. For the stained beams in the lounge and other stained woodwork, he suggested applying 4 parts of A. C. Horn Hornite Brand light oak mixed with 1 part Hornite mahogany, which would produce "a very natural effect."<sup>47</sup>

While the work was going on at Indian Lodge, William Wuehrman, the National Park Service architect at Balmorea, submitted a plan for covering the walls of the dining room, the lounge, and the lookout room with murals depicting "historical events in relation to old landmarks and legends" and "Indian and Mexican methods of cooking, hunting, and securing food, agricultural pursuits, etc." He accompanied the proposal with a sketch and suggested that two muralists from Tulane University, Xavier Gonzales and Julius Woeltz, who taught summer art classes at Sul Ross State Teachers College at Alpine, be commissioned to do the work, and that in the future the remaining CCC buildings in the park be used to establish "a summer art colony to bring revenue to the Parks Board in addition to the main building." In forwarding the proposal to the National Park Service design office in Austin, Wuehrman's supervisor, F.W. Digby Roberts, wryly endorsed it, "My only comment to Mr. Wuehrman's sketches is that it will be very nice if we have the time and the money to execute it properly. . . . In the absence of time to do the work properly, my suggestion would be to paint the inside in harmonizing colors and do away with any attempt to decorate." No murals were painted in the Lodge.<sup>48</sup>

### OPERATING INDIAN LODGE

When the Lodge was turned over to the Texas Parks Board in the summer of 1935, the board signed a contract with a concessionaire to serve as manager and to oversee the rest of the park. This was the system used in all Texas state parks at that time: the concessionaire charged the public fees for the use of the park facilities, maintained the park, and paid the Parks Board a fixed percentage of the net profits. The first manager at Indian



*Indian Lodge patio and pergola, with gravel surface substituted by Nason for flagstone, c. 1936. Photo from Archives of the Big Bend.*



Lodge, which was then known as Indian Village, was J. C. White, who opened the Lodge to the public in September 1935. White had to cope with kerosene lamps and an absence of hot water, and, although the electric generator was installed during his tenancy, he left sometime in the spring of 1936. In July of 1936, Jack and Esther Neuens took over the Lodge and the park. The *Alpine Avalanche* described the Neuenses as having dude ranch and eastern inn experience, saying “they came here a year ago from Connecticut . . . Mr. Neuens is a western man and Mrs. Neuens an eastern woman.” They immediately changed the name of the hotel from Indian Village to Indian Lodge, telling the *Avalanche* that “the first name was sometimes misleading,” and they redecorated the lounge in what the *Avalanche* described as “a pretty Indian design.”<sup>49</sup>

Esther Neuen’s daughter, Alice Anderson, recalled in a 2005 interview that when her mother and stepfather took over the Lodge, the guest rooms were furnished but there was no furniture in the lounge. Her stepfather went to Juarez and bought Mexican pigskin equipale furniture with designs painted on it, and her mother made monks-cloth curtains for the windows that looked onto the patio, weaving three strips of red, yellow, and blue cloth into them above the hems and hanging them by loops from the curtain rods so that they dropped straight down. Her mother also purchased all the linen for the beds in the guest rooms, including “Indian-type cotton blankets,” at J.C. Penney’s in Alpine, as the Parks Board provided mattresses but no linens.<sup>50</sup>

Anderson remembered that rather than moving into the room next to the dining room that had been designated as the manager’s quarters, her mother made a room in the former garage space, next to the Kohler generator, into a bedroom for her family because she thought that they needed to be near the generator in case of an emergency. Anderson’s two older sisters slept in one of the guest rooms. The generator, she recalled, was “quite noisy” when it was running. The rest of the staff consisted of an Anglo-American woman from Fort Davis who was the cook and several women from town, both Anglo-American and Hispanic, who helped with cleaning the bedrooms. Most of the guests were scientists who were installing the 80-inch telescope at nearby McDonald Observatory and rented rooms month to month; Anderson particularly remembered John C. Kline of the Warner and Swasey Company of Cleveland, Ohio, which built and installed the telescope. Aside from the scientists, there were few guests.<sup>51</sup>

Although the hot water system was installed during their tenancy, the Neuens experienced other difficulties in running the Lodge, and in March 1937 they asked to be released from their contract. The Lodge was closed, making possible the extensive repair work that was done in 1937–1938. When it was reopened on August 1, 1938, W. S. Presley was the manager, and Jack Shepherd was in charge of the dining room. Room rates were \$2.00 a day for one person, \$3.50 for two, and four people could rent a double room for \$6.00. A curio shop in the lobby sold horsehair belts, silver spurs and bits, and inlaid domino score boards that were made by inmates at the Washington State Penitentiary. A Texas Parks Board brochure proclaimed that Indian Lodge had a “size and picturesqueness surpassing its inspirational source—the Indian pueblo—and rivaling the palace of the Grand Lama” and went on to say that “There is not more imagination, sophistication, and aspiration in Hollywood than is here exhibited.” In 1940, when Otis McPhaul was the manager, the Lodge was open from March to September, there was a grand piano in the lounge, and on weekends there was dancing on the tiled terrace. A tennis court and a croquet court had been built, and a rifle range and an archery range were being planned, and possibly a swimming pool. Indian Lodge was as close to Hollywood as one could get in the Big Bend.<sup>52</sup>

### INDIAN LODGE IN WARTIME

Manager Otis McPhaul left Indian Lodge shortly after Pearl Harbor, and his successor was the first woman to manage the Lodge, Mrs. Douthit Alcus of Austin, whose contract was approved by the Parks Board at its April 1942 meeting. The Parks Board must have had some qualms about sending a single woman to the remote Davis Mountain State Park because shortly after she arrived, the board’s secretary, E. B. Camiade, wrote her saying, “At the request of Mr. Quinn [Frank Quinn, Executive Director of the Texas Parks Board] we are sending you, under separate cover, a police whistle. Carry it with you at all times in your work in the Park and Lodge, and instruct your assistants that whenever you blow said whistle, they are to go to your side immediately for whatever aid or assistance you may need or desire.” Alcus evidently had little need for the whistle, as she stayed at the Lodge through the war and for two years afterward and is fondly remembered by the staff members who worked with her.<sup>53</sup>

In August 1942, Alcus reported to the Parks Board that the total receipts from the Lodge since April—\$1,496.00—were about half of the previous year’s because of the wartime decline in tourist travel. But by March 1943, the Lodge was operating at full capacity because it was accommodating 15 Army wives, the spouses of cadets stationed at Marfa Army Air Field Advanced Flying School, as permanent guests. But the Lodge was not making

a profit because the Army wives were being charged discounted rates. A list of guests and payments for February 1943 in the papers of Robert Cartledge, who served as an auditor for the Parks Board in the 1940s, shows that all 16 rooms were full that month, and that the wives were charged extra on nights when their husbands visited them. Some of the wives may have been a little disorderly because when Parks Board Executive Director Frank Quinn made an inspection visit in February 1943, he recorded that he and Alcus decided that he should have “a frank talk with the young Army wives who are now living at the Lodge. All matters were straightened out to our mutual satisfaction.” At that time the Lodge staff consisted of just four people: Alcus; Roddy Vasquez, who did maintenance; his wife, Betty, who helped in the kitchen; and Julia Chavez, the cook.<sup>54</sup>

Toward the end of the war, probably because the Lodge was being occupied all year long instead of only in the summers, the Parks Board decided to install butane heaters in all of the guest rooms. Previously those rooms had been heated by firewood. Otis McPhaul recalled cutting wood on the U Up U Down ranch and hauling it to the Lodge in his 1936 Ford station wagon, and Robert Cartledge’s accounts show a monthly payment of \$36.50 for “wood and labor” while Alcus was manager. In April 1945, however, a 1,000-gallon underground butane tank was installed and a network of 1-inch piping was routed into the adobe walls so that each room could be heated by gas heaters with ceramic backs and radiants, and the fireplaces became purely decorative, although fires were still built in them by guests.<sup>55</sup>

Robert Cartledge, who maintained a Parks Board office in Alpine during the war for the purpose of purchasing land for Big Bend State Park, paid frequent visits to Indian Lodge and tried to help with maintenance tasks that were beyond Alcus and her staff’s capacities. He made some temporary repairs to the roof, but while the butane installation was going on, N. H. Lee of the Parks Board staff inspected the Lodge and concluded that its condition was very bad. “Maintenance has been of a limited and temporary character,” he wrote. He found that the roofing material had deteriorated so much that water was seeping through it, getting under the flashing, and running down the walls into the rooms below and that the tile floor of the lounge terrace was leaking into the dining room beneath it. Water was also entering the building through cracks in the exterior plaster, he reported, and the wooden doors in the dining room and lounge were in poor condition. He concluded by saying, “The walks to the rooms are a mess . . . I waded mud and water getting to my room. Such a condition around a fine place like the lodge cannot be allowed to continue.” The following September, Inspector F. A. McNiel noted the same conditions, and added “the exterior ends of roof purlings [sic] are all rotting away and the rot is carrying back into the walls.” No immediate attempt seems to have been made by the Parks Board to address these problems.<sup>56</sup>

The end of the war brought an influx of guests, many of whom stayed for several weeks in the summer. Ronnie Hartnett Patillo, who worked at the Lodge in the summers from 1944 through 1948 while she was in high school in Fort Davis, remembered that many of the same people came back each year, and that she always looked forward to seeing them. Patillo, who is a member of an old Fort Davis Hispanic family, laughingly recalled that she wore a full skirt, a peasant blouse, and sandals while serving tables at the Lodge, and that customers would ask if she were Indian. “I would say yes,” she said, “and they would take my picture by the fountain in the patio.” Patillo lived at the Lodge during the summer, in a room next to the kitchen. The cook, Julia Chavez, lived in an adjacent room with her little boy, Julian, and Patillo recalled Alcus’s kindness to Julian: “She [Alcus] raised that boy, that Julian, the cook’s boy. . . . They had a wishing well [the fountain in the patio] and when they’d clean it, whatever was in the wishing well, that was Julian’s money.” Patillo also remembered that Alcus planted rosebushes in the patio and tended them with great care.<sup>57</sup>

Mrs. Douthit Alcus left Indian Lodge at the end of 1947, but she left a lasting legacy behind: it was she who changed the color of the building from its original subdued buff to a lighter white. In January 1947, the *Dallas Morning News* reported that Alcus had “renovated” Indian Lodge by giving the exterior “a new coat of cream colored stucco” and that she planned to re-paint the interior. In June of that same year *Sun-Up*, a travel magazine, reported that Alcus had “helped re-model and redecorate [Indian Lodge] for postwar tourists” but gave no further details about the remodeling. There is no record of the extent of the renovation in the Texas Parks Board meeting minutes or any of the board’s papers at the Texas State Archives, so it is impossible to tell exactly what else was done to the building, but it might have included adding the roof over the lounge terrace, covered with three layers of #15 felt and tar and supported by 3-inch pipe columns, for which a sheet of plans dated October 7, 1948, exists in the CCC Maps and Plans collection at the State Archives. The roof may have been intended to alleviate the leaks into the dining room below the lounge terrace, and it is possible that other structural problems described in the 1945 inspection reports may have been addressed at this time. The same month that the *Sun-Up* article appeared, a significant event in the Lodge’s history occurred in Fort Davis: construction of the Scenic Loop, which had been

proceeding piecemeal since 1933, was finally completed. On June 27 the highway was officially opened to traffic by Anton Aggerman, 88, the last surviving soldier who had served at Fort Davis, who used an Indian stone axe to sever a cord laced with eagle feathers across the road.<sup>58</sup>

## POSTWAR PROBLEMS

Mrs. Douthit Alcus was succeeded by a series of concessionaire-managers who struggled without success to make an acceptable profit from their concession contracts. None remained at the Lodge as long as Alcus. John and Maris Sparks replaced Alcus on December 1, 1947, and left the following May; W. A. Richardson took their place and stayed until the fall of 1953; he was followed by B. F. Crockett, who was there slightly less than two years and was replaced in August 1955 by M. V. Estes. Estes held the contract for eight months and was replaced in April 1956 by Rollie P. Dobyns. The concessionaires were responsible for the Lodge's operating costs, and even though they received free housing in the three-room manager's apartment and were permitted to keep 20 percent of the net profit from the park and Lodge income and 90 percent of the gross income from the curio shop in the Lodge, the Lodge's 16 rooms, which were occupied only in the summer months and during the November deer-hunting season, simply did not provide enough income to offset the rising operating costs generated by the postwar economy. Dobyns's contract was amended in February 1957 to permit him and his family to take their meals in the Lodge restaurant without cost, but even then his situation was not viable, and he left on short notice in November 1957. During these years the concessionaires, anxious to keep their costs down, did little maintenance at the Lodge and the Parks Board, whose principal income was from its share of the concession fees, did even less.<sup>59</sup>

Dobyn's departure in the middle of deer season, when the Lodge was full of hunters, created a management crisis. A couple named Marbury were brought in from Bastrop State Park to operate the Lodge temporarily, and when they returned to Bastrop, Jeff Davis County Sheriff Wilbur Medley's wife Mary Isabelle took over their responsibilities, but no one could be found who would sign a concession contract, and so the Parks Board hired Lewis Walker, an advertising salesman and reporter for radio station KLLL in Lubbock who was a close friend of Waggoner Carr, Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives, as the first salaried manager of Indian Lodge.<sup>60</sup>

Walker, his wife, and two children moved into the manager's quarters, by now a three-room apartment with bath, in December 1957 and remained there for nine years, giving the Lodge its first stable management in a decade. He kept the Lodge open 10 months out of the year, closing to the public in December and January with the exception of a hunting party from Parker Brothers Construction Company in Houston that came every year in early December. There was also one full-time resident, Alan Maxwell, director of the nearby Harvard Radio Astronomy Station on Cook Flat. Maxwell took his meals with the Walker family during the closed months. Walker's son, Lewis Walker, Jr., remembers that the Lodge was always booked to capacity from mid-May through August and to half-capacity during the spring and fall months. Most guests stayed for only a few days, but some came for a week or longer.<sup>61</sup>

Besides Walker and his wife, the only full-time employee was the cook Tomasa Gonzalez, who lived in one of the adobe CCC buildings with her blind father and small son. Lewis Walker, Jr., said that Gonzalez was part Apache, and he remembered her father sitting on the stoop of the building they lived in playing the guitar and singing "Rancho Grande and other Mexican songs." During the summer, young women from town and further away were hired as waitresses and chambermaids. Margaret Crawford, who worked as a chambermaid at the Lodge in 1959 and 1960, recalled that she and her friend Beverly Squires, who were both students at West Virginia University, read about the Lodge in a catalogue of summer jobs, were hired, and took the bus from Morgantown, West Virginia, to Fort Davis. They were given sleeping quarters with two other young women in the room above the lounge that was originally designated as the "lookout room"—they called it the crow's nest—and used the bathroom off the lobby and the shower next to the kitchen. In addition to the paid staff, Walker's family performed chores at the Lodge. Fifty years after the fact, Lewis Walker, Jr. remembered how intensely he disliked bringing firewood in from the park, stacking it in the patio, and laying fires in the Lodge's 19 fireplaces every morning.<sup>62</sup>

During Walker's management the Lodge started to be used as a venue for Fort Davis High School banquets, junior-senior proms, and other school dances. Walker's daughter Barbara Walker Ridley, who was in junior high school and high school while her family lived at the Lodge, recalled that "all the dances were held at my house." The proms were held on the terrace, with music provided by records, while "western dances" were held in the lounge. She also recalled that her father, who received his M.A. in biology at Sul Ross State Teachers College (now Sul Ross State University) while he was manager of the Lodge, used to give lectures and slide shows on the



*Indian Lodge before 1967 remodeling. Photo from Ralph Davis.*

natural history of the Big Bend on the terrace, and that there was an old-fashioned 10-foot long shuffleboard table out there, on which she “got quite good at shuffleboard.”<sup>63</sup>

### **RENOVATION AND EXPANSION**

Plans to increase the number of rooms at Indian Lodge go back at least to November 1944, when Parks Board Director Frank Quinn recorded that in a post-war planning session board member Tom Beauchamp had suggested that “50 cottages could be used at Fort Davis, one group near the road and another group more secluded—semi permanent.” Beauchamp was actually echoing the 1933 plans for the park, as shown on a map drawn by Roy Ferguson that is in the CCC Plans and Maps Collection at the Texas State Archives which shows a clearing on the north bank of Keesey Creek east of the Indian Village marked “Future Cottage Sites.” By the time Lewis Walker became manager in 1957, the need for additional rooms and more modern facilities was evident. Lewis Walker, Jr., recalled that there were frequent complaints, sometimes to legislators, from people who could not get rooms, as well as complaints about the absence of air conditioning, swimming facilities, and television. As the popularity of the Big Bend increased as a tourist destination in the early 1960s, pressure for the expansion and modernization of Indian Lodge increased.<sup>64</sup>

Two unrelated events made that expansion and modernization possible. In 1963, the State Legislature combined the Texas Parks Board and the Fish, Game, and Oyster Commission into one agency, the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, under the oversight of a newly created Parks and Wildlife Commission. Under the leadership of Governor John Connally, there was a new focus on improving and professionalizing the state park system, drawing on the expertise of Texas Tech University’s parks and recreation program, which produced a study of the Texas park system with recommendations for its improvement. Although improvements to Indian Lodge were not included in that study, the time seemed ripe to start planning them, and at the February 1964 meeting of the new Parks and Wildlife Commission, Executive Director J. Weldon Watson told the commissioners, “We are in the process of developing some plans and specifications, even though we do not have the money to build it, for a renovation and



a new set-up out at Fort Davis State Park, which is now known as Indian Lodge.”<sup>65</sup>

The following year, 1965, the money for the renovation and expansion of Indian Lodge became available as the indirect result of a lawsuit filed in Jeff Davis County. Joe Espy, a wealthy and politically well-connected rancher and banker in Fort Davis, had donated 169 acres to the Davis Mountains State Park in 1933 with the provision in the deed that if it ever ceased to be used as park land it would revert to him or his heirs. It was this land on which the CCC had constructed the dirt road known as Skyline Drive, and a shelter, picnic tables, and barbecue pits had been built at the top of the hill at the end of the road. The road did not drain properly, and by 1940 it had become impassable, the picnic facilities had been abandoned and Fort Davis citizens were petitioning the Parks Board and the Texas Highway Department to reopen and pave the road. Nothing was done, and by 1957 the entrance to Skyline Drive had been fenced and even hikers were denied access to it. Espy informed the Parks Board that he considered the state to have abandoned the title to the land and that, under the terms of his gift, it had reverted to him and that he intended to lock the gates which gave access to it and put up signs declaring it to be private property. The Parks Board instructed the Attorney General to file suit against Espy, and when the case came to District Court in Fort Davis in August 1962, Judge C. E. Patterson found that the state had not fulfilled the conditions of the gift and that the land had reverted to Espy. The state appealed the case to the Court of Civil Appeals in El Paso, and the judge there also ruled for Espy. At that point Espy announced that he would return the land to the state if the Parks Board would agree to rebuild Skyline Drive and the picnic facilities on the hill before January 1, 1966, and in April 1963, he re-deeded the land to the state with those conditions specified in the deed. When the 1965 legislature met, it passed a general appropriations bill that included a specific appropriation of \$709,294 for improvements in “Davis Mountains State Park, including improvements to the Espy Tract; Old Fort Parker, Meridian; and Bastrop State Park.” An article written later that year about the Davis Mountains State Park improvements by Fort Davis journalist Barry Scobee for several West Texas newspapers describes Espy’s actions as “Operation Prod” and attributes the special appropriation to the interest of State Senator Dorsey Hardeman of San Angelo and State Representatives Dick Slack of Pecos and Gene Hendryx of Alpine in the park.<sup>66</sup>

