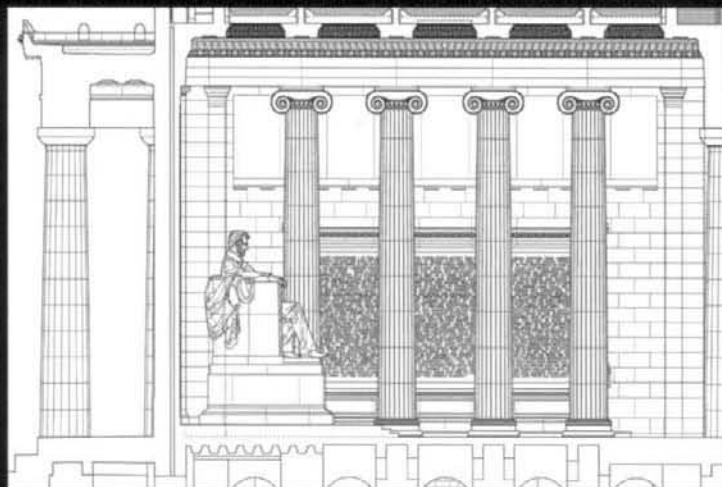
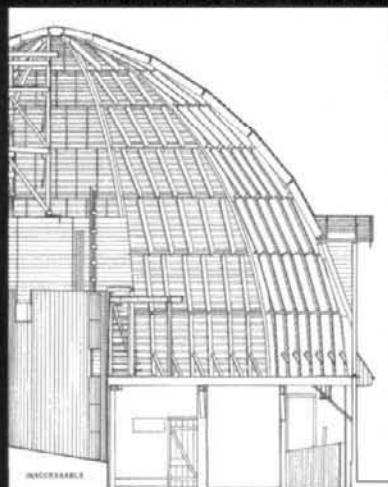




AMERICAN PLACE

The Historic American Buildings Survey at Seventy-five Years





THE AMERICAN
INSTITUTE
OF ARCHITECTS

The Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) of the National Park Service operates under a tripartite agreement among the National Park Service, the Library of Congress, and the American Institute of Architects. The 75th anniversary exhibition was sponsored by the US Department of the Interior Museum and the National Park Service HABS program.

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HABS Architects measuring the Kentucky School for the Blind; Louisville, Kentucky, Theodore Webb, Photographer, 1934, HABS No. KY-20-19.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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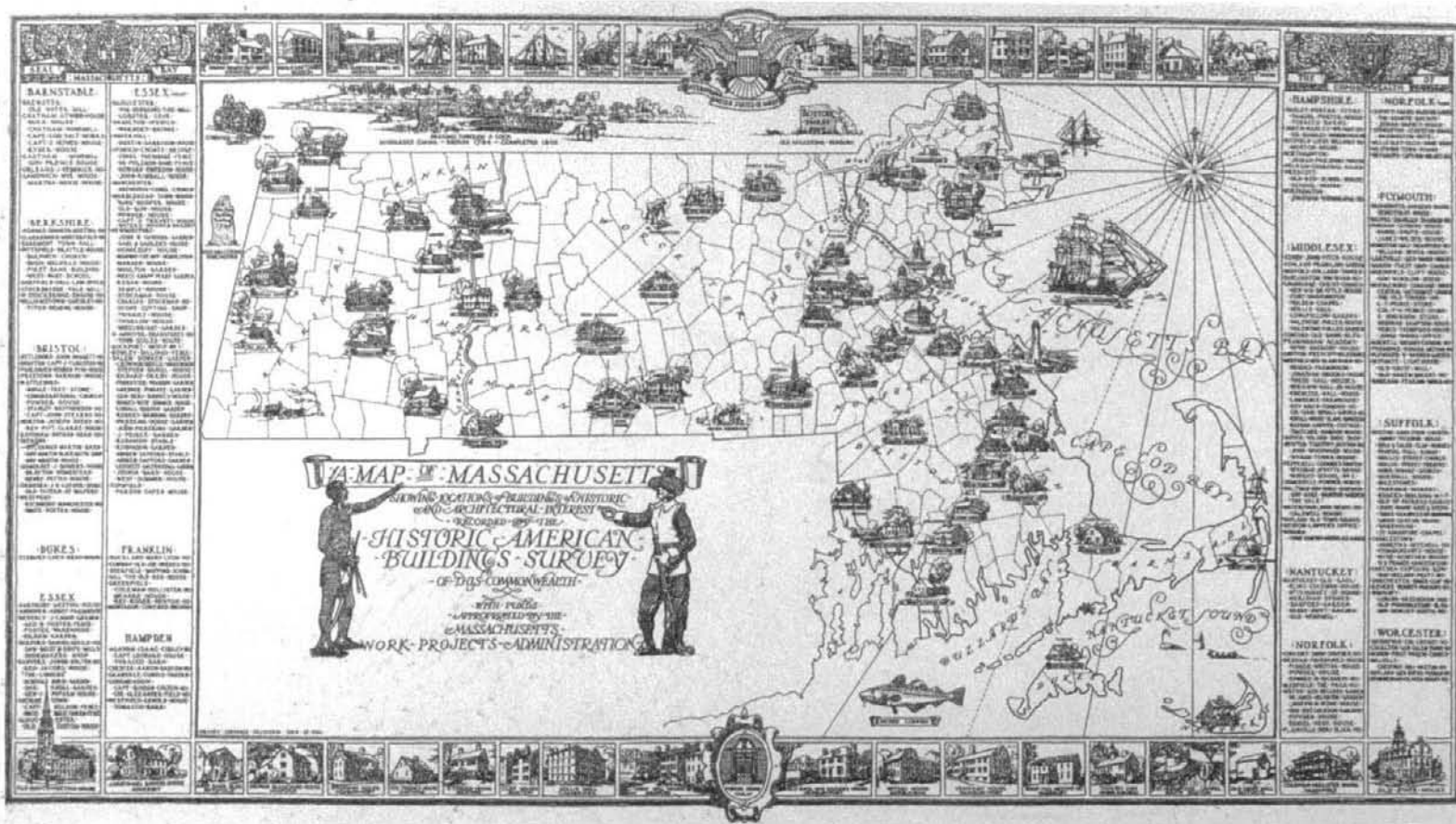


Architects at work at their drafting tables in the Boston, Massachusetts field office of HABS in the 1930s.