In the summer of 1965, the Texas Parks & Wildlife Commission allocated \$442,000 of the funds obtained as a result of Espy’s Operation Prod to Davis Mountains State Park and approved a master plan for the development of that park that included a 22-room addition to Indian Lodge, renovation of the original 16-room unit, and the construction of a new dining room and a swimming pool at the Lodge, as well as other amenities in the park. At that time, all state construction projects were supervised by the State Building Commission, and in October 1965, Parks and Wildlife concluded an agreement with that commission to supervise the renovation and expansion of the Lodge. Davis, Foster, Thorpe and Associates of El Paso were selected as the architects for both the renovation and expansion, with the understanding that the total cost of the job was not to exceed \$350,000, and their design was approved by the State Building Commission in May 1966. But when the bids came in, the low bid, which was from the Guldemann Construction Company of El Paso, was \$452,885. Changes in the plans—which included deleting extensions to the lounge, office, and curio shop; substituting wood doors for metal ones on the guest rooms; deleting the laundry and kitchen equipment; and making some alterations to the cooling and heating systems—were negotiated with the architects. These changes reduced Guldemann’s bid to \$403,443, which the Parks and Wildlife Department accepted on September 16, 1966.<sup>67</sup>

The architects’ plans to expand the Lodge called for two new two-story units, each containing 12 guest rooms to be built on the east side of the old structure and for a new two-story building with a dining room, kitchen, and meeting room to be built on the south side, where Fehr and Caldwell had originally intended to locate the second garage, across the entrance court from the manager’s apartment. All three of the new buildings were to be constructed of concrete masonry units and their exteriors covered with stucco; they were to have horizontally sliding aluminum windows, and the interiors were to be finished with gypsum board and acoustical tile ceilings. The old section was to be completely rewired and the butane heating system removed from it, and both sections were to be equipped with a chilled-water 2-pipe HVAC system. In addition, a 22 x 42-ft swimming pool and small wading pool were to be built east of the old dining room terrace. There is no indication that preservation of the historic features of the old section was an architectural consideration. In fact, the plans for renovating the old section eliminated most of Fehr’s and Caldwell’s Arts and Crafts details. Acoustical tile ceilings were to be dropped into all of the guest rooms to accommodate the hydronic piping for the new HVAC system, hiding the river cane ceilings and the pine roof beams. Interior walls in seven units were to be completely removed; in other units, sections of the adobe walls were to be removed and replaced with cement masonry units. Rooms 24 and 25 were to be thrown together to create one large room. The wooden casement windows were to be replaced with aluminum windows, and the

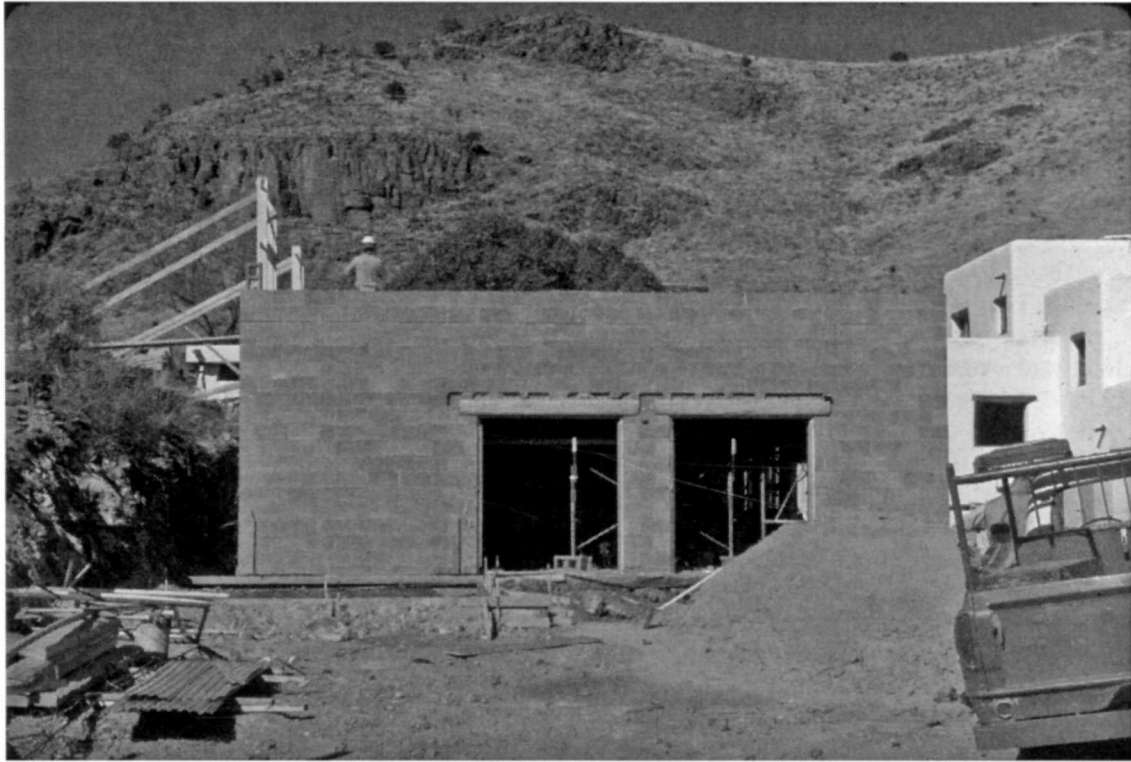
doors from the Bastrop mill with their hand-wrought hardware were to be replaced with factory-made wooden doors with standard hardware. In many of the rooms, the original plaster was to be replaced with new plaster applied to metal lathing, which concealed new electrical conduits and plumbing pipes. Some of the bathrooms and closets in the guest rooms were to be reconfigured, and all of the bathrooms were to be completely modernized and lined with Cambridge Mosaic tile. Many of the hand-adzed door and window lintels were to be replaced with cement lintels. All of the walkways and terraces, including the patio, were to be covered with concrete. Only the lounge and the dining room below it retained a semblance of their original appearance, and even in those rooms the original plaster was to be sandblasted and new plaster applied over it and the original glossy finish on the pine beams and columns was replaced with a muddy brown “antique” finish. In addition to changes in the guest rooms and the public rooms, the manager’s apartment was to be remodeled.<sup>68</sup>

Work on the renovation and expansion started on October 10, 1966, and proceeded in a much more straightforward manner than the work on the original Indian Village had, even though 16 subcontractors, all but one from El Paso, were involved. Only three significant problems developed during construction, and they were solved without delaying the completion of the job. In December 1966, tests showed that the soil being used as fill around the swimming pool did not have sufficient compaction quality, and the dirt contractor was instructed to remove that soil and replace it with soil from a different pit. In May 1967, the consulting engineers for the sewage disposal system, Zumwalt and Vinther of Dallas, determined that the disposal field called for in the plans had insufficient topsoil to drain properly, and a new field was laid out south of the new construction.<sup>69</sup>

The third problem was caused by the Parks and Wildlife Commission’s requirement that the guest rooms be equipped with television outlets. Five thousand dollars was allocated within the budget for a television system, but the initial proposals received from television service providers in Alpine and Fort Davis involved running pole lines from antennas that were 1 to 3 miles from the Lodge, at costs ranging from \$10,500 to \$19,000. At the architects’ recommendation, Syscom Corporation of El Paso was retained to make a television field strength survey at the park. Eventually, a site was located on the mountain north of the Lodge where channels from Midland, Odessa, and Monahans could be received, and Paul Stager of Alpine installed two 30-ft antenna towers there and a cable



*Indian Lodge after 1967 remodeling and expansion, with two new room blocks, dining room structure, and excavation for swimming pool. Photo from Ralph Davis.*



*Cinder block construction of dining room building, 1967. Photo from Ralph Davis.*

system that led to the Lodge at a cost close to the budgeted amount.<sup>70</sup>

At the same time that work was being done at the Lodge, improvements in the rest of the park, funded by a federal Land and Water Conservation Fund grant of \$515,776, were being made under the supervision of Parks and Wildlife Department construction superintendent Bill Adair. These included widening and paving Skyline Drive and renovating the shelter and picnic facilities at its terminus, drilling two new water wells and constructing two new storage tanks, and constructing a maintenance building, a headquarters building, a residence, an interpretive center, and additional restrooms, campsites, and picnic facilities. A total of \$1,031,552 in state and federal funds was spent on improvements to the Lodge and the park in 1965–1966.<sup>71</sup>

The Parks and Wildlife Department had intended to revert to the system of operating the renovated and expanded Indian Lodge through a concessionaire, and when the kitchen equipment was deleted from the plans, it was assumed that the concessionaire would supply that equipment, but no concessionaire could be found who wanted to take the Lodge over, and so in June 1967, just a few weeks before the job was completed, it was decided that the department would operate the Lodge and purchase the kitchen equipment. The Guldemann Construction Company was asked to bid on the equipment and responded with a bid of \$19,504, which included the installation costs. The bid was accepted and, because the Lodge was scheduled to open in August, the equipment from the old kitchen was salvaged and installed until the new equipment could be delivered.<sup>72</sup>

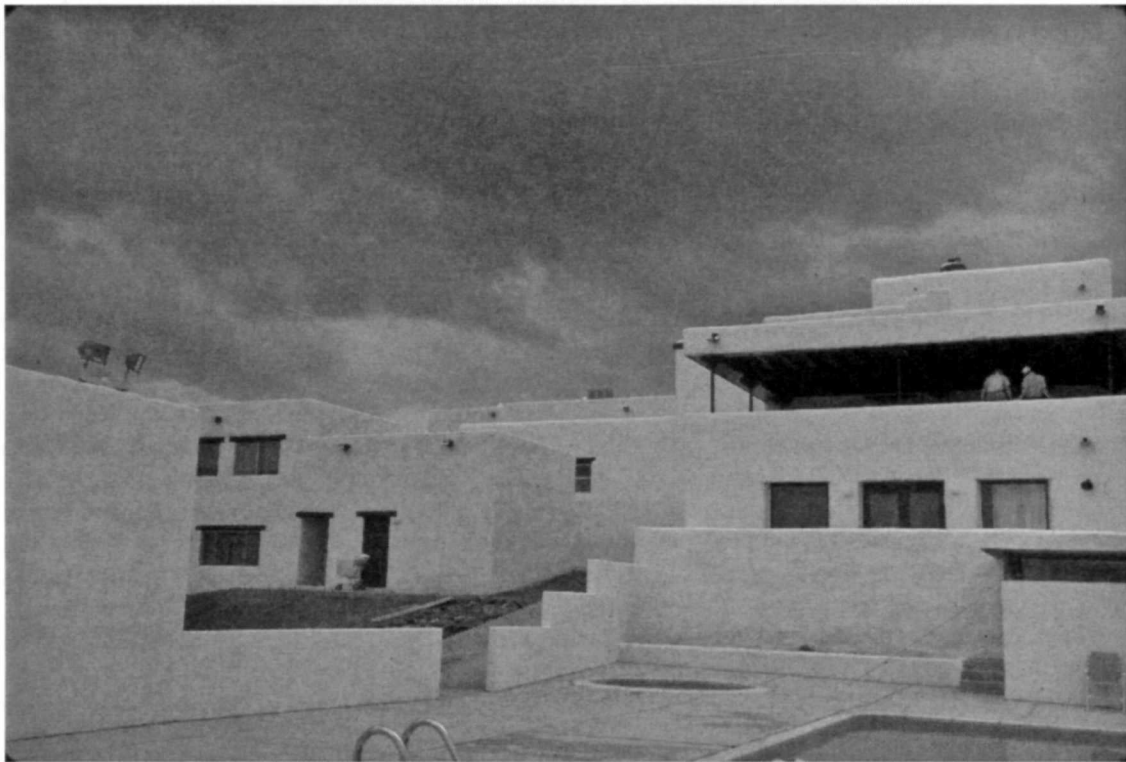
### **INCREASING VISITATION**

The Lodge renovation and expansion project was officially completed on July 21, 1967, although the buildings were not officially accepted from the contractor by the State Building Commission until January 11, 1968. When the Lodge reopened in the fall of 1967, Bill Collins of the Parks & Wildlife office in Austin was detached from duties there to serve as manager of the Lodge. He moved into the manager's apartment, hired a cook and housekeeping staff, and started receiving guests. "People from Midland and Odessa just swarmed in," he recalled in a 2006 interview. "They came every weekend." Collins developed menus for the dining room, bought groceries

at the Safeway in Alpine every week because, until the new kitchen equipment was installed, the refrigerator was not large enough to hold a wholesale delivery, and took the laundry to Alpine because laundry equipment had been deleted from the architects' plans. Eventually he had to buy and install a washer and dryer because the laundry in Alpine would not wash bedspreads. Collins remained at the Lodge for 18 months before a regular manager was hired and he was able to return to his job in the Parks Division.<sup>73</sup>

Collins was succeeded as manager by Carl Lawson, who remained at the Lodge until his retirement in the late 1970s. He was succeeded by Harvey Rhea, who was followed by Clabe Webb, who was followed by Jane Russell, who was manager until 1989. She was followed by Michael Crevier, who was there until 1994. Crevier instituted a number of programs designed to strengthen ties between the Lodge and the Fort Davis community, including an annual breakfast with Santa Claus for local children in early December, and a Christmas *posada* complete with live animals. Crevier also named the restaurant at the Lodge the Black Bear after a bear cub that had been captured on the Sproul Ranch by the CCC boys in the 1930s and had served as camp mascot. Crevier's successor as manager was Jerry Cooper, although he did not live in the manager's apartment, which was remodeled into office space at the end of Crevier's tenure. In October 1994, the Parks and Wildlife Department combined Indian Lodge, Davis Mountains State Park, and Balmorhea State Park into a single administrative unit, and the Lodge no longer had a resident manager; various aspects of the hotel's management were divided among several park employees.<sup>74</sup>

During the years after the 1966–1967 renovation, the Lodge's clientele changed significantly in two ways. The two meeting rooms added by the renovation made the Lodge an ideal location for meetings and seminars, and corporate, governmental, and non-profit groups became important additions to the guest list. Senior citizens' bus tours also began to make the Big Bend a destination, and these groups began stopping overnight at the Lodge in the spring and fall, sometimes as many as 30 or 40 busloads each year. Angela Ernhart of Fort Davis, who worked at the Lodge from 1981 to 2003 in various capacities from dishwasher to interim manager, recalled in a 2006 interview that when she first started, even though the Lodge was open nearly all year long, most guests came between Memorial Day and Labor Day, with another spurt of visitors in November around Thanksgiving and the opening of



*View of Indian Lodge from east after 1967 expansion and remodeling, showing swimming pool in foreground with old dining room and covered lounge behind it and new room blocks with sliding aluminum windows on left. Photo from Ralph Davis.*



deer-hunting season. By 2000, however, the only slow period was between New Year's and mid-February. A 1993 analysis of visitation concluded that from September to mid-November, most visitors were retirees on fall vacations or participants in weekend business seminars; in late November, families on Thanksgiving vacations; during the last 10 days in December, families on Christmas vacation; in January and February, participants in business meetings; in March, families on spring break; in April and May, senior citizens on bus tours; and in June, July, and August, families and family reunions. The annual occupancy rate in 1993 was 84 percent, with the lowest periods in early November, early December, and January, February, and the first week of March.

The staffing of the Lodge increased along with the visitation. Although there had been 7 or 8 summer employees in the late 1950s, Ernhart recalled that in the 1980s there were 18 part-time and 6 full-time staff members working during the summer seasons. Either the manager or the assistant manager had to be at the Lodge 24 hours a day; the manager lived in the manager's apartment and the assistant manager lived in a mobile home parked where the regional Parks and Wildlife Department offices are now located. Ernhart particularly remembered a policy that permitted people to reserve rooms only one year ahead of time; the result was that people who wanted rooms at especially busy times would call the Lodge shortly after midnight on the date they wanted their next year's reservations to start, and someone had to be available to answer the telephone.<sup>75</sup>

During Ernhart's years there, the Lodge closed for two weeks every January for annual maintenance. The rooms were repainted if paint was needed, and the mineral deposits that accumulated in the water heaters were cleaned out. Ernhart recalled that an ongoing maintenance problem was the swelling of the wooden doors that were installed in 1966–1967. "Sometimes we would almost have to break into the rooms to get people out of them," she said. The troublesome wooden doors were replaced with metal doors in 1984. In 1985, a laundry building was constructed in the park maintenance compound, solving a problem that had plagued the lodge since its opening; guest room linens no longer had to be sent to Alpine or Midland to be laundered. In 1988, the two television antennae towers north of the Lodge were demolished and an underground cable connection to Fort Davis was installed.<sup>76</sup>

It would appear that between 1968 and 2000, with one exception, no major alterations were made to the Lodge buildings. An index to files in the TPWD Records Division lists files about roof repairs, sandblasting, and stuccoing in 1975 and roof and decking repairs in 1980, and Ernhart recalled that the roof over the lobby leaked and was covered with a polyurethane spray foam sometime in the 1980s, but no further details are available. The exception was the construction in 1988 of a one-room addition to the south end of the manager's apartment. This addition, designed to house a living room, had originally been planned as part of the 1966–1967 renovations and additions and had been deleted from that project to bring it within budget. The addition now houses the guest registration desk.

By 1995, the 1966–1967 additions and renovations to the Lodge were nearly thirty years old and were deteriorating. The mechanical equipment was nearing the end of its effective life, and the buildings' interior finishes were badly in need of refurbishment. A revived public interest in the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps had led to a renewed interest in the historic integrity of the older section of the Lodge, and guests were starting to complain about the dropped ceilings and metal windows in those rooms. In May 1994, Texas Parks & Wildlife Project Director Bill Dolman, Architect Laura David, and Regional Director Delton Daugherty convened a 4-day charette at Indian Lodge to discuss the needs of that building as well as of other structures in Davis Mountains State Park and those at Balmorhea State Park. About a dozen Parks & Wildlife specialists attended, and the agenda included a room-by-room inspection and assessment of all of the Lodge buildings. The team's recommendations for capital improvements at Indian Lodge included upgrades to the rooms in the both the old and new sections of the Lodge and the restoration of the rooms in the old section to their 1930s appearance, modifications to the dining room and two guest rooms in the new section to bring them into conformity with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and improvements to the water, HVAC, and sewage systems. Funds for these improvements were not immediately forthcoming, although in May 1996, a 590-square foot addition costing \$120,000 was attached to the dining room in order to accommodate handicapped restrooms and other alterations were made to bring the building into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.<sup>77</sup>

In May 1998, in conjunction with the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the State Parks Board, Indian Lodge hosted a celebration to honor the CCC enrollees who had worked on the Lodge. Seven former enrollees attended, as well as a crowd of well-wishers, including State Representative Pete Gallego of Alpine. Representative Gallego was given a tour of the Lodge and showed an interest in the building's history and ongoing maintenance problems. Gallego decided to make rehabilitating the newer section of the Lodge and restoring the older section, as detailed in the 1994 charette report, one of his legislative priorities. In the 1999 session of the Legislature, as a



member of the conference committee on the appropriations bill, he was able to obtain an appropriation of \$6 million from general obligation bond funds for the project. In the 2000 general election, voters approved an \$850-million bond issue for construction and repair of state buildings, and funds from these bonds enabled the Department of Parks and Wildlife to completely fund both the rehabilitation of the newer section and the restoration of the older, work that was to be done in three phases between 2001 and 2006.<sup>78</sup>

## EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

Indian Lodge is a historically significant structure for four reasons. First, it is a significant artifact of the second stage of automobile tourism in the United States, the years between 1920 and 1940 when automobile tourists, instead of camping beside their automobiles wherever they were when night fell, stopped at fixed destinations that were designed to accommodate highway tourists. The resort hotels of the late 19th and early 20th centuries were built to be reached by railroad; in fact, many, like the El Tovar at Grand Canyon; the Greenbrier in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia; and the Homestead in Hot Springs, Virginia, were served directly by railroad branch lines. But Indian Lodge was built in a remote location accessible only by automobile, in connection with a projected 75-mile scenic highway designed specifically for automobile tourists. The Lodge belongs to the closing years of the period when Americans were still discovering the freedom of automobile travel and were using it to explore the scenic wonders of the West, and so it occupies an important place in the history of the automobile.

The older section of the Lodge is also an excellent example of the National Park Service's theory that structures in parks should extend the visitor's wilderness experience by being constructed of indigenous materials and designed to reflect local vernacular architecture and should be located so that they blend with the landscape. Indian Lodge, built into the side of a hill above Keesey Creek, conforms to those ideals and at the same time reflects a widespread Southwestern architectural fad of the 19-teens and '20s. It is in the pseudo-Pueblo Southwestern regional romantic style that also produced the Hopi House at Grand Canyon (1904), the El Ortiz Hotel at Lamy, New Mexico (1914), and the Museum of Fine Arts and the La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe, New Mexico (1916 and 1921). In fact, the architects seem to have been directly inspired by the regional romantic buildings of Mary Colter, the architect of Hopi House. Indian Lodge is the only example of a pseudo-Pueblo style hotel in Texas and thus has a significant role in the architectural history of the Southwest.

The original section of Indian Lodge is the largest and most complex structure built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in a Texas state park. CCC structures have survived in 31 Texas state parks, but most of them are cabins, concession buildings, refectories, and picnic shelters. The original section of Indian Lodge, with its dramatic location, massive retaining walls, 15 guest rooms, large public rooms, terraces, patio, and lookout room is unquestionably the crown jewel of the CCC's work in Texas and is an important part of the state's social history.

Finally, the Lodge played a small but significant role in World War II as the temporary home of the wives of cadets in training at Marfa Army Air Field Advanced Flying School, which opened December 5, 1942, and graduated one 9-week class per month until May 1945. The wives lived at the Lodge for varying lengths of time while their husbands were stationed at the school, and the cadets made occasional 50-mile round trips to visit their spouses.

The period of historic significance for the older section of the Lodge is the years 1933–1945, and the rooms in that section should be restored to that period.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>3</sup> Jacobson and Nored, pp. 176, 250; Warren James Belasco, *Americans on the Road: From Autocamp to Motel, 1910–1945* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1979), pp. 8, 74.

<sup>4</sup> Jacobson and Nored, pp. 453–454; *House Journal*, 38th Legislature, Regular Session (Austin: Secretary of State, 1923), pp. 1653–1657.

<sup>5</sup> James Wright Steely, *Parks for Texas: Enduring Landscapes of the New Deal* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999), p. 6.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*; Phebe K. Warner to D. E. Colp, May 28, 1924; Colp to Warner, December 28, 1926, January 3, 1927; all in D.E. Colp Papers, Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin; D.E. Colp to B.F. Berkeley, December 29, 1926; Berkeley to Colp, December 31, 1926; both in B. F. Berkeley Papers, Archives of the Big Bend, Sul Ross State University.

<sup>8</sup> Jacobson and Nored, pp. 261–263, 470; (Marfa) Big Bend Sentinel, January 8, 1931; “Davis Mountains State Park SP-4, Proposed Park Site,” in CCC Drawings Collection, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department; Jeff Davis County Deed Records, Vol. 33, pp. 619–621, Vol. 34, p. 576, Vol. 35, p. 330, Vol. 111, p. 466; *Alpine Avalanche*, June 30, October 6, 1933; Texas Park Board Minutes, September 11, 1933, February 13, 1947, microfilm at Records Division, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, Austin (hereafter cited as Parks Board Minutes).

<sup>9</sup> SCR 13, 4th Called Session, 41st Legislature, Texas Parks Board Papers, Texas State Archives (hereafter cited as Parks Board Papers); Phebe K. Warner, “Conservation, Recreation, Education,” *The Western Weekly*, June 1, 1924, clipping in Phebe K. Warner Papers, Panhandle-Plains Museum, Canyon, Texas; J. B. Odell to D.E. Colp, June 3, 1926; July 9, 1926; both in Colp Papers.

<sup>10</sup> Steely, p. 21.

<sup>11</sup> John A. Salmond, *The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933–1942: A New Deal Case Study* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1967), p. 30.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 84–85; Kenneth E. Hendrickson, Jr., “Replenishing the Soil and Soul of Texas: The Civilian Conservation Corps in the Lone Star State as an Example of State-Federal Work Relief During the Great Depression,” *The Historian* 65:4, p. 803.

<sup>13</sup> Steely, pp. 24, 28.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 29, 52–54.

<sup>15</sup> Jacobson and Nored, p. 275; *Alpine Avalanche*, July 7, 25, August 25, October 13, 1933; A. V. Chapin to Wendell Myers, July 13, 1940, Parks Board Papers.

<sup>16</sup> Ernesto Rivera, interview, March 16, 1993, Transcript in Texas Parks & Wildlife Department Infrastructure Division files; Camp Report, January 8, 1934, RG 35, Box 211, Records of the Civilian Conservation Corps, National Archives, Washington (hereafter cited as CCC Papers).

<sup>17</sup> Victor Douglass, interview, February 23, 2003, transcript in TPWD-CCC Oral History Project files.

<sup>18</sup> Menu, January 5, 1934, CCC Papers; Victor Douglass interview.

<sup>19</sup> Extract from Monthly Educational Report, February 2, 1935, CCC Papers.

<sup>20</sup> The Checker-Upper, November 20, 1934, January 31, 1935. Infrastructure Division Files, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.

<sup>21</sup> Alpine Avalanche, July 7, 1933; Cecil McMeans, interview, October 26, 2006, Videotape at Indian Lodge; Victor Douglass interview; Vivian Grubb, interview with author, August 15, 2006; CCC Papers.

<sup>22</sup> Jacobson and Nored, p. 276; Victor Douglass interview; W.R. Bowers, interview, August 29, 1997, transcript in TPWD-CCC Oral History Project files; Camp Report, July 28, 1934, CCC Papers.

<sup>23</sup> Edward B. Rowan to Max Bachofen, November 19, 1934; Bachofen to Rowan, undated; Rowan to Bachofen, March 5, 1935; A. S. Lewis to Rowan, May 9, 1935; all in RG 121, Entry 124, Box 1, Records of the Public Building Service, National Archives, Washington.

<sup>24</sup> Alpine Avalanche, July 7, October 6, 1933; George Nason to Herbert Maier, March 16, 1935, RG 79, Box 15, Records of the National Park Service, National Archives Regional Center, Denver (hereafter cited as NPS Papers).

<sup>25</sup> Alpine Avalanche, October 6, 1933, August 8, 1934; Steely, p.65.

<sup>26</sup> Alpine Avalanche, December 1, 1933, March 2, 1934; Victor Douglass interview; Harry L. Dunham to Herbert Maier, February 12, 1934, NPS Papers; Steely, p. 75.

<sup>27</sup> SP-4 Payroll, June 1934, NPS Papers; Arthur Fehr, Daybooks 1934–1937, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, May 17–19, 26, 29, 1934; Robert O. Whiteaker to Herbert Maier, November 27, 1934, NPS Papers; Austin American, September 6, 1934.

<sup>28</sup> “Planting Plan, Indian Village,” drawing in CCC Maps and Plans Collection, Texas State Library.

<sup>29</sup> Steely, pp. 75–76; Arnold Berke, Mary Colter: Architect of the Southwest (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002), pp. 83–112, 165–183; Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997), pp. 110–145.

<sup>30</sup> National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, File No. 7397, “Fehr, Arthur,” on file at Texas State Board of Architectural Examiners, Austin; Austin American-Statesman, January 24, 1969.

<sup>31</sup> File No. 1061, “William C. Caldwell,” Texas Board of Architectural Examiners, Austin; Death Certificate #09195, Harris County, Texas, Texas Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics, Austin.

<sup>32</sup> Alpine Avalanche, December 1, 1933; Application for Camp, December 7, 1934, NPS Papers; Ernesto Rivera interview.

<sup>33</sup> Ernesto Rivera interview; Victor Douglass interview; Record of Encumbrances, SP-4, February, 1934-March, 1935, NPS Papers.

<sup>34</sup> Memorandum Concerning Project 1003, Bastrop SP 22, October 3, 1936, Parks Board Papers; Alpine Avalanche, August 9, 1935; Record of Encumbrances, SP-4, February 1935, NPS Papers.

<sup>35</sup> Alpine Avalanche, August 9, 1935; George Nason to Pat Neff, January 20, 1936, Parks Board Papers.

<sup>36</sup> Fehr Daybook, March 13, 14, 1936; Parks Board Minutes, September 2, October 3, 1936; “Balmorhea State Park, Reeves County, Texas, Furniture for Indian Village,” CCC Maps and Plans Collection, Texas State Library.

<sup>37</sup> John H. Veale, “Reconnaissance Report on Sewage Disposal System at Indian Village, Davis Mountains, Texas, November, 1937,” NPS Papers.

<sup>38</sup> Conrad Wirth to Herbert Maier, December 20, 1934; George Nason to Maier, January 5, 1935; Maier to State Park Emergency Conservation Work, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., January 29, 1935, all in NPS Papers.

<sup>39</sup> J.Y. Haile to Herbert Maier, January 9, 1935; Maier to State Park Emergency Conservation Work, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., January 31, 1935, both in NPS Papers.

<sup>40</sup> George Nason to Maier, February 4, 1935, NPS Papers.

<sup>41</sup> George Nason to Herbert Maier, February 13, 1935, NPS Papers.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> George Nason to Herbert Maier, March 23, 1935, NPS Papers; Alpine Avalanche, June 14, 1935; undated newspaper clipping, Parks Board Papers.

<sup>44</sup> Velma Davis, "Art and Inspiration," undated clipping from Dallas Morning News in Indian Lodge History file, Indian Lodge; Project Estimate and Allotment Request, Project #114, July 23, 1936; Project Estimate and Allotment Request Project #134, August 23, 1935; George Nason to Herbert Maier, September 17, 1935; Maier to A.H. Good, September 20, 1935; Maier to Nason, October 12, 1935; R.O. Whiteaker to A.S. Lewis, October 10, 1935; Maier to State Park Emergency Conservation Work, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., December 28, 1935; C.T. Patrick to Cecil Doty, July 31, 1936; all in NPS Papers; Roscoe Bowers to James Steely, June 26, 1994, "Notes on Indian Lodge," file in author's possession; Alpine Avalanche, August 14, 1936.

<sup>45</sup> Project Estimate and Allotment Request, Project 108, Roof and Terrace Repairs, Fort Davis SP-4, July 18, 1936; Request for Mandays, Job 108, Roof Repairs, December 6, 1936; Fred Johnson to Acting Regional Director, National Park Service Region III, November 30, 1937; Inspection Report, Balmorhea State Park 47 (Fort Davis SP-4 Side Camp), March 30, 31, 1938; all in NPS Papers; "Davis Mountain Side Camp, Roof Reconstruction," CCC Drawings Collection, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; Roscoe Bowers to James Steely, June 26, 1994, in Steely, "Notes"; Scrapbook #3, Barry Scobee Papers, Archives of the Big Bend, Sul Ross State University (hereafter cited as Scobee Papers).

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<sup>47</sup> G. T. Patrick to F.W. Digby Roberts, April 18, 1938, NPS Papers.

<sup>48</sup> F.W. Digby Roberts to Central Design Office, National Park Service, Austin, February 5, 1938; William Wuehrman to "Dear Jones," undated; both in Parks Board Papers.

<sup>49</sup> Alpine Avalanche, September 9, 1935, July 17, 31, 1936.

<sup>50</sup> Alice Anderson, interview with author, July 6, 2005.

<sup>51</sup> Alice Anderson, interview; David S. Evans and Derral Mulholland, *Big and Bright: A History of the McDonald Observatory* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), pp.29, 83.

<sup>52</sup> Parks Board Minutes, March 23, 1937; E.B. Camiade to Sherman Shaffer, April 6, 1942; undated clipping, "Improvements at Indian Lodge"; both in Parks Board Papers; Scrapbook #3, Scobee Papers; Otis McPhaul, interview, November 13, 1995, transcript in TPWD-CCC Oral History Project files; Indian Lodge Vertical File, Archives of the Big Bend, Sul Ross State University.

<sup>53</sup> Parks Board Minutes, April 10-11, 1942; E.B. Camiade to Mrs. Douthit Alcus, April 21, 1942, Parks Board Papers; Ronnie Hartnett Patillo, interview with author, July 21, 2005.

<sup>54</sup> Parks Board Minutes, August 13-14, 1942, March 20, 1943; Indian Lodge Receipts Through 2/26/43, Robert Cartledge Papers, Box #3, Archives of the Big Bend, Sul Ross State University; Frank Quinn, "Inspection Report, Davis Mountains State Park, February 16-19, 1943," Parks Board Papers; Ronnie Hartnett Patillo interview.

<sup>55</sup> Completion of the Installation of the Butane Gas System for Indian Lodge at Davis Mountains State Park: Instructions to Bidders, Proposal Specifications, April 14, 1945, Parks Board Papers.

<sup>56</sup> N. H. Lee, "Inspection Report, Davis Mountains State Park, April 20, 1945"; F. A. McNiel, "Inspection Report, Davis Moun-

tains State Park, September 18, 1945; both in Parks Board Papers.

<sup>57</sup> Ronnie Hartnett Patillo interview.

<sup>58</sup> Dallas Morning News, January 12, 1947; Sue Powell, "Mile High Vacation," Sun-Up, June 1947; Fort Worth Star-Telegram, June 29, 1947.

<sup>59</sup> Parks Board Minutes, December 14, 1947; October 20, 1948; November 7, 1953; August 26, 1955; April 16, 1956; February 12, 1957; December 16, 1957; Bill Collins, interview with author, August 31, 2006.

<sup>60</sup> Bill Collins interview; Barbara Walker Ridley, interview with author, August 12, 2006; Parks Board Minutes, December 16, 1957.

<sup>61</sup> Lewis Walker, Jr., interview with author, August 15, 2006.

<sup>62</sup> Lewis Walker, Jr. interview; Margaret Crawford, interview with author, July 3, 2005.

<sup>63</sup> Barbara Walker Ridley interview.

<sup>64</sup> Frank Quinn, "Memorandum on Post-War Planning, November 19, 1944," Parks Board Papers; Colonel Lewis Walker, Jr. interview; Bill Collins interview.

<sup>65</sup> Vivian Elizabeth Smyril, "Texas Parks and Wildlife Department," *The New Handbook of Texas* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996), Vol. 6, p. 387; Bill Collins interview; Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission Meeting Minutes, February 18, 1964, Texas Parks & Wildlife Commission Papers, Texas State Archives (hereafter cited as Parks and Wildlife Commission Minutes).

<sup>66</sup> Barry Scobee and B.E. Coan to Clifton Rice, August 16, 1940, Parks Board Papers; Parks Board Minutes, May 6, August 19, 1967; Texas v. Espy, cause #924, Minutes of 83rd District Court, Book 3, pp. 284–285; Tommy Espy Williams, interview with author, July 13, 2005; General and Special Laws of the State of Texas Passed by the Regular Session of the 59th Legislature . . . January 12, 1965–May 31, 1965 (Austin: Secretary of State, 1965), pp. 1804–1809; El Paso Herald-Post, September 19, 1965; San Angelo Standard Times, September 19, 1965; Jeff Davis County Deed Records, Volume 61, p. 640.

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<sup>68</sup> Davis, Foster, Thorpe and Associates, Inc., "Indian Lodge, Davis Mountains State Park, Rehabilitation of Existing Lodge and Construction of Lodge Expansion and Swimming Pool," 38 sheets, Infrastructure Division, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.

<sup>69</sup> Ralph Davis to K.W. Davis, December 23, 1966; Gene Guldemann to Ralph Davis, January 16, 1967; Jack F. Roberts to Davis, Foster, and Thorpe, May 15, 1967; all in Rehab Project Papers.

<sup>70</sup> Ralph Davis to State Building Commission, February 27, 1967; Larry Francis to Ralph Davis, April 10, 1967; Ralph Davis to Knox Davis, May 5, 1967; all in Rehab Project Papers.

<sup>71</sup> Annual Report of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department . . . for the Fiscal Year 1966–1967 (Austin: State of Texas, 1967), pp. 20–23.

<sup>72</sup> Ralph Davis to Guldemann Construction Company, June 6, 1967; Gene Guldemann to Davis, Foster, Thorpe and Associates, June 14, 1967; Ralph Davis to William M. Gosdin, June 14, 1967; all in Rehab Project Papers.

<sup>73</sup> Johnny L. Buck to Jack Doyle, March 12, 1968, Rehab Project Papers; Bill Collins interview.

<sup>74</sup> Angela Ernhart, interview with author, August 10, 2006; Michael Crevier, interview with author, October 17, 2006; Delton Daugherty, interview with author, November 1, 2006; "FY 95 Business Plan for Davis Mountains State Park," Indian Lodge History File, Indian Lodge.



*Historic Structure Report: Indian Lodge*

<sup>75</sup> Angela Ernhart interview.

<sup>76</sup> Angela Ernhart interview; Delton Daugherty interview.