About HABS and Its Companion Programs

Heritage documentation Programs (HDP), part of the National Park Service, administers the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) and companion programs the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), the Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS), and the Cultural Resources Geographic Information Systems (CRGIS). Documentation produced through the programs constitutes the nation's largest archive of historic architectural, engineering, and landscape documentation. Records on nearly 40,000 historic sites, consisting of large-format, black and white photographs, measured drawings, and written historical reports, are maintained in a special collection at the Library of Congress, available to the public copyright free in both hard copy (in the Library of Congress) and electronic (via the Web) formats. CRGIS data, maps, and GIS applications are available at parks, battlefields, and other historic sites. HDP also develops and maintains the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Architectural and Engineering Documentation*, and the National Geospatial Data Standards for Cultural Resources.

HDP conducts a nationwide documentation program in partnership with state and local governments, private industry, professional societies, universities, preservation groups, and other Federal agencies. The program assigns highest priority to sites of national significance, especially those that are in danger of demolition or loss by neglect, and to National Park Service properties. In addition to the summer recording program, documentation enters the Collection through mitigation activities under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, submissions in prize competitions, and donations. Documentation provides a permanent record of the nation's most important historic sites and large-scale objects. The Collection is unique in the strong support it enjoys from its institutional sponsors and the public, and is distinguished in its national scope, consistent format, archival stability, and continued growth. The documentation on nearly 40,000 sites and structures also contributes to wider recognition and appreciation of historic resources such as National Historic Landmarks; provides baseline documentation for rehabilitation and restoration; and makes available well-researched materials for interpretation and illustration. Not surprisingly, it is the most heavily-used collection at the Library of Congress' Division of Prints and Photographs.



Map of Massachusetts, Showing Locations of Buildings of Historic and Architectural Interest Recorded by the Historic American Buildings Survey of this Commonwealth With Funds Appropriated by the Massachusetts Works Progress Administration," Henry Orange Glidden, design and delineation, date unknown, ca. 1937.

Foreword

In 1932 Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected president following the financial, social, and political failures which brought the Great Depression upon the American people. Roosevelt initiated his “New Deal” by using the power of the federal government to create recovery projects for all segments of American society. He also ushered in a host of changes in the way Americans appreciated their own history, culture and natural resources. In 1933, he appointed Harold Ickes as Secretary of the Interior and in that same year the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) was born. Ickes and his team worked tirelessly to preserve America’s natural resources, Indian cultures, and aspects of American history including our often-crumbling architectural heritage.

AMERICAN PLACE: The Historic American Buildings Survey at Seventy-Five Years is an exhibition of historic and current photographs and drawings of sixty-one American buildings that represent fading currents in American society. To preserve and disseminate the knowledge contained in these buildings, the architects, draftsmen, and photographers of HABS have dutifully recorded these places, great and small for the last seventy-five years. Their photographs and drawings show beauty and decay, hope and loss, and most of all the ever-changing needs of the American people.

Catherine C. Lavoie and Richard O’Connor approached the Interior Museum in 2007 with hopes that together we could bring about an exhibition to tell this important story of how the architectural history of America has been recorded for seventy-five years. The work of the Interior Museum is to interpret the history of the department and to promote the current work of the bureaus. Seventy-five years ago, Harold Ickes was in the midst of creating the new Department of the Interior headquarters building and planning the Interior Museum to show the American people the important work of his great department. We are proud to have joined with the staff at HABS to produce this exhibition illustrating the ongoing challenge of preserving in drawing and photography the American dream.

In addition to the amazing people at HABS and the National Park Service, I wish to thank our chief of cultural resources, David D. McKinney and the Interior Museum staff: Kirk Peter Dietz, Deborah Wallis Wurdinger, Erin McKeen, and Mary Ecker, as well as Mark Hall of Creative Communications Services for their efforts to bring about this endeavor. Please join us in *AMERICAN PLACE: The Historic American Buildings Survey at Seventy-Five Years*, a celebration of our history and culture.

Sincerely,

Hunter Hollins
Coordinator of Museum Services
U.S. Department of the Interior Museum



The First Skyscraper, 638 Royal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana; Richard Koch, photographer, June 1936; HABS No. LA-21. The "Skyscraper" derived its name from the fact that it was the first four-story structure erected in New Orleans. Built for French émigré Pierre Pedesclaux ca. 1800, it began as three stories; the fourth was added by the 1870s. Its iron balconies and French doors capture the essence of the city in its hey-day.

Laying the Groundwork

Prologue to the Establishment of HABS

The Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) was established in 1933 to create a public archive of America's architectural heritage, consisting of measured drawings, historical reports, and large-format black & white photographs. The idea of "securing records of structures of historic interest" was first endorsed by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1918. However, it took the onset of the Great Depression to provide the opportunity in the form of a federal program initiated during President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" administration. Anticipating the 1935 Historic Sites Act by well over a year, HABS was the first significant boon to historic preservation at the national level. The program field tested many of the preservation strategies still in use today such as the surveying, listing, and compiling of documentation on historic properties; the development of comprehensive, contextual information; and the establishment of national standards for documentation.

HABS was part of a ground-swell of interest in collecting and preserving information, artifacts, and buildings related to our early history, recognized as the Colonial Revival movement. Like HABS, the movement was motivated in part by the perceived need to mitigate the effects of rapidly vanishing historic resources upon America's history and culture. Path-breaking organizations such as the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, and Colonial Williamsburg presented models for the collection of historical artifacts and the interpretation of our architectural heritage. And architects trained in the Ecole des Beaux Arts prepared drawings of colonial-era buildings in folio volumes as a means of promoting and understanding historic architecture. While important, these activities occurred only on a limited, local or regional basis. The HABS surveys implemented for the first time the comprehensive examination of historic architecture on a national scale and to uniform standards.

Just prior to the establishment of HABS, Executive Order 6133 transferred stewardship of historic battlefields and other associated sites from the War Department to the National Park Service. At the same time, Director Horace Albright broadened the traditional NPS focus on preserving naturalistic western landscapes to include the cultural heritage of the east. Chief landscape architect Thomas C. Vint was moved from the San Francisco regional office to Washington, DC to oversee the development of new historical parks such as Colonial Parkway in Virginia; he also provided general management of the new HABS program. HABS recording, and its rich archive of period-specific architectural details, aided in the restoration and interpretation of these and many other historic properties, while also creating a lasting record for future generations.

The significance of the HABS program then as today resides in the scope of the collection and its public accessibility, as well as in the establishment of national standards for recording historic architecture. As was intended, the HABS collection represents "a complete resume of the builder's art," ranging "from the smallest utilitarian structures to the largest and most monumental." The materials are available to the public copyright-free and on-line through the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress. As a resource for architectural historians, restoration architects, preservationists, scholars, and those of all ages interested in American history and architecture, HABS is one of the most widely used of the Library's collections. It is, in fact, among the largest collections of architectural documentation in the world. HABS is also responsible for the development of standards for the production of drawings, histories, and photographs, as well as the criteria for preparing the documentation for inclusion in the Collection currently recognized as the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Architectural and Engineering Documentation*.



Lefferts House, Prospect Park, Brooklyn, New York; Charles B. Bretz, delineator, 1936; HABS No. NY-5-11. This distinctive Dutch Colonial house was erected in 1777 by Pieter Lefferts on the foundation of the house built by his great-grandfather Lefferts Pietersen van Hagewout a century prior. The elder Lefferts received the land from colonial governor Peter Stuyvesant in 1660 and built his home in what was then the village of Middle Woods, now known as Flatbush.

The impetus for the establishment of the HABS program came from a number of concurrent movements that converged in 1933. It was the nation's 100th anniversary in 1876 that first sparked a deep appreciation for America's colonial past. In celebration of the event a Centennial Exhibition was held in Philadelphia, the birthplace of American liberty. While in large part intended to highlight our progress and industrial ingenuity, the exhibition was also a nostalgic reflection upon our early history. Buildings

erected in the "Colonial Style" were scattered throughout the grounds, many containing period furnishings. Through these displays, the exhibition helped to create an unprecedented awareness for information and artifacts relating to the colonial era that marked the beginning of the Colonial Revival movement. Local and regional historical organizations subsequently formed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the interest of preserving remnants of early Americana. Most notable are

the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, founded in 1889, and the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, founded in 1910. Both organizations promote regional history through architectural and material culture collections. The Colonial Revival movement also affected American architectural design. In fact, its influence was so profound that it lasted into the mid-twentieth century, and arguably continues to this day. One of the greatest early inspirations for the emulation of colonial architecture was the Rockefeller-funded restoration of the Virginia colonial capital at Williamsburg that began in 1927. Under the direction of Boston architect William G. Perry (of Perry, Shaw and Hepburn) the Williamsburg architects took a scholarly approach to restoration. They conducted field investigation throughout the Tidewater region, recording pre-revolutionary buildings in order to learn first-hand about colonial-period styles and construction techniques. This and other restoration efforts, as well as the ongoing design of new Colonial Revival style buildings, created the need for a database of primary source materials such as molding profiles and period architectural details.

Similar motivations lay behind the popularity of the concurrent Beaux Arts movement. The Ecole des Beaux Arts, the French National School for the Arts, had long influenced architectural training in the United States. Beaux Arts methodology included the “surveying” or drawing of historic buildings as a crucial component of architectural training. (And even for those architects learning through apprenticeship rather than formal training, the “survey” approach was an equally valuable means of perfecting their skills.) From the formation of the first American architectural program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1865, through the 1930s, students were encouraged to study historical precedents in order to understand the various styles and their potential for use in modern design. The founder of MIT’s architectural program, William Robert Ware, established a curriculum as much dependent on history as design, prescribing the training needed for the day’s “architect-historians.” This phrase is used to refer to a select group of “scholarly architects” who undertook design work and also conducted research in architectural history.^[1] In addition, architects that were so inclined assembled their drawings of historic buildings into folio volumes. Many also contributed

drawings and articles to the influential *White Pine* series of architectural monographs published bimonthly, from 1914 to 1940. Likewise, the Beaux Arts “White City” created in Chicago for the enormously popular World’s Columbian Exhibition of 1893 also helped to reaffirm American’s admiration for classical architectural themes.