<sup>77</sup> Angela Ernhart interview; Delton Daugherty interview; "Final Report: Balmorhea, Davis Mountains, Indian Lodge Charette, May 16-20, 1994"; "Project #575-046, Indian Lodge Dining Room Renovation," both in Infrastructure Papers, Records Division, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.

<sup>78</sup> Big Bend Sentinel, May 7, 1998; Delton Daugherty interview; Pete Gallego, interview with author, September 20, 2006; David Bischofhausen, interview with author, September 21, 2006; Indian Lodge Rehabilitation Phase III, Project 101287, Infrastructure Papers, Records Division, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.

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PART II

ARCHITECTURE OF THE INDIAN LODGE

BY

JOE C. FREEMAN, ARCHITECT  
AUSTIN, TEXAS



## **ARCHITECTURE OF THE INDIAN LODGE**

### **An Indian Lodge in the Davis Mountains**

The Indian Lodge rests on the north slope near the head of Keesey Canyon. Like the rock outcroppings nearby, the building is in stark contrast to the grassy slopes of the Davis Mountains that surround it. Unlike the dark and organic basalt rock formations with their eroded vertical lines, the Indian Lodge is clearly manmade, with strong horizontal lines, an understandable design, and an identifiable style. The Indian Lodge recalls an era of tourism in the American Southwest when a rich and mysterious landscape, and the culture that grew from it, were discovered, rediscovered, studied, and celebrated in literature, art, and architecture. Pueblo-like in configuration and Pueblo Revival in stylistic influence, the Indian Lodge is complex in arrangement but makes use of simple rectangular forms. The original portion of the Lodge, which carries the Pueblo stylistic attributes, was built in 1934–35 by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Two wings, of sympathetic but contemporary construction and detailing, were added in 1967 by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Many repairs, additions, and modifications have been made over the life of the building. In 2006, the Department completed a comprehensive rehabilitation of the original part of the Lodge.

The Indian Lodge was constructed from the stone, soil, and timber indigenous to the Davis Mountains of the Trans-Pecos region. The terraced footing wall foundation was built of locally gathered stone. Adobe brick were made and cured on the site using a soil mix of sands and clays hauled to the site. Timber cut from the higher elevations of the Davis Mountains was used for vigas (beams), and river cane, gathered from the banks of the Rio Grande, was used for the latillas that span between the vigas. The stone and adobe surfaces were stuccoed to form a monolithic finish. Although the smooth stucco surface covered the modulated and varied rectangular forms of the raised, two- and three-story superstructure, the building's surface was punctuated by projecting vigas, inset door and window openings, and exposed stone laid flush with the stucco surface at some chimneys and parapets for a rustic effect.

### **Pueblo Revival in the American Southwest**

With the rise of a Texas state parks system and a growing federal presence and energy in developing national parks, tourism flourished in the Southwest. Fred Harvey and the Santa Fe Railway had brilliantly exploited the commercial aspects of tourism with a chain of hotels and facilities that keyed on the design influences of Native American art from the region. A series of international expositions held in the 1890s and early 1900s in Chicago (1893), St. Louis (1904) and San Diego (1915) celebrated the art and architecture of the Southwest. The Panama-California Exposition in San Diego constructed an "Indian Village" that included a five-story replicated Pueblo complete with ovens, ladders, hanging peppers, and Indians. Although the structure was fabricated from cement plaster on chicken wire, it was successful in presenting the romantic image of the architecture and culture of the Pueblo Indians. Not surprisingly, the Santa Fe Railway Company sponsored and paid for the entire Southwestern Indian aspect of the exhibition, with the active participation of its president, Edward P. Ripley.<sup>1</sup> At other locations in the Southwest, national parks were established. The Petrified Forest in Arizona and Mesa Verde in southern Colorado were formally designated as national parks in 1906 and became tourist destinations. The Grand Canyon was so designated in 1919, after having been a tourist destination and game preserve since 1900.

By 1921, administrative and support facilities at Mesa Verde National Park had been constructed in the Pueblo Revival Style. Mary Colter, architect for the Fred Harvey Company, was busy designing and constructing facilities at the Grand Canyon in a rustic stylistic treatment strongly influenced by the native culture and indigenous materials of the region. By 1936, The Painted Desert Inn had been built in a style similar to that of the Indian Lodge at Petrified Forest National Park. After having helped with the Indian Village at the Panama-California Exposition in 1914–15, cultural anthropologist Jesse Nusbaum worked with National Park Service architects and builders on the Pueblo-styled administrative area at Mesa Verde. The architects and builders of the National Park Service actively embraced a growing movement toward a rustic architecture appropriate to the national parks, particularly those in the west.<sup>2</sup> The Indian Lodge at Fort Davis State Park was among the easternmost participants in the stylistic movement that pervaded the Southwest and perhaps the most prominent example of the style in Texas.<sup>3</sup>

### **Architectural Precedents—Origins of the Pueblo Revival Style**

In his benchmark study of Pueblo architecture published in the Eighth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology in 1887, Victor Mindeleff described “a primitive architecture, which, under the influence of the arid environment of the southwestern plateaus, has developed from rude lodge into the many-storied house of rectangular rooms.”<sup>4</sup> If Mindeleff’s introductory description seems simplistic or too succinct, a dedicated reader of the entire study, completed with his brother Cosmos, would find an exhaustive analysis of Pueblo architecture. Using narrative, drawings, and photographs, Mindeleff revealed the complexity of an architecture interwoven with its physical and cultural environment. Plans illustrated complex arrangements of rooms in adobe and stone structures and linked them to tribal and cultural organization. Architectural structure such as supporting walls and beams was detailed in simple line drawings. Architectural details such as doors, windows, stairs, fireplaces, and roof drainage systems were exhaustively presented in all their various forms.

In describing Pueblo architecture in his analysis of the precedents for religious architecture in New Mexico, George Kubler noted that the Pueblo culture takes its name from its form of habitation. He goes on to describe a pueblo:

“The pueblo itself is a group of cellular community dwellings, built of stone or sun-dried clay, formed by the repeated addition of new chambers. Continuous party walls run throughout the structure in horizontal and vertical extension. The plan generally includes open spaces between the ‘apartment houses’ formed in this manner; esplanades between the long rows of buildings...and courts which may be completely enclosed or open on one or more sides . . . .”<sup>5</sup>

The architecture described by both Mindeleff in 1887 and Kubler in 1940 was of such strength as to be enduring in the landscape and evocative in memory.

### **Landscape and Cultural Identity**

The romanticization of the American West developed with the proliferation of the dime novel’s tales of cowboys, Indians, and outlaws after the Civil War. But the romantic appeal of the Southwest grew from sources much broader. The Smithsonian Institution and the Bureau of Ethnology, through the work of Frank Hamilton Cushing and others, exposed the rich art, architecture, and culture of the Native Americans from the Hopi to the Navajo. In 1884, Helen Hunt Jackson’s novel, *Ramona*, was published. The novel romanticized the Indian and Spanish cultures of the west, particularly California, and was widely read.<sup>6</sup> Idealization of the Southwest—especially California, Arizona, New Mexico, and to a lesser extent, western Texas—was also influenced by images of a dramatic and distinctive landscape and its interpretation in literature and art. The romantic ideal benefited from exposure to the American public through improved communications and transportation in the region, particularly railroads and highways. Whereas in the past books, studies, reports, and images had hinted at the region’s appearance, people now came to see for themselves. By 1912, Arizona and New Mexico had achieved statehood. Railroads and a network of roads crisscrossed the region. Between 1912 and 1917, thousands of American troops who participated in military actions related to the Mexican Revolution had seen the borderlands. Art colonies flourished in Santa Fe and Taos in the 1920s. Noted regional architect John Gaw Meem was designing Pueblo- or Santa Fe-styled buildings in Santa Fe and at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque.<sup>7</sup> In El Paso, the architectural firm of Trost and Trost dynamically mixed Pueblo and Southwestern themes with elements of the Craftsman movement in the 1920s.<sup>8</sup> The region thus gained an integrated identity in art, literature, and architecture that was recognized throughout the United States and Europe. By the early twentieth century, the American Southwest fused the various aspects of its cultural identity in a distinctive manner as have few periods in American history.

### **Characteristics of Pueblo Architecture**

The Pueblo Revival Style was based on the Indian Pueblo, a building form evolved over hundreds of years to fit the available materials, climate, social organization, and nature of the Pueblo Indians, descendants of the Anasazi. The characteristics of Pueblo architecture had been established before Spanish occupation. Pueblos typically were one-, two-, and three-story stone and adobe structures that served as residences and food-storage buildings. According to Victor Mindeleff, the buildings were constructed of load-bearing stone gathered locally

and stacked to form walls. The stone were either laid up in a mud mortar or stacked dry and chinked with mud and small stones. Before Spanish occupation, adobe was not typically laid up in blocks but was puddled. Stone, when available, was preferred over adobe because of its durability. Walls were typically plastered with adobe mud. Wood beams, or vigas, spanned between walls and supported secondary, smaller beams or small branches called latillas that supported the mud roofs. The vigas often extended through the exterior walls, and the exterior walls continued above the roof line to form low parapets. Roofs of puddled adobe mud also served as terraces for upper floor rooms. Door and window openings were spanned with wooden lintels.

Interior fireplaces with chimneys were constructed of stone and adobe mud and were distinct in design. Chimneys often were capped with broken pots. Lean-to sheds of wood timber and branches were attached to exterior walls. Roof drainage was handled by means of scuppers, or openings in the parapet walls. Water was directed away from the wall by extending the scupper beyond the wall plane. Scuppers were hollowed logs or flat stones extending through parapets, and often flat stone shingles were used as splash blocks at the base of the wall.

From these aspects of construction, an architectural vocabulary emerged, the characteristics of which were reinterpreted to produce a regional revival style that may be seen in the Indian Lodge's architectural composition and details.

### **Characteristics of Pueblo Revival Architecture**

Pueblo Revival architecture was derived from the recognizable architectural materials, design, and character-defining features of Pueblo architecture. The character-defining features and architectural elements that emerged include:

- Rectangular, repeated forms
- Stepped, multiple levels
- Flat roofs behind parapets
- Deep-set door and window openings with wood lintels
- Projecting viga (beam) ends
- Smooth stucco walls with rounded edges and corners
- Wood slab and panel doors
- Divided light, wood, sash or casement windows
- Projecting porches with wood columns, zapatos (corbels), and beams
- Stylized wood carvings
- Use of earth tones, white, and turquoise
- Flagstone, brick, or wood floors
- Smooth plaster interior wall surfaces
- Exposed structure ceilings with vigas and latillas
- Corner fireplaces, bancos (raised adobe platform), and niches

### **ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION OF THE INDIAN LODGE**

#### **Original Construction 1933–1935**

##### ***The Architects***

The first architectural drawings for an Indian Village have been attributed to J.B. Roberts.<sup>9</sup> Little is known of Roberts's actual design for the Indian Lodge because his drawings were never located. It is clear, however, that Olin Smith, a National Park Service architect located in Austin, must have carried out Smith's design intentions and formalized them in the 10 sheets of drawings titled "Indian Village, Texas State Park No. SP- 4" now located at the State Library and Archives in Austin. Given the date when construction began and the date of the drawings, it appears Smith's drawings were issued for construction before a number of details had been resolved.

The architect of record for the original building was William Calhoun Caldwell, despite the fact that a number of architects already had worked on the project. Caldwell modified the original design, prepared revised drawings, and signed them.<sup>10</sup> Caldwell's involvement followed National Park Service Inspector George Nason's

examination of the work under construction that found the building to be inadequate at the half-way point. Nason called in Austin architect Arthur Fehr to upgrade the building's design. Fehr, in turn, called in San Antonio architect William Calhoun Caldwell. Fehr and Caldwell's collaboration appears to have been aimed at purging the building of modern detailing and giving more life and character to the design rather than making material changes to its design and construction. From July 1933, when Roberts started his drawings, until January 1935, when Caldwell completed his drawings, three successive sets of drawings had been undertaken, each based on the previous set and each set a refinement of the work before. Complicating the design, construction was started in early 1934 using Robert's drawings. Construction had been underway for about six months when the second set of drawings by Smith was completed. By the time 13 of 22 sheets of the third set of drawings by Caldwell were completed in November 1934, construction had been underway for almost a year. Any consistency in design and design intent may be owed to the experienced architects, engineers, and inspectors of the National Park Service who held the project together through changes in architects and design.

### *The Design*

Designed on three principal levels, the Indian Lodge is irregular and asymmetrical in plan and was sited on the side of a hill and steps up the incline. As the building follows the slope, vertical heights of the different elements change. Varying parapet heights and masses of the projecting chimneys break the horizontal lines of the building. The structure is longer than it is deep, and its length parallels the contours of the site. The composition projects and recedes, creating complex shadows in strong contrast to its smooth, light-colored surface. Deeply recessed doors and windows, rough stone-faced elements, and projecting viga ends (now removed) gave variety and richness to the wall surfaces.

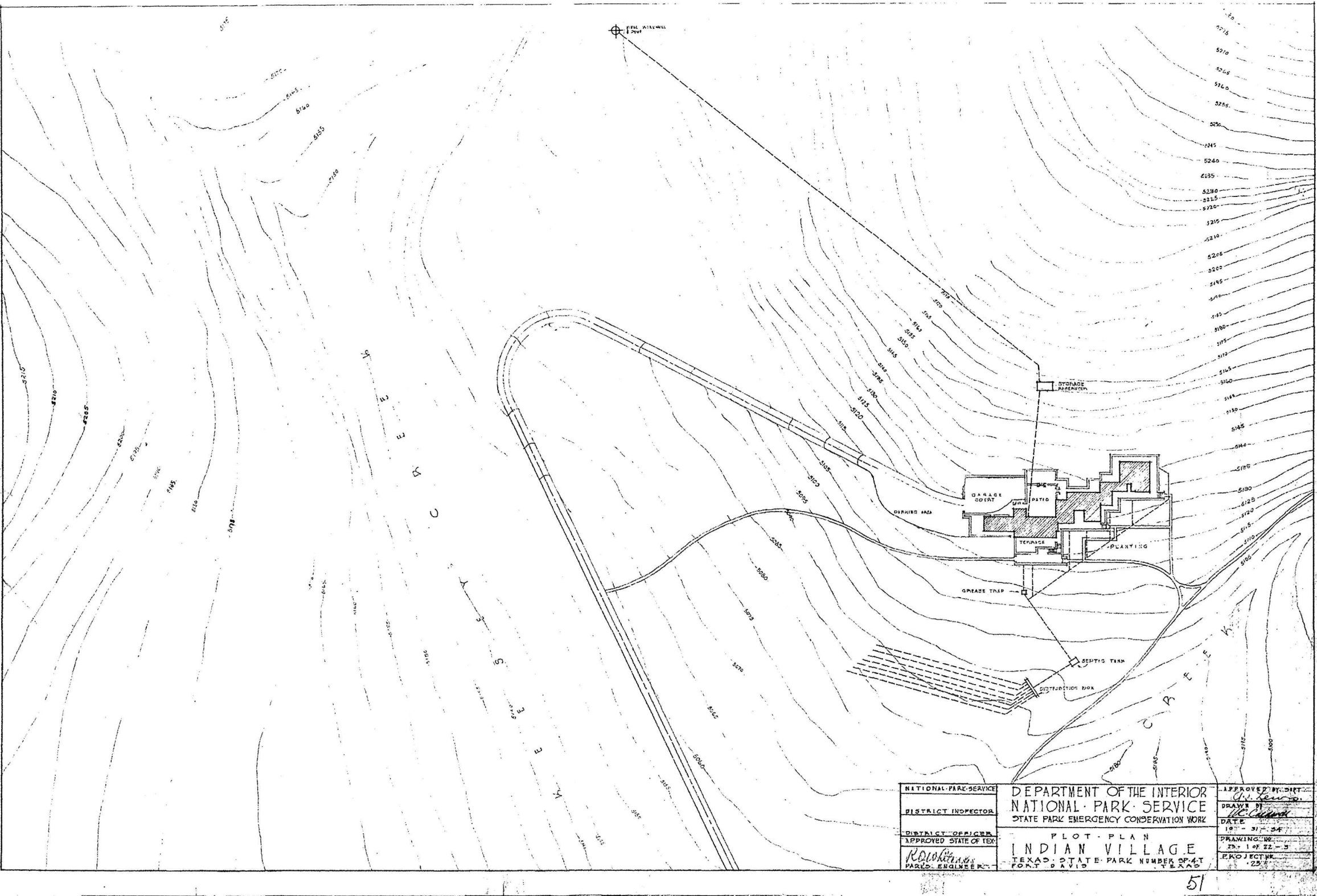
The Indian Lodge owes its original design to three factors: the robust romanticism that was the style of choice for rustic park buildings in the Southwest, a strong architectural response to the dramatic site, and persistence in carrying out the design intentions in the face of successive architects, three sets of drawings, and a difficult logistics and construction environment. That the building was erected using newly trained workers of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and administered by the National Park Service in a loose association with a Texas state parks system in its infancy only adds to the importance of the accomplishment. That there were delays, revisions, and design deficiencies related to the selection of materials and technical detailing should not have been unexpected.

The original architect's design concept and site selection were carried forward by the successor architects. The hierarchy of forms, the arrangement of spaces (both interior and exterior), and the character of detailing and finishes speak of a well-developed design. And although there were revisions to the original design and corrective measures taken to remedy some technical deficiencies in the detailing, that design remains remarkably complete.

The original design for the Indian Lodge called for 16 guest rooms on multiple levels linked by a series of outdoor walled terraces served by a block of public rooms such as a lounge and dining room. The building, as designed, was approached from below and from the south. A walled "motor court" led, by stairs, to an office, registration desk, and reception area adjoining a "lounge," a richly detailed public space with exposed vigas and fireplaces. Below the lounge was a dining room with an adjacent kitchen and support spaces. The dining room had its own separate entrance that opened to the valley beyond. Outside the office, and with access to the lounge, was a courtyard with a fountain, an outdoor fireplace, and a pergola placed atop a raised platform. Rooms with individual entrances were arrayed beyond the courtyard and were accessed by ascending outdoor terraces linked by steps and stairs. Design changes, instituted by George Nason to expedite completion of the lodge, eliminated planned garages, changed the entrance, and substituted gravel for flagstone on some terraces.

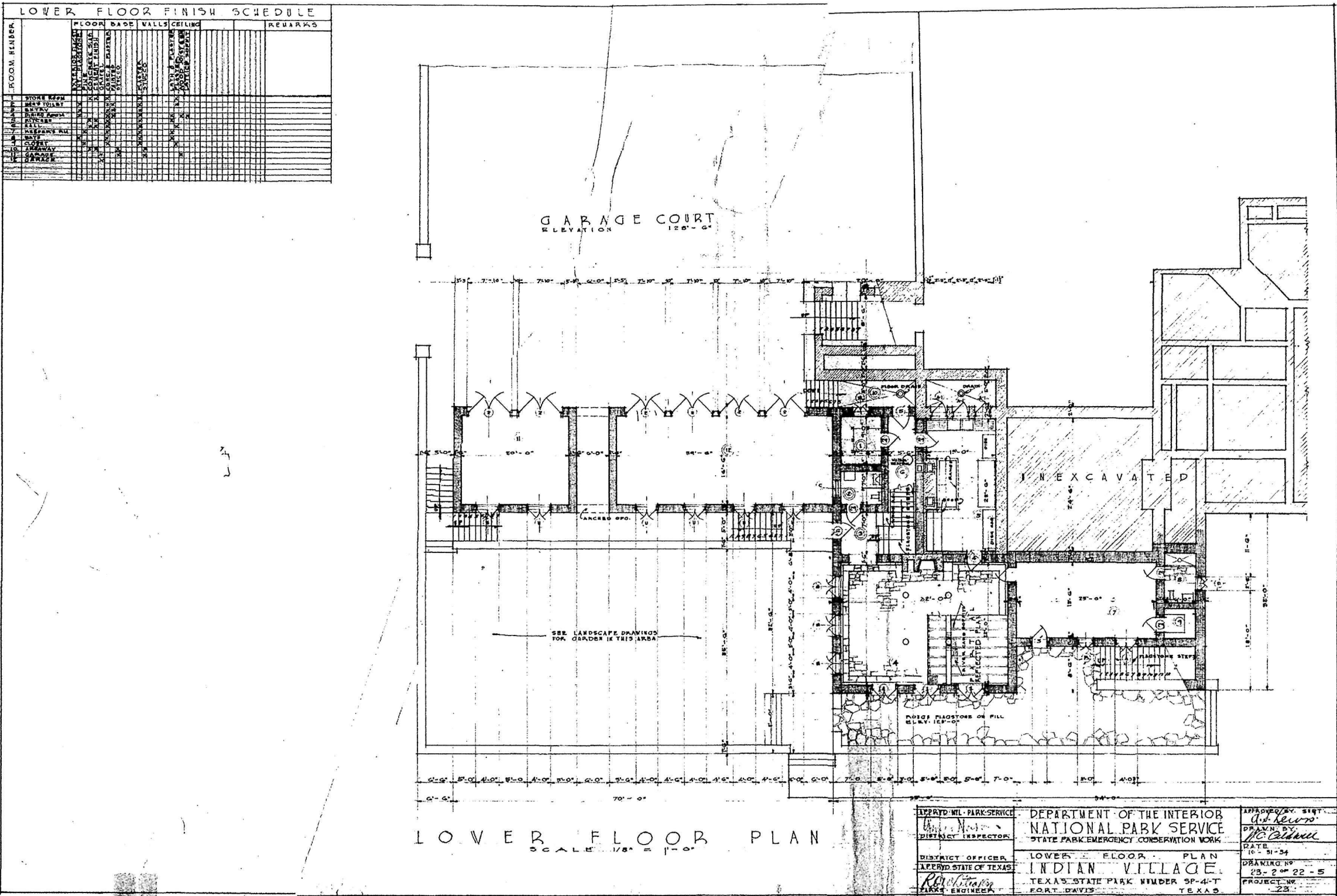
### *The Drawings*

Architectural and engineering drawings used to build the park and the Indian Lodge represent a complex but edifying chronicle of its design and construction. Excluding the drawings specifically related to the planning and building of the park, drawings for the Indian Lodge represent the work of no less than four different architects. There is much to be learned from missing drawings attributed to J.B. Roberts to Olin Smith's tentative first set of 10 sheets (said to be based on Robert's work) to W.C. Caldwell's 22-sheet initial set (with supplemental sheets) prepared with design collaboration from Arthur Fehr and built on Olin Smith's original layout. When compared to written and photographic documentation of the construction, it becomes clear that although site, orientation,