The National Park Service (NPS) was not immune to the growing interest in colonial history and architecture. By the early 1930s, through the vision of Director Horace Albright, NPS turned its attention towards historic landscapes, looking specifically at America’s cultural heritage. The idea was first conceived of by Albright’s predecessor, Director Stephen Mather (1915-1928), who was bothered by the lack of national parks east of the Mississippi River, and at the same time extremely interested in American history.^[2] While Mather was unable to find time to pursue this himself, as acting director in 1917, Albright began by lobbying for the transfer of existing military parks and monuments from the War Department to The Department of the Interior.^[3] Once appointed director in 1929, Albright moved ahead with the creation of eastern historical parks. His first direct venture into the field of historic preservation began in 1930 with the restoration of Wakefield, the birthplace of George Washington in Westmoreland County, Virginia. Later controversy over the authenticity of the restoration led to a recognition of the need for expert advice on such matters.

When, on the heels of the Wakefield project, Congress authorized the creation of NPS units at Jamestown and Yorktown, to be linked by a parkway to Williamsburg, Virginia, Albright looked for someone in the NPS with historical background. In consultation with chief Landscape architect Thomas Vint in San Francisco, they selected one of Vint’s staff, Charles E. Peterson, an architect trained in the Beaux Arts tradition, to lead the “Colonial Parkway” project.^[4] Peterson arrived in Virginia at the height of the Williamsburg restoration efforts, and developed close relationships with the architects working there. As Peterson later reflected,

They [the architects] began the graphic analysis of the distinctive Tidewater eighteenth-century style with the brilliant success still to be seen in their earliest

work. It ranges all the way from wooden smokehouses in backyards to the great, reconstructed Governor's Palace. Careful study of the numerous antique structures still standing across the Tidewater country gave the architects a mastery of the local style. The relationship between the structures and measurements projected on paper became a highly developed subject. The drafting rooms were full of adventure and excitement and every junior architect was working on a book of his own. Though not a Rockefeller employee, I was working nearby [Jamestown to Yorktown] and knew them all.^[5]

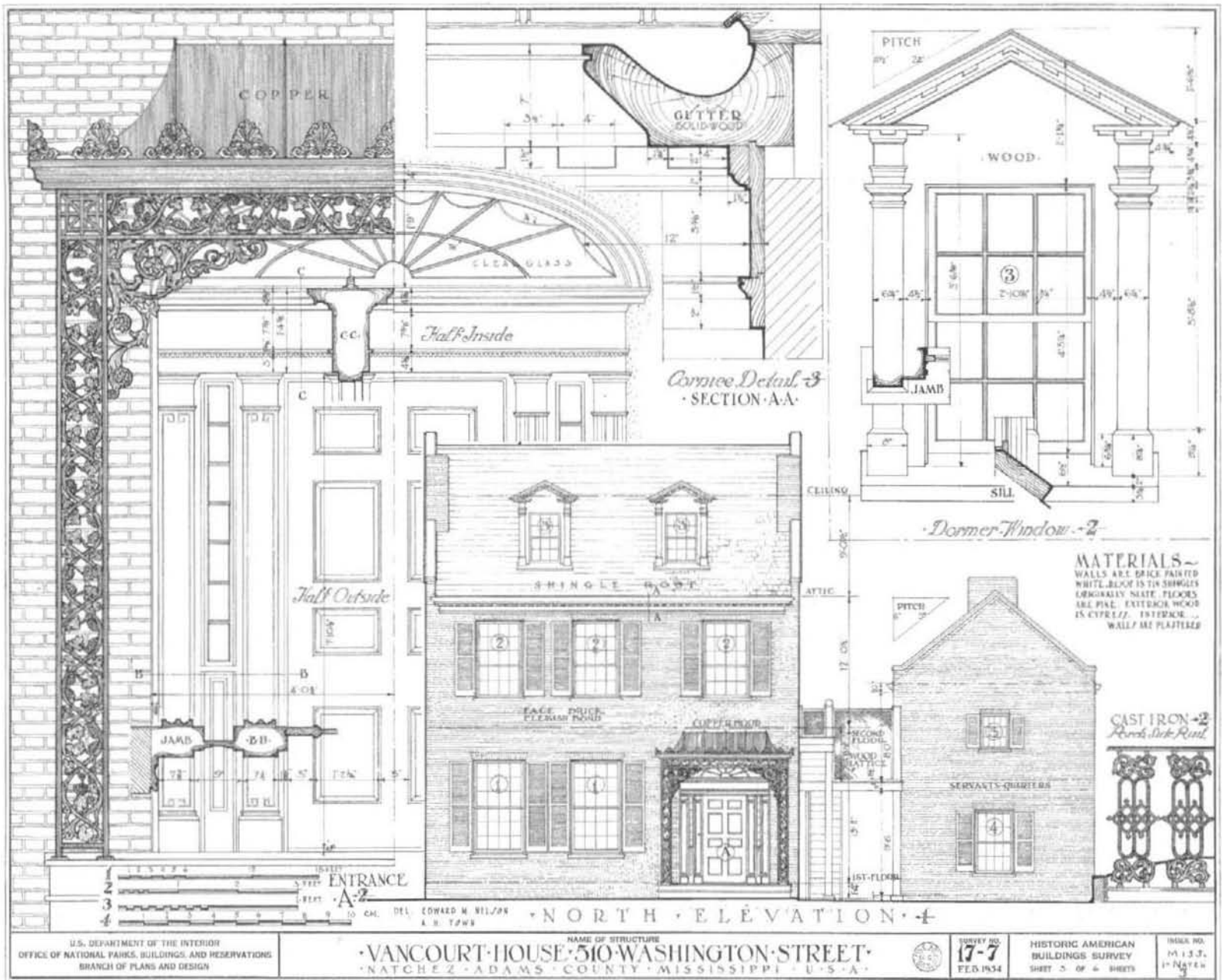
The influence of that experience is clearly reflected in the insightful proposal that Peterson would later write for the establishment of the HABS program to record in a similar manner the full range of America's architectural heritage.