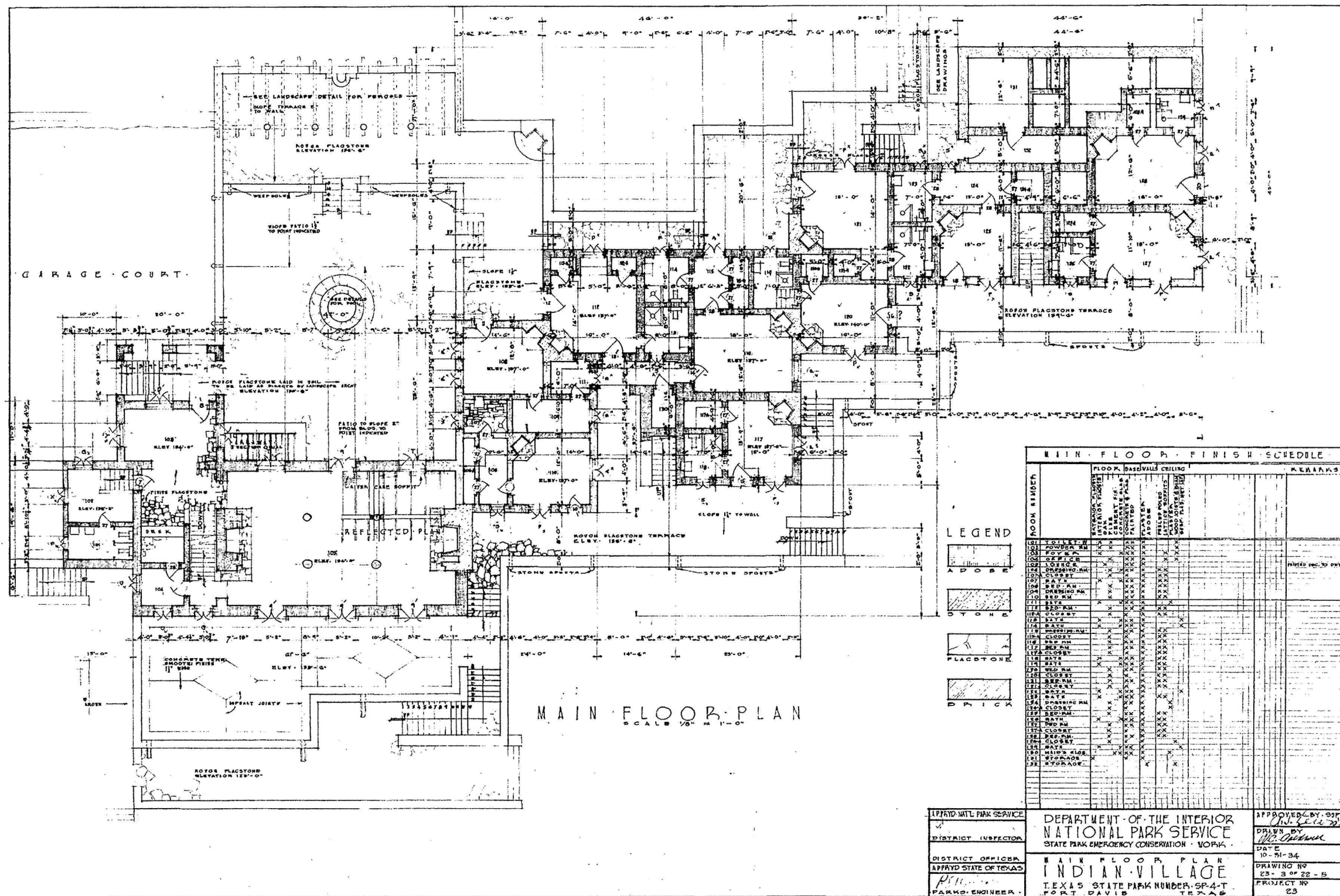


Site Plan

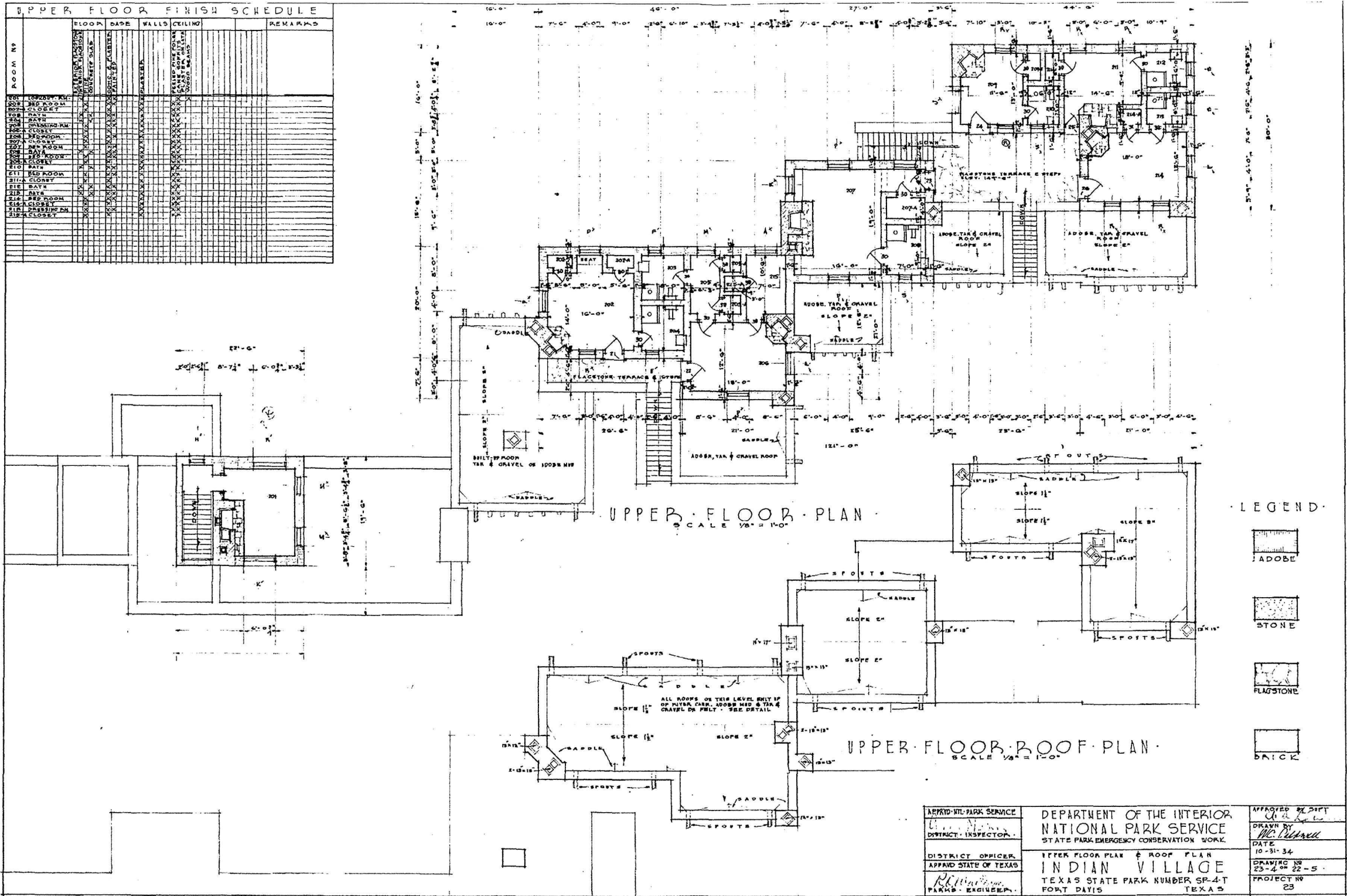




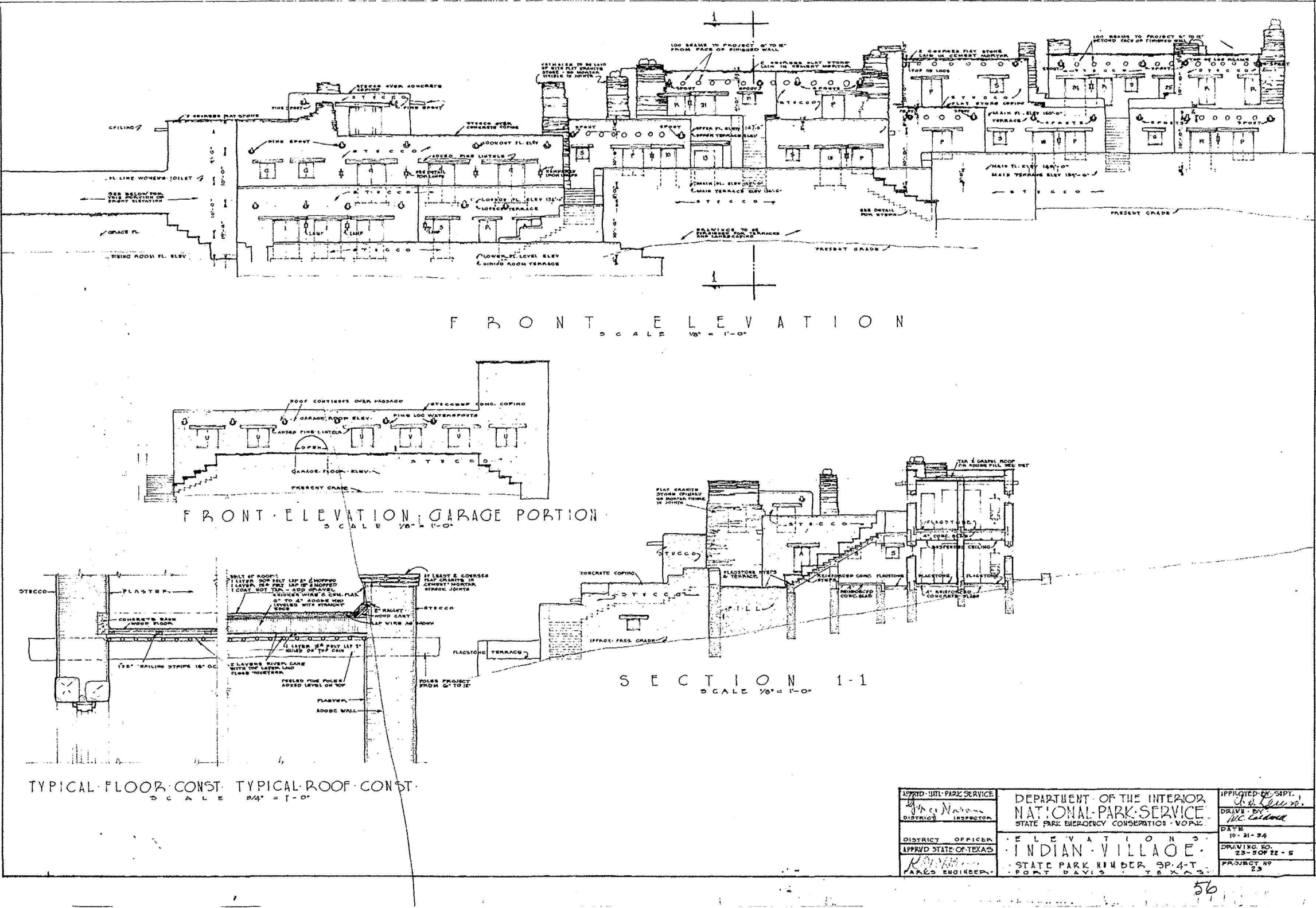
Floor Plan



Floor Plan



Floor Plan

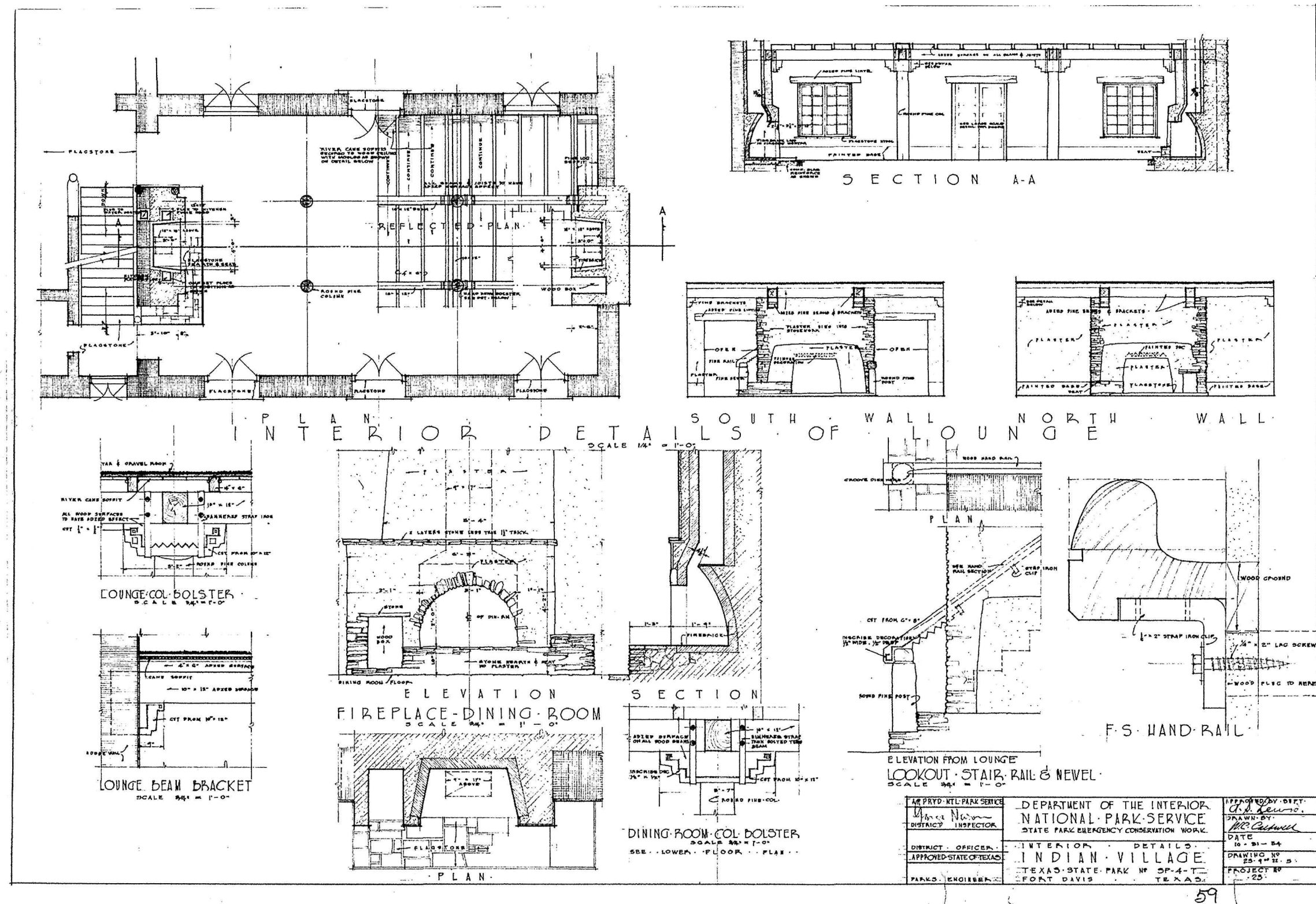


Exterior Elevations



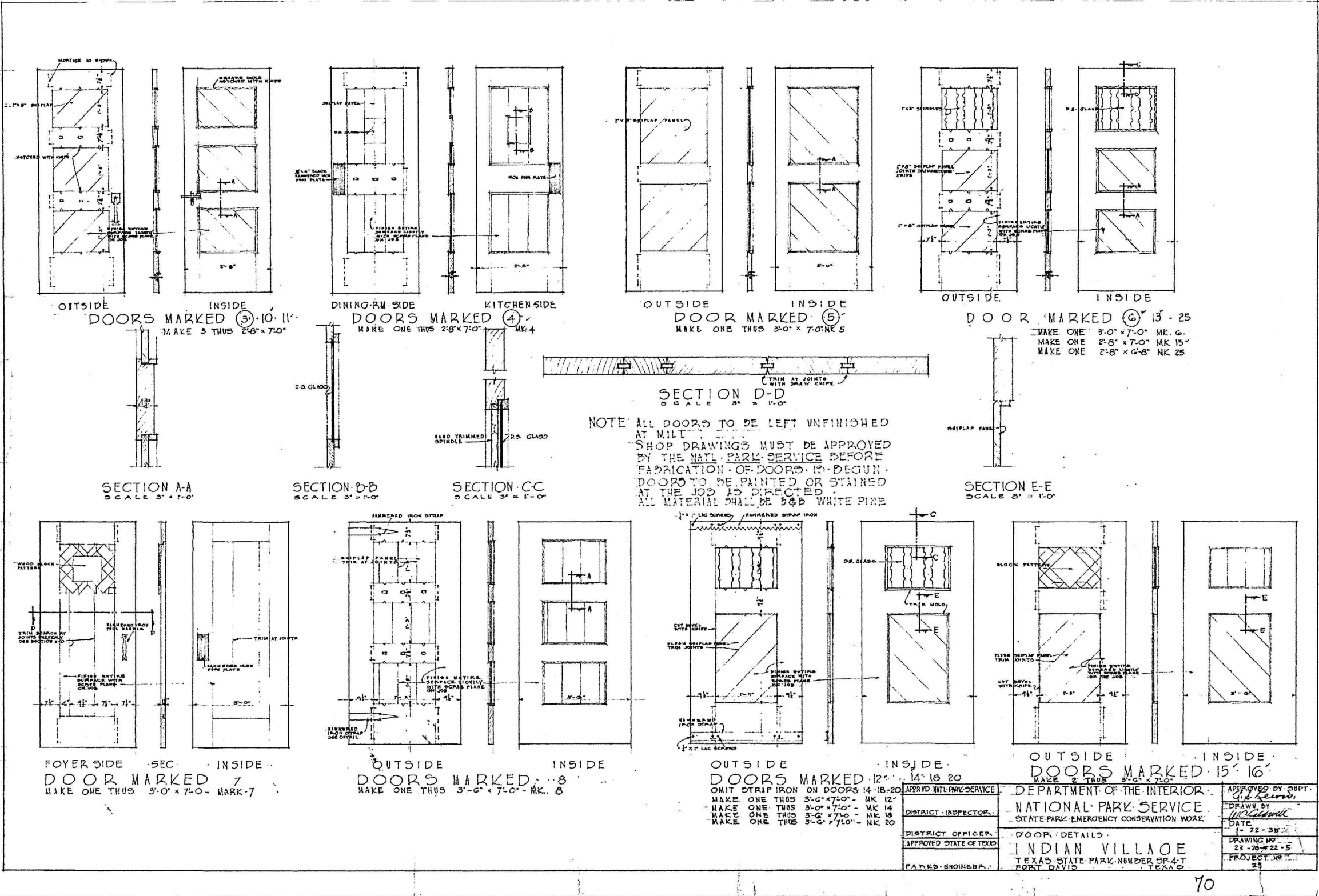




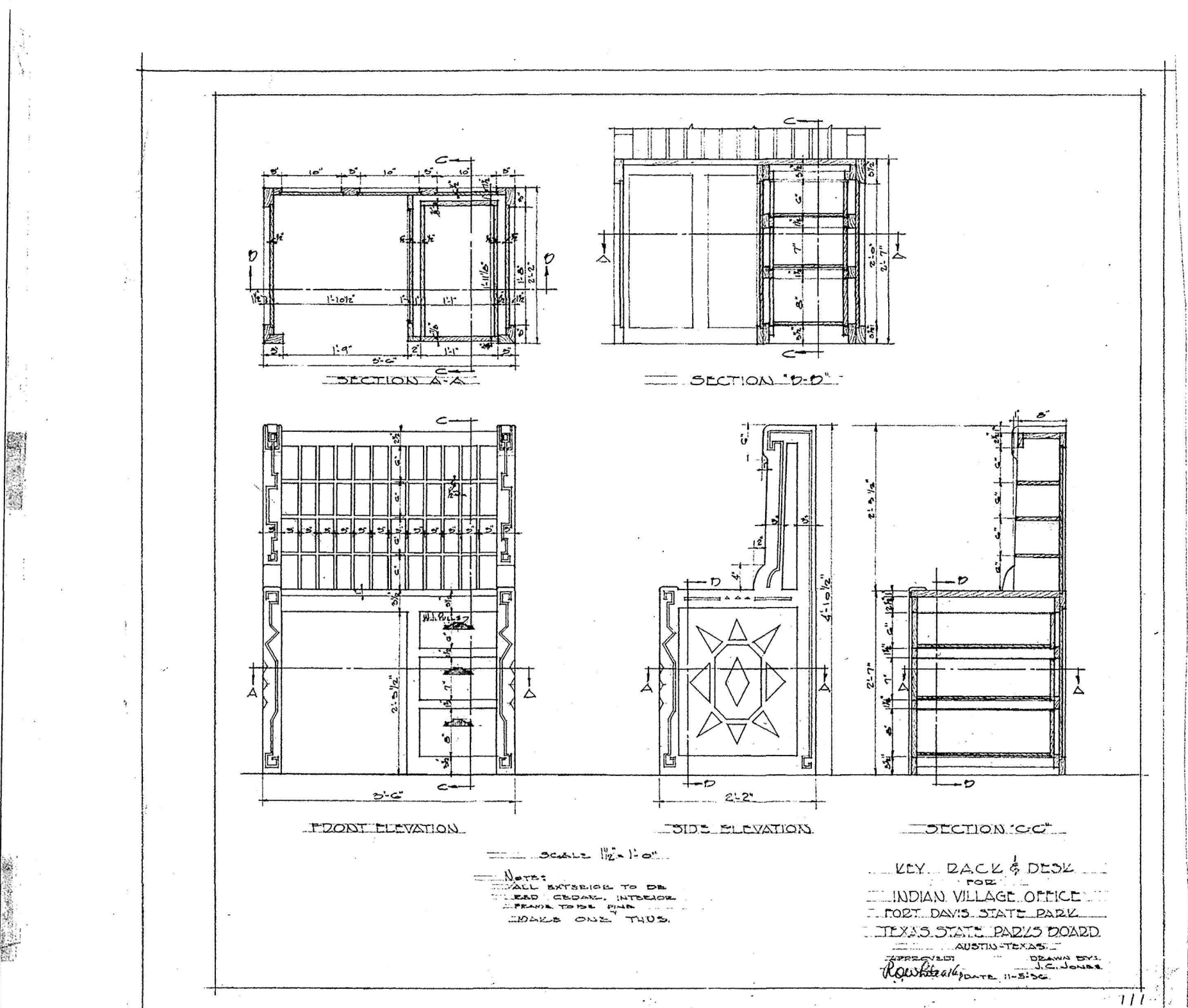


Lounge Details









Furniture Details



*Oblique view near entrance looking north. Photograph by Joe Freeman, 2007.*





*Oblique view from the pergola looking north. Photograph by Joe Freeman, 2007.*



*Oblique view from the patio looking east toward the lounge. Photograph by Joe Freeman, 2007.*

and developed design scheme were firmly established (with some notable exceptions), critical matters in technical detailing, selection of finish materials, and interpretation of the Pueblo Revival Style were not clearly resolved before construction started.

Olin Smith's drawings reveal a struggle to correlate the floor plans of the building's multiple levels with building sections. That construction was already underway before Smith's drawings were started may indicate that Roberts' drawings were used to site and lay out the building. That Smith's drawings were completed shortly before construction was halted in March of 1934 may indicate that Smith's drawings were inadequate. Certainly George Nason's intervention in May 1934 with the selection of Fehr and Caldwell was based on the need for experienced architectural design and detailing. Caldwell's drawings that followed showed not only a fine drafting hand but also skill and experience in preparing architectural drawings and a higher level of stylistic interpretation. Although some details were problematic, such as the roof flashing details, Caldwell's drawings, prepared under pressure because construction was well underway, saved the project. The following drawings were used for the original construction of the Lodge:

*J.B. Roberts Drawings: Lost in Guadalupe River Flood (1998)<sup>11</sup>*  
*Olin Smith Drawings: 10 Sheets dated January–April 1934*  
*Caldwell Drawings: 22 Sheets<sup>12</sup> dated October 1934–January 1935*  
*Landscape Drawings: 4 Sheets by Roy S. Ferguson, 2 dated December 1934*  
*Furniture Drawings: 5 Sheets dated September–October 1936*  
*Furniture Drawings: 11 Sheets dated November 1936–October 1938*  
*Ornament Drawings: 1 Sheet Mural Elevations–undated*

### **Construction**

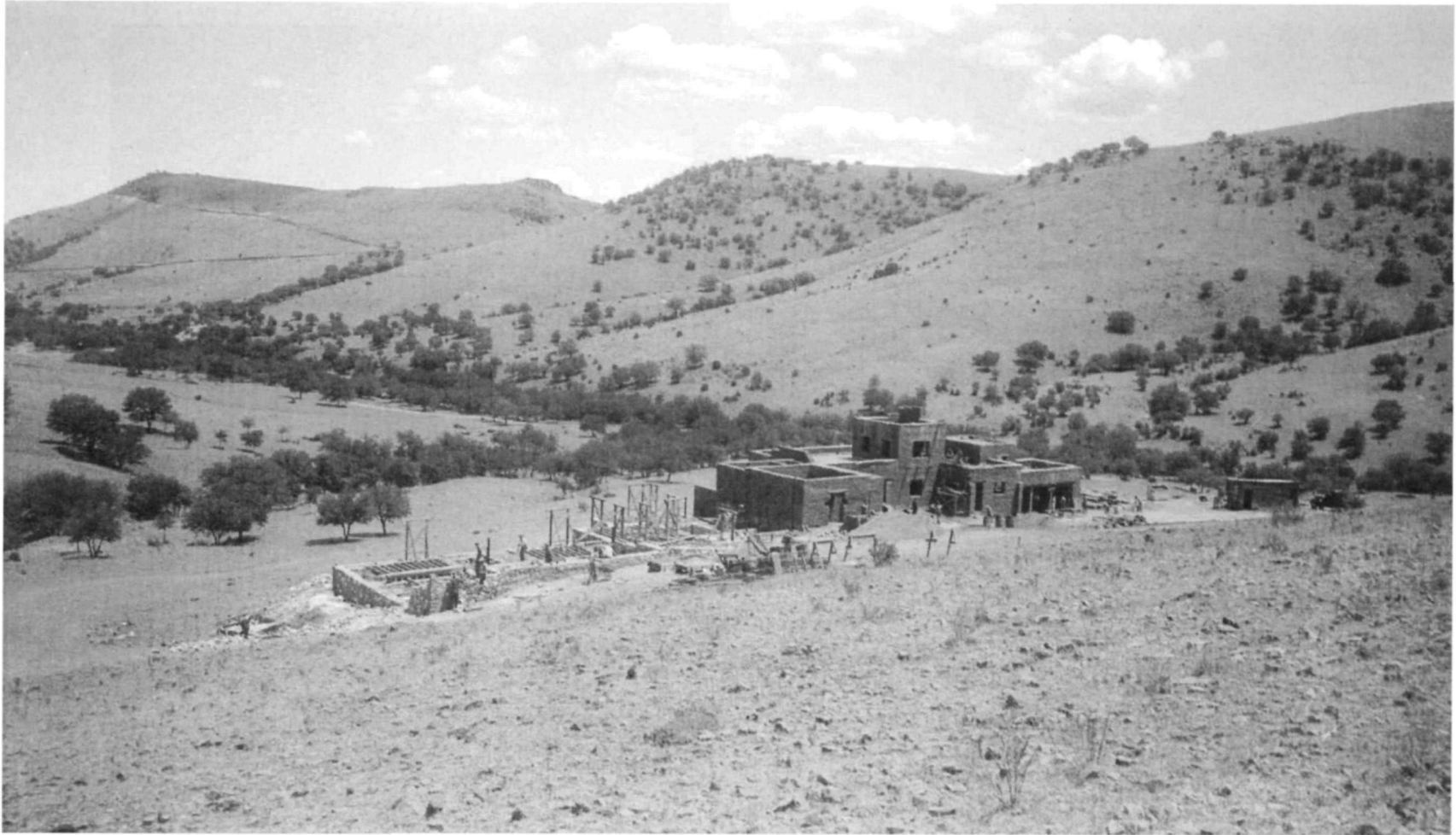
#### **Foundation**

Construction began on the Indian Lodge in early 1934 with the excavation of trenches for placing stone footing walls. These walls, which provided a base for the adobe walls and terraces of the lodge, were built using flat stone shingles of dark rock found near the site. Set in cement mortar, the footing walls were laid square and plumb. Investigations during recent repair work indicated that intersecting walls were keyed together by overlapping alternate masonry courses.<sup>13</sup> The cement mortar was set back from the wall's vertical face to provide a key for the cement stucco that eventually would cover both the stone and the adobe. In addition, stone foundation walls were extended above grade before the adobe walls were built.

#### **Exterior Walls—Adobe and Stone**

Adobe bricks were fashioned on or near the site from soil brought to the site. Tests were carried out on the soils at the site, but the soils were found to be unsuitable.<sup>14</sup> An examination of pieces of adobe found in the crawl space indicated the presence of straw, a standard adobe component. The adobe bricks were nominally 4x12x18 inches in size and were laid in a running bond pattern. The bricks were laid to form 12-inch-, 18-inch-, and—at the lounge patio—24-inch-thick walls. Specifications for the adobe bricks used at Balmorhea State Park by the CCC from the same period offer additional information on the manufacture of the bricks: "The adobe dirt, which is available without cost, is to be delivered to the job site in a dry state. The dirt is to be mixed with water in the pit in sufficient quantity to make a sticky mud. Into this mud shall be cut straw to make the adobe hold together better. After cutting the mass several times to insure even mixing the mud is to be placed in moulds of size approximately 4" x 12" x 18" and thoroughly puddle and struck off flush with the mould. The mould is then removed and the bricks left to dry. When the bricks have dried they shall be stacked so that air can circulate through the tiers and the stack shall be covered with 15# roofing felt to shed the water until the bricks are fully cured."<sup>15</sup>

Exterior walls, both stone footing walls and adobe walls, were stuccoed with a hard cement stucco on poultry netting (chicken wire). The stucco appears to be two- and three-coat work of a natural gray cement color and was returned to the inset door and window frames at the masonry openings. By 1938, the stucco had been painted a buff color using paint mixed from a combination of dry pigments.



*Oblique view looking toward the southeast during construction.*



*Oblique view looking toward the southeast during construction.*





*Oblique view looking toward the west during construction.*



*Oblique view looking toward the west during construction.*

A review of historic photographs from the Museum of the Big Bend 16 taken during construction indicates a number of details about the construction sequence and the stone and adobe work:

- After the footing walls were completed, construction of the building's two- and three-story superstructure proceeded from south to north. The superstructure appears to have been built in two major sections. Adobes were extended in alternating courses to key the second section to the first.
- Ledges and pockets were set in the stone to receive the wooden floor joists which were installed before the adobe walls of the superstructure were built.
- Rough door bucks were set in place and braced to the floor joists, and the adobes were laid to the bucks. Adobes were laid to lintel height, and wood lintels were installed before continuing the walls to a level where the vigas (beams) were set.
- The adobes were laid and finished level on all four sides of each room the vigas were installed. After the vigas were set in place, the exterior walls were extended up to form parapets.
- Between the time exterior walls were installed and the time they were plastered, several changes were made in viga end exposure, the location of scuppers, and placement of stone accents.
- Construction of the Indian Lodge was staged from the uphill (west) side of the building. Vigas were stacked at the south end of the building. Piles of sand and barrels of cement can be seen along with stacks of adobe and other building materials. An adobe manufacturing yard was located below and to the south of the Lodge site on a flat area.
- Adobe walls were stuccoed before the perimeter rock footing walls.

### ***Roofs***

After the exterior adobe walls were carried to their full height, roofs were installed above the vigas and latillas inside the parapets. The roofs consisted of 4 to 6 inches of adobe mud covered with multiple plies of hot-mopped asphalt-impregnated felt with a gravel topping. The tops and backs of the parapet walls were flashed using sheet metal flashing.<sup>17</sup> Parapets were capped with thin stone shingles cemented in place. Near the end of the original construction, the stone caps were eliminated and stucco, used on the walls, was carried up and over the tops of the parapets.

Before Caldwell's design changes, the roof structure used squared joists with a wood deck. Short lengths of cane were butted between the joists and held in place with rustic quarter round trim. Caldwell's changes called for round vigas with continuous layer of cane latillas over the vigas. Roofs, supported by wooden vigas and laid on cane latillas, consisted of 4 to 6 inches of adobe fill covered with multiple plies of asphalt impregnated felt mopped-in with hot molten asphalt and finished with gravel. A layer of 15# felt was placed between the river cane and the adobe fill. The adobe was sloped to drain to scuppers that penetrated the parapet walls. Caldwell's drawings called it a "tar and gravel roof." The built-up roof system consisted of:

- 30# felt lapped 2 inches and mopped
- 15# felt lapped 18 inches and mopped
- 1 coat of hot tar and gravel

At the parapets, a wooden cant strip was placed on the adobe fill abutting the back side of the parapet. The cant strip provided an angled transition between the roofing and the back of the parapet wall. The roofing plies were carried over the cant and terminated in a 2-inch continuous reglet set in the wall above the cant strip. The back side of the parapet wall was covered with poultry netting and cement plaster above the reglet. In an unusual aspect of the detail at the parapet, the poultry netting on the back side of the parapet was carried down into the turned up roofing plies at the cant. The drawings showed that in some places the parapet walls were capped with two courses of flat granite set in cement mortar—struck joints—and in other locations, the parapets were capped with concrete copings over which plaster was applied.

### ***Terraces and Paving***

Terraces and patios were walking surfaces that linked the complex arrangement of rooms. The terraces

and patios, linked by steps at elevation changes, were screened by low, stucco-clad, stone walls. Original drawings called for the terraces and patios to have rough flagstone paving. Late in the construction, Nason changed the flagstone paving to gravel fill to expedite the project's completion. 18 Caldwell's drawings show structural concrete stairs with stone treads and riser coverage.

### ***Doors***

Doors were designed in wood and carried out the Southwestern or Pueblo Revival theme. A sheet of Olin Smith's drawings dated March 15, 1934, showed elevations of 13 different door types, including ornate lounge doors. The doors ranged from style-and-rail panel doors to slab doors of white pine. Drawings prepared by William Caldwell, dated January 22, 1935, included 3 sheets of door elevations and details that revised the doors proposed by Smith. Although the door material, white pine, remains the same from the Smith drawings to the Caldwell drawings, Caldwell's doors reflected more sophistication in design and detailing. Caldwell's doors also showed a greater understanding of millwork and fabrication techniques calling for mortise and tenon joints, a variety of panels and stops, and a more elaborate interpretation of Southwestern ornament. The doors were all fully 7'0" tall, and with the exception of a few oversize doors 3'6" wide, were of standard 2'8" and 3'0" widths. Smith's doors had sawn wood lintels, but Caldwell's used larger and rougher hewn wood lintels. Of Caldwell's doors, none remain with the possible exception of a single door in the original kitchen. Much of the original door framing was removed in the 1966–1968 renovation and was replaced with metal frames. Much information remains about the original construction and the early modifications under the existing stucco. Items such as frames, nailers, early and sequential paint colors, and composition of materials remain for further analysis.

Generally, Caldwell's doors were wider than those that Smith proposed. Although Caldwell's drawings showed more detailing experience, he still managed to make a number of common dimensioning errors that showed some doors as being 3'6" wide on the outside and 4'6" on the inside. Lounge doors (detailed on Sheet #19, doors 1–9) were built and are shown in a mock-up in the NPS files. Caldwell's doors were to be fitted with custom hardware of wrought iron, further reflecting the Southwestern theme.

### ***Windows***

The Indian Lodge's first windows were wood casement sash of white pine with divided lights. Smith's drawings showed 12 different casement window sizes and wood window frames set on pre-cast concrete sills with false, 4x4-ft wood lintels of sawn lumber.

Caldwell extensively revised Smith's window scheme by reducing the number of window types from 12 to 10, standardizing Smith's odd dimensions, and giving the windows thinner stiles, rails, and muntins and heavier lintels. Smith's windows, detailed on a drawing dated March 15, 1934, showed a heavier hand and less experience than Caldwell had in detailing and shop drawing. Caldwell's window scheme rounded off Smith's angular, projecting, cast-concrete sills and replaced them with smooth stucco returns at the sills and jambs; his scheme also replaced the milled 4x4-ft headers (lintels) with the more traditional roughly squared, heavy wood lintels. Caldwell included hand-wrought iron latches for the meeting rails of the casement windows.

### ***Fireplaces***

Fireplaces were identifiable elements in both Pueblo architecture and the revivalist interpretation that followed. But Smith's undated drawings showed no fireplaces in the floor-plan views in the lounge, dining room, or individual guest rooms. Fireplaces and chimneys were, however, shown in the building sections that cut through the dining room and lounge. A drawing initialed by Caldwell and dated August 14, 1934 showed sixteen 13x13-ft flues serving 16 fireplaces in individual guest rooms. Caldwell's floor plan, dated October 31, 1934, showed 16 fireplaces also in addition to the 2 fireplaces in the lounge, 1 in the dining room, and 1 outdoor fireplace in the patio. Details of the fireplaces in the public rooms were shown on a sheet also dated October 31, 1934. Details of the fireplaces in the guest rooms were shown on an elaborate sheet dated November 26, 1934.

Of Caldwell's drawings, the two sheets that detail the fireplaces of the Indian Lodge were among the most graphic and well developed—both stylistically and technically. Each fireplace appeared different in elevation although all are made of stucco and stones and had the same hearth elevation set about 3 inches above the adjacent

finished floor. Most of the fireboxes and throats were lined with firebrick and rose to clay flues. That the floors of the hearths were built above and supported by the wood floor joists and subflooring in the guest rooms—and that Smith's drawings showed no fireplaces in the guest rooms—suggests that Fehr's and Caldwell's revisions added fireplaces to the guest rooms after wooden floor joists had already been installed.

### ***Lounge, Foyer, and Dining Room***

The public spaces of the Indian Lodge included an entrance foyer (with a reception desk, a powder room, and small office), a lounge with opposing formal fireplaces, and, below the lounge, a dining room, manager's apartment, and kitchen. The foyer was accessed from an entrance porch. As the visitor entered the foyer, directly ahead was an alcove with a reception desk and behind the alcove a small office. To the visitor's right was a door that led to a powder room, and to the left, an opening leading into a formal lounge. The lounge, about 24 ft wide and 41 ft long, was designed in the tradition of elaborate public spaces common to tourist hotels in the National Parks.

The flooring was of oak strips that ran the length of the room. Investigations during the 2003–2005 rehabilitation found a diagonal shiplap sub-floor and a 3-inch-wide pine floor under the 2-ft-wide oak. The oak strips were marked with a "Kirby" stamp on the back indicating the Kirby Lumber Company. The pine floor can be seen in the 1935 documentary photographs taken of the lodge. Walls were of plastered adobe.

The ceiling was exposed wood structure supported by the adobe walls at the perimeter and four large hewn pine columns at the center of the room. The columns were topped with carved wooden corbel blocks (*zapatos*), designed to support the beams above and transfer the structural loads to the columns. Heavy iron straps held the blocks in place. Heavy timber beams extended in both directions from the columns and supported a series of secondary beams, or joists that, in turn, supported a wood deck. *Latillas* of river cane were applied between the joists and were held in place by rusticated trim pieces. The imposing room opened to the patio on the west and to an open terrace on the east side. The terrace provided a wide view of the valley and the mountains and plains to the east.

Smith's drawings showed the lounge, and the dining room below, in both cross and longitudinal section, including the fireplaces, but the floor plan was less well developed. The squared timbers and joists appeared to have already been installed by the time Caldwell's drawings were done. Caldwell left the lounge with its rich detailing and opposing fireplaces largely as rendered by Smith, with the exception of the arrangement of stairs leading to a look-out room above the lounge. Caldwell made significant changes to the foyer and the stairs, however. The wooden stairs and floor of the foyer were replaced with concrete construction and finished with flagstone. The dining room was similarly detailed, with a fireplace, exposed wood beams and columns, and a flagstone floor. A women's powder room adjoined the foyer at an intermediate floor level above that of the foyer.

### ***Guest Rooms***

Guest rooms, as conceived by Smith, were rectangular rooms with alcoves, closets, and bathrooms. The rooms had no fireplaces, and the bathrooms had no provisions for hot water. Smith's spartan bathrooms had only a toilet, shower, wall-hung lavatory and a bare light socket. Interior finishes were pine floors in the bedrooms, painted concrete floors and base in the bathrooms, plaster walls and base, and ceilings with exposed beams and *latillas*. Each room was slightly different in configuration. Caldwell's more developed plan added fireplaces to each room. Each of the rooms had an individual bath, and each room had access to an adjoining terrace and a window for natural light.

### ***Ornament***

Ornament in the form of decorative door panels, hand-wrought iron door and window hardware and structural straps, and carving on corbels appears to have been an integral part of the Indian Lodge's design scheme, especially after Nason's intervention in March 1934. Certainly, Caldwell's drawings prepared between May 1934 and January 1935 reflect this. Lounge door panels on Caldwell's well-developed sheet of door elevations are rich with Southwestern Indian decorative themes. In a Pueblo Revival context, Caldwell's decorative ironwork hardware, structural straps, and light fixture designs were more Spanish Colonial than Pueblo in stylistic development. Smith's drawings show little ornament, but landscape drawings dated December 1934, prepared by Roy S. Ferguson, show an ornamental zigzag carving on the column bracket, or corbel, of the pergola. Caldwell's ornamental designs can





*Interior view from the patio looking east toward the lounge. Photograph by Joe Freeman, 2007.*

be seen best on the corbels in the lounge. The Pueblo-influenced design motif on the corbel consists of horizontal zigzags that terminate on each end in ascending, stepped, and squared spirals surrounding a solid square. The zigzag motif is a stylized symbol for lightning.<sup>19</sup>

### ***Furniture***

The design and construction of furniture for the Indian Lodge followed the same pattern as the design and construction of the lodge. George Nason, ever vigilant in design quality and appropriateness, found the Lodge's first set of furniture inappropriate.<sup>20</sup> Delivered in August 1935, the colonial-styled furniture was rejected with a lengthy admonishment. Nason called on the ever-reliable William Caldwell to design the new furniture. By March 1935, new, more appropriate Pueblo-Revival styled furniture had been designed and approved.

Caldwell's furniture design, in five sheets of drawings dated November 5, 1936, and drawn by J.C. Jones and approved by R.O. Whiteaker, were followed by nine sheets (with addenda) drawn by P.E. Pressler and approved by W.J. Lawson. The nine-sheet set by Pressler was dated from August 31, 1938, through October 13, 1938. Pressler was listed on the Texas State Parks Board title block as the furniture's designer. Pressler's drawings were comprehensive and detailed enough to construct the furniture without shop drawings. With respect to the furniture design and manufacture, what happened between the approval of Caldwell's drawings in 1936 and Pressler's drawings in 1938 may remain a mystery. Did Pressler further develop Caldwell's design, or did he merely redraft Caldwell's work and list himself as designer? That the Lodge was closed for extensive repairs between March 1937 and August 1938 may indicate that the actual manufacture of the second set of furniture was coordinated with other remedial work at the Lodge. The date of the arrival of the new furniture at the Lodge remains obscure. The several sets of furniture drawings, combined with the fact that the furniture designs used for the Lodge's furniture were completed at Balmorhea rather than the Indian Lodge, add to the problems of attribution of the furniture design and construction.<sup>21</sup> It is an irony of the project that the furniture drawings were so fully developed but many items were never built.

### ***Furniture Schedule***

The following furniture was fabricated from drawings prepared for the Texas State Parks Board. Some sheets were dated and some were undated but all appeared to be from the same set of nine drawings. Both design and drawing were attributed to P.E. Pressler:

- Key rack and desk, drawings dated November 5, 1936, designed by Caldwell and drawn by J.C. Jones, varnished red cedar with starburst pattern.
- One four-legged stool, varnished wood, no decoration, dated August 31, 1938.
- One counter and back bar, varnished wood with some paintwork in Chinese red, dated August 31, 1938.
- Twenty mirrors and towel racks, varnished cedar with red sealing wax, arrowhead motif, Indianhead profile motif on towel bar mounts, towel bar wrapped with rawhide, dated July 28, 1938.
- Twenty night stand tables, varnished cedar with red sealing wax, dated July 28, 1938.
- Three curio cases, wood with glass front, dated October 13, 1938.
- Two settees, carved wood with zigzags, arrows, and cutouts, dated October 13, 1938.
- Four lounge chairs, dated October 13, 1938.
- Two writing desks, cutouts, eagle, spirals, teepee, Indian with peace pipe, and mounted wall lamp, dated October 13, 1938.
- One registry stand, mixed Aztec motif with stylized figures, zigzags, arrow points, dated October 13, 1938.
- Four smoking stands, two designs, dated October 13, 1938.
- Four floor lamps.
- Twenty-five table lamps, wood with teepee shades (1 lamp prototype remains in an exhibit case).
- Two folding tray stands.
- Seventeen small room chairs, no date.

- Nineteen dressing tables and stools, no date.
- Seventeen suitcase stands, no date.
- One lounge chair, no date.

### ***Electrical Lighting***

Caldwell's plans dated October 31, 1934, showed an electrical distribution system primarily for lighting. The lighting design consisted of wall-mounted switches and ceiling- and wall-mounted fixtures. Public spaces had both switched light fixtures and wall-mounted duplex outlets. Lead-jacketed Romex wire (found during the 2003–2005 rehabilitation and left in place) was used in the wiring scheme. Exterior lighting consisted of wall-mounted bracket lights. Each guest room had a wall-mounted exterior light by the door, interior ceiling lights in each room, and a light over the mirror in the bathroom. Near the end of construction, and near the end of his set of drawings in January of 1935, Caldwell prepared a sheet of drawings showing five custom light fixtures and a switch cover plate—all in rustic style that called on Southwest Indian decorative motifs. The fixtures, both wall-mounted and ceiling-mounted, were made of hammered copper and steel sheet metal. Finishes were smoked, painted, or natural. The fixtures, now removed, were fabricated for both the individual guest rooms and for public spaces such as the lounge and dining room. Except for the upper floor rooms, which had two outlets, the guest rooms had no electrical outlets, a deficiency of little consequence because the electrical system had no power. Rooms were to be lit by kerosene lanterns as intended by the rustic theme envisioned for the Lodge. The kerosene lamps were used briefly until an electrical generator was installed on the first level in December 1935.

### ***Water System***

Water was supplied to the Lodge from nearby wells and was pumped to a storage tank above the building. Water flowed by gravity to the Lodge from above and supplied only cold water to the Lodge. It was not until August of 1936 that a gas water-heating system provided hot water to the Lodge and its guest rooms.

### ***Septic System***

The Lodge's septic system consisted of 4-inch-diameter clay drain tiles that drained to a septic tank and distribution box in the meadow below the Lodge. Parallel lateral drain lines distributed waste liquids to a large drain field below the tank.

## **Major Additions and Renovations 1935–1966**

By the end of March 1935, the Lodge was judged substantially complete— an optimistic assessment of the Lodge's condition. Deficiencies included both things done and things left undone. The primary imperfection in the work had to do with the detailing of the roof, parapet flashing, and the roof drain scuppers. Some terraces above occupied spaces, such as the lounge terrace above the dining room, leaked badly. A number of the gravel-surfaced terraces also proved to be poor walking surfaces. Sins of omission included:

- Failure to seal and paint the exterior stucco.
- Failure to paint interior walls.
- No water heating equipment or hot water piping to the Lodge and its rooms.
- No power to the electrical lighting fixtures.
- No window or door screens.
- No electrical outlets in the guest rooms.

The electrical system powered by a generator in the former garage (now the office area) of the Lodge was deemed inadequate, and an extensive upgrade of the system was initiated as a major part of remedial repairs to the Lodge after its initial completion. The plan, based on drawings dated August 1937, supplemented both wall- and ceiling-mounted light fixtures in the rooms and public spaces and added convenience outlets in the guest rooms. In addition, the lower level room that had housed the generator or light plant was converted to an electrical equipment

room to accommodate the service entrance, meters, and electrical panels for the new system. Wiring for the original system (No. 14 wire) was found to be inadequate, and new heavier-gauge wire was pulled. Electrical power from Fort Davis replaced power from the generator.<sup>22</sup>

### ***Roof Repairs***

Roof and parapet repairs were extensive. The original roof-drainage system had been haphazard and secondary to the architectural effect that was intended. Roof slopes were not coordinated with scupper locations, and the number of scuppers was inadequate to drain the roofs. Some scuppers that were incorrectly flashed or that drained onto the terraces were removed. Water capture and flow on each of the 17 individual roofs was calculated and keyed to the size and location of downspouts required. Parapets were capped with concrete, poultry netting for the cement plaster was carried over the top of the parapet, and the so-called reglet shown in Caldwell's drawings was replaced with proper metal flashing and counter flashing. The cant strip was removed, and multiple shingled roofing plies were turned up the parapet face and coordinated with the flashing and counter flashing. A new four-ply built-up roof was installed. Galvanized through-wall scupper assemblies were soldered together, coordinated with the parapet flashing placed over the projecting wood scuppers (canales), and sloped to drain.

Problems with draining and waterproofing the terraces also required corrective measures. The lounge terrace over the dining room presented special problems that required extensive work. Originally a step below the floor level of the lounge, the lounge terrace was built up over the years with successive layers of concrete and tile to solve drainage problems. This created a dead load (weight of the structure) that exceeded the capacity of the original structural supports. Elsewhere, the gravel paving Nason placed on the terraces instead of flagstone in an effort to expedite completion of the Lodge was replaced with asphalt paving.

### ***Hot Water System***

A hot water system was installed as another part of the remedial work. The riser diagram on undated drawings in the set showed a 300-gallon hot water tank located in the room below present Room 123 on the east end of the building supplied by a 1.75-inch intake line. Hot water distribution was by a 1.75-inch main water line that stepped down progressively to 0.5-inch and ¾-inch lines to the fixtures. Galvanized-pipe water lines were routed into the adobe and plastered over.

### ***Window Screens, Screened Doors, and Fireplaces***

Window screens and screen doors were fabricated as part of the remedial work, as were some measures to correct problems with the Lodge's many fireplaces. Drawings for the screens were dated March 22, 1938.

### ***Septic System Modifications***

Drawings dated July 5, 1938 called for upgrading the septic system below the Lodge. The septic tank was modified, a chlorinator was installed, and the old drain field was demolished and the tile salvaged for reuse in new drainage fields to be constructed adjacent. The old drain field was a series of parallel leach lines. The new field consisted of three rectangular dispersal fields layered with gravel and sand strata. The water well received new casing and other maintenance.

### ***Butane Heating System***

In January 1945, a butane heating system was installed at the Lodge. Drawings showed a 1,000 gallon butane tank buried in the parking court immediately to the south of the Lodge entrance. A 1.0-inch pipe started from the tank and branched to a 1-inch iron pipe distribution system installed surface mounted on the outside of the exterior stucco walls. To supply free-standing individual heater units in each room, 0.5-inch feeder pipes extended through the walls.

### ***Lounge Terrace***

In October of 1948, a roof and supporting structure were installed over the lounge terrace. The steel structure consisted of 3.0-inch galvanized iron pipe columns set on steel base plates on the terrace's concrete deck. Built-up wood beams spanned between the columns and supported 2x6-ft wood rafters spaced at 24 inches on centers. At the perimeter of the roof structure, vertical 2x4-ft cornice brackets and plywood cladding formed a 2'2"-high fascia that was clad in stucco. A built-up roof was installed over a wooden, shiplap deck. A flue hole was cut through the roof in 1968. Repairs to the concrete deck were accomplished in layers over a number of years and resulted in a problematic structural load in the form of a 12-inch-thick composite concrete deck. Drawings were prepared by the Texas State Parks Board with no reference to the Department of the Interior as in previous drawings. The drawings were signed as drawn and designed by "McNiel" and approved by J.L. Goode.

### ***Exterior Stucco***

Finally, the exterior stucco and interior plaster were sealed and painted. The paint color, an off-white that appeared even brighter in the Texas sun, replaced a carefully designed buff in the late 1940s.