At the same time, members of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) were working towards the long-aspired goal of creating an archive of architectural documentation on a national scale. The Board of Directors of the AIA first endorsed a "national survey" with the intent of "securing records of structures of historic interest" in 1918, but to no avail.^[6] The idea finally gained momentum in May 1930 when Leicester B. Holland, an architect by training and the chief of the Division of Fine Arts of the Library of Congress, announced the establishment of the Pictorial Archives of Early American Architecture at the AIA meeting.^[7] As a member of the AIA, Holland looked to the organization for their support in promoting his new initiative. Holland asked the AIA to actively seek the cooperation of its state and local chapters in compiling photographic examples of early American architecture for inclusion in the library's collection. As he stated at the May meeting, "What I wish of the [American] Institute [of Architects] primarily is its good will... Secondly, I wish the Institute members to spread word of this organization—the archives which we are founding—through the the country [and] through the districts to which they belong." The AIA asked that he prepare a statement that could be sent to each chapter.^[8] As its promoters explained, "for the purposes of general study of our ancestral architecture, especially for such examples as are doomed to disappear, there is urgent need for a repository where photographic records from the whole

Unites States may be assembled."^[9] The AIA's enthusiastic response to Holland's new collection led to his appointment in 1931 as chairman of their Committee on Preservation of Historic Buildings.

Like those on the Committee before him, Holland was dedicated not just to the collection of photographic images, but to the creation of a national survey of historic buildings. Setting the agenda for the Committee, Holland realized that before the surveys could begin they needed to create awareness within their membership, as well as the general public. As he explained it, they must "arouse a strong public realization in every section of the country, that there are everywhere certain old buildings of great historic interest, locally and therefore nationally, which should be preserved wherever possible as landmarks of the course of American civilization."^[10] The "surveys" that Holland proposed were a logical outgrowth of the Beaux Arts tradition through which many of the AIA's members had trained.^[11] In May 1933, the AIA finally announced its intention to begin the "national survey." They anticipated it becoming part of a larger "general campaign for preservation" that began by identifying historic buildings and the reasons for which "they should be subjects for public consideration."^[12] Little did they know at the time that in a matter of months they were to gain a power ally in the form of the federal government!

The National Park Service was also moving forward with its own historic preservation efforts. Charles Peterson's former supervisor, Thomas C. Vint, was called to Washington, DC to oversee the development of new historical parks in the east such as Colonial in Virginia (where Peterson was already working); Salem Maritime in Massachusetts, and Hopewell Village in Pennsylvania. As Chief Architect of the National Park Service's Branch of Plans and Designs, Vint was placed in charge of the preservation of historic sites and structures. This included responsibility for the many battlefield parks, historic sites, cemeteries, and monuments transferred to NPS from the War Department in 1933 that had finally resulted from Albright's earlier lobbying efforts (known as Executive Order 6133). Vint was also given general oversight of HABS, and remained a strong advocate for the program to his retirement in 1961. Vint is probably best remembered for his preservation-minded approach



Van Court House, 510 Washington Street, Natchez, Mississippi; Edward M. Nelson & A.H. Town, delineators, 1934; HABS No. MS-17-7. This Federal style townhouse was built in 1817-18 of brick covered with stucco. The delineation of the lacy iron grillwork of the front entry porch is a good example of the attention to detail often demonstrated in the HABS drawings of the 1930s.

to park planning and his efforts to develop master plans for all NPS parks, natural and historical.^[13] His contributions to historic preservation theory are deserving of greater recognition. According to historian Ethan Carr, under Vint's direction, "Between the late 1920s and the early 1930s, the park service went from having very limited responsibilities in the management of historic sites to

becoming the leading national institution in the field of historic preservation."^[14]

On November 8, 1933, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt revealed as part of his "New Deal" programs, the creation of the Civil Works Administration (CWA), a federal employment program intended to streamline funds directly



George Pessony House, Palestine, Texas; photographer unknown, 1936; HABS No. TX-126. This house was built in 1854 in a style typical of the homes of this region, and was purchased after the Civil War by George Pessony. The small frame residence is made grand by its over-scaled Greek Revival details such as the entry portico, and wide dentilled cornice and corner pilasters.

to relief workers. Along with the announcement was a call to all federal agencies to submit proposals for short-term initiatives. Charles Peterson, along with colleague Alston G. Gutterson, spent the weekend putting together ideas; the former was largely responsible for the justification and the latter for the estimates of man-power and federal dollars that the program would require.^[15] Peterson's submission was the culmination of years of preliminary work and lobbying efforts on the part of many architects within both the government and the private sector. In fact, Peterson turned first for support of his proposal to William Perry and to Leicester Holland. Perry and the Williamsburg

Advisory Committee provided support in the form of a telegram to Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes in which they stated that "The [HABS] plan as detailed impresses us as an admirable method of accomplishing a work of historic importance."^[16] Once the HABS proposal was accepted in December 1933, Holland and the Committee on Preservation of Historic Buildings were poised to take action. Perhaps not surprisingly, many of the first "district officers" who managed the HABS surveys in the field were members of either the Committee or local AIA chapters. As Holland later stated, "If the [American] Institute [of Architects] had not been ready organized to nominate

District Officers at the drop of a hat, the first campaign would hardly have gotten under way before quitting time.”^[17] Within weeks of receiving its approval, hundreds of the unemployed were in the field recording for HABS. In addition, both Holland and Perry served on the Advisory Committee for HABS, the former as its chairman.^[18] Many of the same preservation concepts used by Holland, Perry, and others to justify earlier recording efforts are eloquently conveyed in Peterson’s original HABS proposal:

Our architectural heritage of buildings from the last four centuries diminishes at an alarming rate. The ravages of fire and the natural elements, together with the demolition and alterations caused by real estate ‘improvements’ form an inexorable tide of destruction destined to wipe out the great majority of the buildings which knew the beginning and first flourish of the nation. The comparatively few structures which can be saved by extraordinary effort and presented as exhibition houses and museums or altered and used



William Maxson House, State Highway #1, Springdale vicinity, Iowa; C.C. Woodburn, photographer, 1934; HABS No. IA-30-16. The Maxson House is a good example of the special attention given to endangered buildings by the early HABS surveys. Note the HABS architect taking notes in the foreground. The Maxsons were among the first white settlers to Iowa, arriving via flatboat from Ohio. As supporters of the abolitionists’ cause, they sheltered John Brown and his men here during the winter of 1857-58.

THE NEW DEAL PROGRAMS

HABS was just one of many cultural programs initiated during President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" administration. The New Deal was the title given to a whole variety of programs and reforms, initiated mostly between 1933 and 1938, that offered relief to the unemployed during the Great Depression while at the same time enriching American life both materially and culturally. The make-work programs included the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), the Civil Works Administration (CWA), and the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The largest of the New Deal programs was the WPA. One aspect of the WPA provided work on the design and construction of infrastructure and public facilities. The program was ultimately responsible for the construction of about 188,000 new and renovated public buildings and infrastructure, including schools, courthouses, hospitals, recreational facilities, airports, and housing projects; as well as roads, highways, and bridges.^[i] The other aspect of the WPA supported artistic and cultural endeavors. The Federal Writers' Project compiled local and oral histories, and created a popular series of state guidebooks. The Historical Records Survey established and cataloged significant archival collections, prior to the opening of the nation's own National Archives. The Federal Art Project created over 200,000 individual posters, paintings, and murals for public display. The Federal Music Project and the Federal Theatre Project both supported live performances, workshops, and classes. Also recipients of WPA funds were the state-sponsored HABS surveys.

HABS was the federal government's first historic preservation program, and the only New Deal initiative related to historic architecture. At the same time that HABS undertook its architectural surveys, another New Deal program hired well-known architects of the Modernist idiom such as Richard Neutra, Lloyd Wright, William Lescaze, and George Elmslie to design housing worthy of

the "progressive" moniker associated with the New Deal. In order to address FDR's concern about the estimated one-third of the population that was "ill-housed," the PWA undertook the development of fifty-one housing projects. These included the three model "Greenbelt Towns," (such as Greenbelt, Maryland), and the Carl Mackley Houses in Philadelphia, both of which are now recognized as National Historic Landmarks.^[ii]

The New Deal programs had a profound and lasting effect upon the nation's historical and cultural development. Never before had the federal government taken responsibility for supporting the arts, or for collecting records and artifacts relating to the country's history.^[iii] And never again would the preservation and interpretation of American's cultural heritage be left solely to private individuals and organizations. Instead, a public-private partnership resulted in a more egalitarian approach to arts and culture, taking them outside the exclusive realm of the privileged classes and integrating them into the everyday life of all Americans. The WPA programs recorded untold histories, legends, and folkways, as well as historic architecture, and injected it into the public sphere. In many ways, these programs led the nation down a path of self-discovery and helped to inspire an appreciation for its heritage. Historian Michael Kammen summarized the New Deal's impact on cultural heritage by saying, "The circumstances were such that assisting Americans helped to save Americana."^[iv]

Notes, The New Deal Programs

- [i] Gwendolyn Wright, *USA; Modern Architectures in History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008), 118.
- [ii] Ibid.
- [iii] Even the National Archives was not established until 1934.
- [iv] Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 444.



Thomas Maskell Store, Main & Pine Streets, Greenwich, New Jersey; George Neuschafer, photographer, February 1941; HABS No. NJ-660. This timber-frame, clapboarded store was erected sometime between 1796 and 1803 by Thomas Maskell, its first storekeeper. Founded in 1748, this now sleepy village of Greenwich located on the Cohansey River was once a bustling port. The town is known as the scene of the Revolutionary War era "Greenwich Tea Party."

for residences or minor commercial uses comprise only a minor percentage of the interesting and important architectural specimens which remains from the old days. It is the responsibility of the American people that if the great number of our antique buildings must disappear through economic causes, they should not pass into unrecorded oblivion.^[19]

It was the immediate need for employment that prompted the federal government to initiate the HABS program. However, it was the desire to mitigate the effects of rapidly vanishing architectural resources upon the nation's history and culture recognized by its creators that would sustain it.