### **Additions and Modifications 1966–1968**

Extensive additions and modifications were made to the Lodge in 1966–1968. Thirty-eight (38) sheets of drawings, dated May 1966, by the El Paso architectural firm of Davis, Foster, Thorpe, and Associates, Inc., called for the following work:

- Twenty-four room addition in two 2-story wings with an adjacent storage room
- Swimming pool addition
- Restaurant and meeting room addition
- Renovation of the original Indian Lodge, including guest rooms
- Various modifications and improvements to mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems, including a 2-pipe HVAC system
- Removal of a stair at the back of the garage down to the restaurant and the south door of the Restaurant was walled-in

### ***Addition***

The Davis, Foster, Thorpe, and Associates, Inc. (Ralph Davis, Architect and Partner-In-Charge) design added a pair of two-story, split-level wings on the south end of the original Indian Lodge. The parallel wings ran north-south and enclosed a courtyard. The parallel wings followed the contours of the land so the easternmost wing was at a lower elevation relative to the westernmost wing. A swimming pool was placed at the north end of the courtyard enclosed by the wings and directly east (and below) the lounge. A two-story building for a restaurant and meeting room was situated at the south end of the original Lodge uphill from the present office and old parking area. A new parking area was located immediately south of the old parking area. Again, taking advantage of the sloping site, access to the lower floor meeting room, a laundry room, and a maintenance shop was from the adjacent grade on the east and south, and access to the restaurant and kitchen on the upper level was from the adjacent grade on the west and from the patio on the north.

Construction drawings called for materials and techniques typical for the 1966 construction date. The architect's palette was standard institutional construction and included concrete foundations, load-bearing concrete-block masonry walls, steel-bar joists, corrugated-metal decks, and concrete floors. For the roofs, the bar joists supported bulb tees, drop-in panels, and poured-gypsum roof decks spanning between. The concrete-block walls received a coat of block filler and were painted. Roofs, behind parapets, were built-up systems on poured gypsum decks. Flush wood and metal doors and hollow-metal frames were proposed, and windows were proposed to be combination fixed and single-hung sliding aluminum sash units.

Mechanical, plumbing, and electrical system improvements were extensive. The lower-level rooms (former kitchen in the original scheme) flanking the dining room became mechanical rooms housing boiler, piping





*Oblique view of a portion of the 1960s room addition from the courtyard looking north. Photograph by Joe Freeman, 2007.*

systems, water heater and pool heater, pumps, controls, and electrical panels. The boiler and chiller served fan-coil air handlers by means of a two-pipe system. A chiller was located just to the north in a fenced coopeage. Although electrical improvements brought the system up to contemporary code requirements, original fixtures in the public spaces and original rooms were lost in all cases. To serve the new meeting room and restaurant building and the 24 additional rooms, a new septic system was installed to the south below the 2 new guest room wings. Using gravity flow, the system consisted of a concrete septic tank and distribution box and new drain fields.

The 24 new guest rooms, 12 in each wing, were simple, straight forward, and efficient. Guest rooms had painted concrete block walls and lay-in acoustical tile ceilings, carpet, ceramic-tile bathroom floors, and utilitarian trim. New television appurtenances were installed and each room had a bath and a closet. Bathrooms were placed between alternating rooms for efficiency.

### ***Original Guest Rooms***

The renovation of the original guest rooms involved extensive alterations to the original construction. Many of the Pueblo Revival details that Caldwell and the CCC workers crafted amid the chaotic period of initial construction were either covered, altered, or demolished. Original viga and latilla ceilings were covered with drop, acoustical ceilings in 6 rooms (some rooms already had gypsum ceilings of an unknown date). Original wood windows and wood doors with hand-crafted hardware were replaced with aluminum windows and flush doors. Openings within the rooms were altered, some doors and windows were relocated and the character-defining materials and construction obscured. Room arrangements were altered by removing original walls to created open suites rather than the smaller separate sleeping and sitting rooms of Caldwell's scheme. Room 119 was expanded into adjoining space, and Room 123 had its two rooms combined into a single room.

The 1966 additions and modifications to the Indian Lodge profoundly changed the architectural character of the original design. By their site placement and mass, the additions diminished the dramatic placement of the original Lodge, but the 1966 work should be judged in the context of architectural design and material use at the time. In 1966, architectural design was near the end of its modern phase and was moving toward post-modern. The additions may be described as sympathetic to the original construction but not without their own identity. The modifications to the older construction, however, were not sympathetic and reflect the limited influence of historic preservation in the 1960s. Theories of preservation, now highly developed and articulated with a language of their own, were not widely accepted when the original construction was altered. But those theories would come into play in rehabilitation efforts at a later date.

### **Interim Improvements 1968–2001**

In 1973, repairs were made to portions of the original Indian Lodge roof. These repairs, documented in Texas Parks & Wildlife drawings dated December 18, 1973, and bearing the architectural seal of Kenneth Marak, called for removing portions of the 1966 (and earlier) work and reroofing to achieve better drainage slopes to the scuppers. Some corrective drainage work was also performed in the patio. Structural supports in the form of fourteen 6-inch-diameter steel columns were set on concrete bases and supporting timber beams were installed in the new mechanical room under the lounge terrace. The columns were located along the east and west sides of the rooms and down their center, and the timber beams ran north and south to catch the heavy loads of the concrete deck above and to relieve loads on the wall supporting the lounge above.

In 1979, two new chilling towers were installed to replace the chiller installed in 1966. According to drawings dated October 30, 1979, and designated Project No. 520-014, two chilling towers were put in a new enclosure at the location of the old tower. Piping to and from the chillers, electrical and plumbing support systems, and other associated work were installed.

Passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in January of 1992 made modifying access to the restaurant, previously accessed only by stairs from the patio, necessary. Adjacent grade to the west of the restaurant, at floor level with the restaurant, provided the only opportunity for public access for the disabled to the restaurant. The access requirements also triggered a need for accessible public rest rooms by the restaurant. To solve these problems, an addition was made to the west side of the restaurant adjoining the patio that included an accessible entrance tied to handicapped parking, accessible public restrooms, and an entrance foyer to the restaurant.

As part of the improvements, a laundry facility was added to the south of the Lodge.

### ***Bond-Funded Improvements 2000***

In 1994, Parks & Wildlife staff carried out a detailed assessment of the needs of the Indian Lodge by Parks & Wildlife staff, and the legislature provided funding for improvements. In 1999, work was initiated on Phase I of the improvements at a cost of around \$1,000,000 focused on upgrading the 200 and 300 wings of guest rooms added to the Lodge in 1966–1968. Lay-in acoustical ceilings were removed and faux-latillas were added. Painted concrete block walls were furred out and clad in painted gypsum board. The HVAC system was changed from a central hydronic system to individual, roof-mounted DX (direct expansion) units for each room.<sup>23</sup> Other enhancements included thin wood floors, window shutters, and complete bathroom renovations. The improvements softened the angular harshness of the two wings with trim details and landscaping. Because of the cost of the work, money allocated for Phase II funding was used for the Phase I construction.

In 2003, the architects and engineers of the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department's Infrastructure Division began work on Phase III of the bond-funded improvements by. Phase III was a comprehensive rehabilitation of the original portion of the Indian Lodge officially called "CCC Indian Lodge Rehabilitation." Rehabilitation of the CCC portion of the Indian Lodge was developed, designed, and managed as an in-house project by the Infrastructure Division with mechanical, plumbing, and electrical engineering services provided by HMG & Associates, Inc., consulting mechanical and electrical engineers. The Architect of Record for the project was Dennis Cordes. Douglas S. Porter, Jr., P.E., Structural Engineer of Record, assumed duties as project manager and the project was completed under his management. General support was given by the Infrastructure Division's staff.

Douglas Porter noted in remarks delivered in October 2006 to mark the formal completion of the Phase III rehabilitation that "...the historical significance and impact of CCC constructed facilities throughout the US had become recognized."<sup>24</sup> Since the harsh treatment of the historic CCC architecture and materials by the 1966 work, historic preservation had matured. Public knowledge of historic architecture and its value as a part of American culture had grown to the point that historic buildings were a valued element in the economic and cultural landscape. Heritage tourism became a revival of the spirit that first led tourists to seek out the architecture, art, and distinctive landscape of the Southwest.

Impetus to rehabilitate the original section of the Indian Lodge and recall the distinctive architectural treatments of the Pueblo Revival style were clear, but what had happened to the building over the years was more complicated. Much effort by the staff and consultants went into unmasking the many layers of work that had occurred over a span of 70 years to determine the condition of original materials and the extent to which original features had been altered or removed.

The scope of work was detailed and comprehensive. A set of construction documents for the work comprised 112 sheets of drawings, as well as many shop drawings, submittals, data sheets, product literature, and maintenance manuals. Dated May 13, 2004, the drawings were computer generated—in sharp contrast to the rather loose, hand-made drawings by Smith and Caldwell from the 1930s.

Douglas Porter summarized the scope of work best:

"The Rehabilitation design consisted of replacement and rerouting of the sanitary sewer and water system(s), and a complete upgrade of the electrical system. It also included removal of all ground-floor wood flooring and repair of the floor joists. To reestablish the historic character, the ground-level wood floors were to be refurbished, the existing aluminum windows were replaced with more historically correct modern energy efficient casement wood windows, and the original pine pole ceiling support vigas and latia (sic) (cane) ceilings were exposed. The HVAC system was replaced with a 4-pipe system, and was rerouted to provide minimal structural disturbance and maximum exposure of the 7 concealed original ceilings. Some of the walls removed in the 1968 remodel were reconstructed, and the bathroom in Room 116 was restored to its original CCC step-down configuration. All the CCC constructed furniture was repaired and refinished, and interior furnishings more in character with CCC period were added. The Patio was re-landscaped using plants reflecting the CCC native flora landscape plan. Exterior lighting was selected that would satisfy the McDonald Observatory dark sky requirements and also reflect the character of the CCC period. Areas of latia (sic) ceiling were repaired w(h)ere they had been damaged during the 1968 remodel or as (a) result of early roofing failures. 2 rooms, 118 and 119, were configured for ADA-compliant bathrooms and are only awaiting TxDOT ramp modifications to be used. Finally, the Lounge and original dining room column and beam finishes were restored to their original glossy orange shellac finish."<sup>25</sup>

Of particular importance in the way the work was carried out was the treatment of the original historical materials and the effort to reveal the nature and configuration of the original construction. Where original portions of walls had been removed in the rooms, ghost marks of their outline were left in the floor. Where original historic fabric had been covered over, painstaking efforts were taken to reveal its configurations, materials, or finishes. The extensive documentation in the construction drawings for the rehabilitation, as well as the earlier drawings, serves as a valuable permanent record of the work.

### **Unfinished Work**

The recently completed work at the Indian Lodge brought measurable improvements long needed, but budget limits meant some planned work items remain to be completed. Further rehabilitation should include the following:

- An investigation of the original paint color of the exterior stucco on the lodge and complete repainting of the stucco based on the established original, or intended, color.
- Replacement of second- and third-generation doors and the installation of wider frames at the CCC portion of the Lodge with replicas of the original doors and hardware as designed by William Caldwell. The doors and hardware are well documented in the drawings.
- Repair and resupport of the second level floors that rest on and crush the river cane above the existing vigas.
- Construction of ADA-compliant restrooms and guest amenities at the assembly room.
- Construction of an elevator to the restaurant for improved ADA-compliant access.
- Complete ADA-compliant parking and access ramps to Rooms 118 and 119.
- Structural repairs to the Lounge terrace roof and supporting structure.
- Supplemental lighting in the Lounge.
- Completion and modification to the loop drive around the Lodge and lighting for the north parking area complying with dark sky criteria.
- An entry sign for the lodge and improved directional signs for the parking areas.<sup>26</sup>
- Repair of the patio pergola and consideration for returning it to its original cane roofed configuration.
- Exterior plaster and stucco repairs.

### **Recommendations For Future Work**

- Consider the construction of guest cottages originally envisioned. The cottages would be small duplex units sited near the Lodge to improve guest capacity and revenue. Design would be appropriate and complementary to the Lodge. Such an addition would require an evaluation of environmental and infrastructure capacities of the Davis Mountain State Park.
- Develop an inspection-based, cyclical maintenance schedule specific to the Lodge as part of an integrated management program.
- Develop a landscape management plan.
- Further document, research, and analyze the original Lodge design and construction with an emphasis on its place in the CCC context.
- Research further into the Lodge's furniture.
- Search for J.B. Roberts drawings.
- Organize and catalogue all research materials collected to date and provide a copy to the State Library and Archives.

### **CONCLUSION**

By force of image, placement in the landscape, and tradition, the Indian Lodge remains an enduring icon in the Trans-Pecos region. Along with Fort Davis, Big Bend, McDonald Observatory, Balmorhea State Park, the lights of Marfa, Scenic Loop and the idea itself of a cool, mile-high mountainous refuge above the harsh plains of

West Texas, the Indian Lodge has become widely known and identified as part of a special place.

Originally constructed in 1934–1935 by the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Indian Lodge survived a chaotic beginning. Built by unskilled labor in a remote location, designed by a series of architects using at least three sets of drawings, and erected under the direction of a new federal program in coordination with a newly established Texas parks system, the Indian Lodge emerged with its identity intact. An intact identity, however, did not mean that technical and operational problems had been solved. Indeed, remedial work was required shortly after the Lodge opened, and the facility had to be closed temporarily. Repairs, renovations, and modifications have continued throughout the life of the building. The recommendations of this document imply that more work will be needed as the Lodge continues to serve and delight its guests.

### **CONSTRUCTION CHRONOLOGY**

April 5, 1933	Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) created by presidential executive order.
November 1933	Texas Parks Board takes responsibility for working with National Park Service on state parks.
June 15, 1933	CCC companies 879 and 881 arrive at Fort Davis.
October 1933	First set of drawings for “Indian Village” drawn by J.B. Roberts.
December 7, 1933	Construction begins.
January 6, 1934	Victor Douglas, CCC worker arrives on site.
January 29, 1934	10 sheets of architectural drawings by Olin Smith, National Park Service architect, prepared, probably from the J.B. Roberts drawings.
February 12, 1934	CCC applies for Third Period funding, notes that work is underway.
March, 1934	Delegation from the State Parks Board, State Water Board, and Captain A.S. Lewis visits site. Lewis becomes construction superintendent
May, 1934	National Park Service Inspector, George Nason, visits site, criticizes the work
May 18, 1934	Architects Arthur Fehr and W.C. Caldwell leave for Fort Davis, ordered by Nason to evaluate the work and revise plans.
May 29, 1934	Nason arrives at Fort Davis, approves Fehr and Caldwell design modifications.
May 31, 1934	Fehr returns to Bastrop, Caldwell starts drawings.
October 31, 1934	Architectural Drawings dated and issued by Caldwell.
March 23, 1935	Nason visits site, declares work substantially complete.
July 4, 1935	Inaugural barbecue opens Indian Lodge
September 1935	Indian Lodge opens to public.



*Historic Structure Report: Indian Lodge*

December 1935	Electrical generator installed for power and lighting.
June 1936	Leaking and deteriorated roof inspected.
August 1936	Gas hot water system installed.
March 1937	Lodge closed for roof repairs.
May 1937	NPS architect, G.T. Patrick prepares drawings for roof repairs.
1938	Power line brought in from Fort Davis and gasoline-powered generator removed, electrical distribution system installed, screens installed, fireplaces repaired, painting completed.
April 1945	1,000 gallon butane tank and gas line installed.
January 1947	New coat of cream colored stucco.
October 7, 1948	Drawing dated for new roof over lounge terrace.
May 1966	Twenty-two-room addition and renovation plans by Davis, Foster, Thorpe and Associates, architects, approved by State Building Commission, Ralph Davis, Principal-In-Charge
September 16, 1966	Guldemann Construction Company's \$403,443 bid for additions and renovations accepted.
October 10, 1966	Work begins.
July 21, 1967	Renovation and expansion work completed.
1980s	Urethane foam roofing installed.
May 1996	590-sq-ft restroom addition and modifications for handicapped installed at dining room for ADA compliance.
November 2000	State general obligation bonds approved for rehabilitation of the Indian Lodge and other state buildings.
2001–2003	Phase I and Phase II repairs.
May 2004	Drawing issued for Phase III.
October 31, 2006	Phase III rehabilitation complete.

## END NOTES

<sup>1</sup> San Diego Historical Society, <http://www.sandiegohistory.org/pancal/sdexpo39.htm>, October 2006.

<sup>2</sup> National Park Service, [http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online\\_books/rusticarch/part3.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/rusticarch/part3.htm), October 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Jay C. Henry, *Architecture in Texas, 1895–1945*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), pp. 164–166.

<sup>4</sup> Victor Mindeleff, *Eighth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, (Department of the Interior, 1887).

<sup>5</sup> George Kubler, *The Religious Architecture of New Mexico*, Fourth Edition (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1972), 15.

<sup>6</sup> Janice Albert, [http://www.cateweb.org/ca\\_authors/jackson.html](http://www.cateweb.org/ca_authors/jackson.html), October 2006.

<sup>7</sup> Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997), Chapter 6, John Gaw Meem on the UNM campus.

<sup>8</sup> Henry, *Architecture in Texas, 1895–1945*.

<sup>9</sup> Kay Roberts Bless, J. B. Roberts' daughter, told Lonn Taylor that Mr. Roberts's papers and drawings were lost in a flood on the Guadalupe River in 1998. Lonn Taylor's e-mail to Cindy Brandimarte, March 16, 2007.

<sup>10</sup> The National Park Service title block does not list a category for "architect." Formal legal designation for architects in Texas did not occur until 1937 when the 45th Legislature established the Texas Board of Architectural Examiners after the notorious New London school explosion that killed 295 children. Before 1937 anyone could call themselves an architect. Professional standards were a matter of personal ethics, proven skill, and reputation.

<sup>11</sup> See note 9 above.

<sup>12</sup> Although 22 sheets were identified, Caldwell prepared additional and supplemental sheets.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with Douglas S. Porter, Jr., Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, Infrastructure Division Engineer and Project Manager for the 2006 Indian Lodge Rehabilitation, October 2006.

<sup>14</sup> Discussion with Douglas S. Porter, Jr., , November 2006.

<sup>15</sup> CCC Construction Records in the files of Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, marked Bal 702. National Archives reference: CCC Park Balmorhea, Group 79, Box 75, Folder 620-80, Denver, NARA 7/05.

<sup>16</sup> Photographs of the Indian Lodge under construction, 1934–1935, Museum of the Big Bend, Alpine, Texas.

<sup>17</sup> Caldwell's drawings, Sheet # 83, 1934–1935.

<sup>18</sup> George Nason to Herbert Maier, February 1935, NPS papers.

<sup>19</sup> Buela Wadsworth, *Design Motifs of the Pueblo Indians* (San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1957), pp. 14–15.

<sup>20</sup> A discussion of the furniture modifications is well documented in Taylor's history.

<sup>21</sup> Drawings were completed at Balmorhea because CCC operations at Davis Mountains State Park had closed down.

<sup>22</sup> For information on the transfer of power from the on-site generator to the Fort Davis source, see Taylor's history.

<sup>23</sup> Interview with Douglas S. Porter on December 6, 2006.

<sup>24</sup> Remarks by Douglas S. Porter at the dedication of the Phase III rehabilitation work, October 2006.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup>Interview with Dennis Cordes, Architect of Record for the phase III Rehabilitation, November 2006.

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*Historic Structure Report: Indian Lodge*

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