Notes, Laying the Groundwork

- [1] It was these individuals—such as Ralph Adams Cram, William Robert Ware, Fiske Kimball, A.D.F. Hamlin, and Talbot Hamlin—who dominated American architectural scholarship through their groundbreaking publications. See: Keith N. Morgan and Richard Cheek, “History in the Service of Design: American Architect-Historians, 1870-1940,” in *The Architectural Historian in America; Studies in the History of Art* 35, ed., Elisabeth Blair MacDougall (Hanover & London: National Gallery of Art, Washington, distributed by University Press of New England, 1990), 61-75.
- [2] Wilton C. Corkern, Jr. “Architects, Preservationists, and the New Deal: The Historic American Buildings Survey, 1933-1942,” Ph.D. Dissertation submitted to The George Washington University, 20 February 1984, 52-53. According to Corkern, Mather saw the lack of parks east of the Mississippi River as the “weakest link” in the NPS system. Before retiring he was able to authorize parks in Kentucky (Mammoth Cave), North Carolina and Tennessee (Great Smoky Mountains), and Virginia (Shenandoah).
- [3] This finally occurred with the issuance of Executive Order 6133, in 1933, just prior to the creation of the HABS program.
- [4] Corkern, 62-63.
- [5] Charles E. Peterson, “The Historic American Buildings Survey, Its Beginnings,” *Historic America: Buildings, Structure and Sites*, C. Ford Peatross, ed. (Washington, DC: Library of Congress) 10-11.
- [6] American Institute of Architects, *Proceedings of the Fifty-First Convention, 1918* (Washington: AIA, 1918): 19. Quoted in Corkern, 7-8.
- [7] According to the Library’s website, “The Pictorial Archives of Early American Architecture (PAEAA) was the first photographic collection for the study of American architecture assembled at the Library of Congress. Initiated by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation in 1930, the PAEAA instituted a national campaign to acquire photographic negatives of seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century buildings in the United States. During its most active period, 1930 to 1938, the PAEAA collected and cataloged approximately ten thousand negatives and photo-prints, including series by John Mead Howells, Francis Benjamin Johnston, Delos Smith, Thomas T. Waterman, and Francis M. Wigmore.” <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/coll/186.html> Delos Smith and Thomas Waterman also worked for HABS.
- [8] American Institute of Architects Proceedings, testimony of Leicester B. Holland, *Journal of Proceedings*, May 1930, 130-131.
- [9] “Archives To Record Our Architecture,” *New York Times*, July 18, 1930; ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *The New York Times* (1851-2004), 14.
- [10] Holland to member of the Committee (October 1, 1931), Committee on Preservation of Historic Buildings, Box 5; as cited in Corkern, 30.
- [11] Corkern, 34-37. According to Corkern, of the thirty-six member of the Committee on Preservation of Historic Buildings, two-thirds had gone to Beaux Arts oriented university training programs, and one in eight had actually to Paris to study first-hand.
- [12] “Architects To List Notable Buildings,” *New York Times*, 24 May 1933; ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *The New York Times* (1851-2004), 23.
- [13] Like many architects in the employ of the National Park Service, Vint was a westerner, trained in landscape design. He graduated from the landscape architecture program at the University of California at Berkeley in 1920, having spent a semester at the Ecole de Architecture, University of Lyon, and then studied city planning at the University of California, Los Angeles. Vint joined NPS in 1922 as an assistant landscape engineer for Yosemite National Park, where he was involved in the design of some of the park service’s first rustic-style buildings, as well as the development of landscape plans. In 1927, he was appointed Chief Landscape Architect of NPS, and headquartered in San Francisco.
- [14] Ethan Carr, “The ‘Noblest Landscape Problem’: Thomas C. Vint and Landscape/Historic Preservation” (paper presented at Armon Hall at Wave Hill, Bronx, NY, April 1999). Available online through the Cultural Landscape Foundation, Stewardship Through Education website, www.tclf.org/conf_papers/
- [15] Corkern, 79.
- [16] Western Union Straight Message, Members of the Advisory Committee of Architects for the Restoration of Colonial Williamsburg to Charles E. Peterson, 16 November 1933; Charles E. Peterson Papers, Box 198, HABS History, General, 1933, University of Maryland Special Collections.
- [17] Letter from Leicester B. Holland to Charles E. Peterson, 26 May 1936; Charles E. Peterson Papers, Box 198, HABS History, General, University of Maryland Special Collections.



Herrick House, Twinsburg, Ohio; Louis P. Fisher, delineator, 1936; HABS NO. OH-223. This ashlar stone house was built by Jonathan Herrick in 1845 in the Greek Revival style that dominated American domestic architecture during the early to mid nineteenth century. The style's Greek derivation evoked democratic ideals that deemed it particularly appropriate to the buildings of our new nation.

[18] Corkern, 80-81.

[19] Historic American Buildings Survey, "Bulletin No. 1, Fiscal and Administrative Procedure," 27 December 1933. Unless otherwise cited, HABS Bulletins and Circulars consulted for the purposes of this article are from the reference library of the HABS/HAER/HALS office, Washington, DC.



Woodlawn Plantation, Napoleonville, Louisiana; Richard Koch, photographer, March 1937; HABS No. LA-20. This failing Greek Revival plantation house was built for William Whitmell Pugh in 1840-1850. The Pugh family migrated from North Carolina in 1818. Once considered among the finest and most up-to-date houses in the area, at the time of its recording it was occupied by migrant workers.

A Complete Resume of the Builder's Art

The Early HABS Surveys

While general administration came from the headquarters in Washington, DC, the HABS program drew its strength from a grass-roots approach. The individual state “surveys” were funded through both the Civil Works Administration (CWA) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA), and were undertaken by “district officers” nominated by the local chapters of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) for their expertise in historic architecture. District officers were responsible for identifying all buildings of historic interest within their regions with the intent of documenting them through measured drawings, photographs, and short historical reports. For each significant structure, an index card of information was prepared with the dual purpose of creating a national listing and setting goals for the recording program. By the close of the initial state surveys in 1941, the district officers had prepared cards for over 7,000 historic structures, about one-half of which received at least one photograph and about one-third of which were measured and drawn.

The HABS surveys capture the nation's vast array of regionally and ethnically derived building forms. The structures recorded range from Native American pueblos and Spanish missions in the southwest to Cape Cod and Saltbox houses in the northeast, and from vernacular sod or log constructed settlers' cabins to high-style Georgian, Greek Revival, and neo-classical mansions. Priority was also given to endangered structures for which no record would otherwise exist.

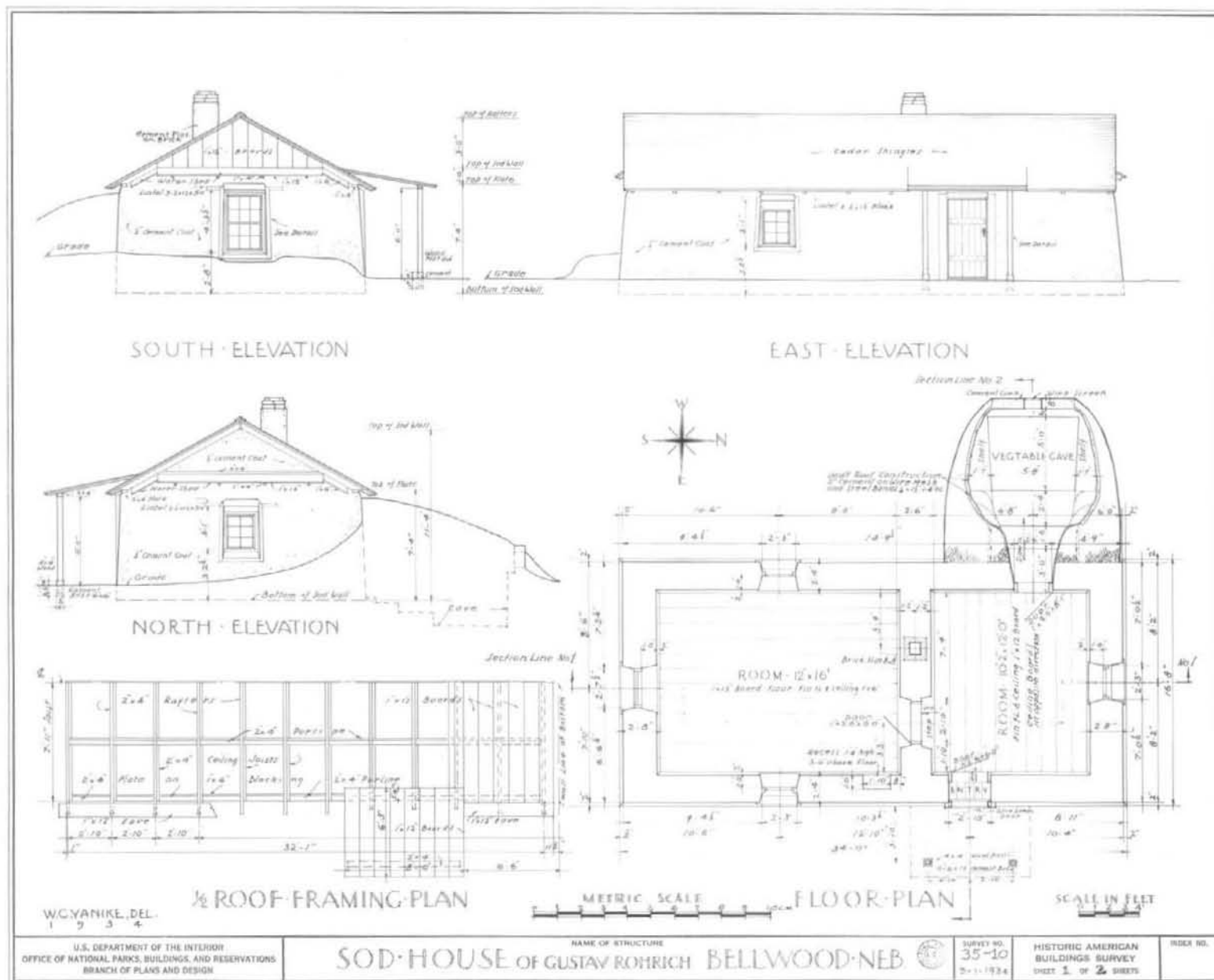
The documentation reveals not just the diversity of building forms and architectural styles, but portrays the nation at the end of an era, before post-war prosperity would forever change the face of the American landscape. The Surveys ended in 1941, as did all WPA funded programs, with America's entry into World War II. HABS remained active in the 1940s and 1950s through the work of the National Park Service's Branch of Design and Construction and its regional offices, and through donations of records by former district officers, other members of the AIA, and by universities and private institutions.

in Mexico when he began his five-year stint with HABS. For all intents and purposes, O'Neill was the first HABS chief, and the only individual working full-time for the program at the Washington, DC headquarters.^[2] O'Neill handled the all-important coordination between the WPA, the individual states, and the district officers that was crucial to the continued work of the HABS surveys. He prepared the necessary progress reports and maintained regular correspondence with district officers and others related to, or interested in, the survey projects. O'Neill, along with NPS architects Thomas Waterman, Frederick D. Nichols, and advisors Holland and Perry prepared the standard techniques or "guidelines" for HABS recording.^[3]

NPS architect Thomas Waterman served as assistant director for HABS. Waterman trained in the office of Ralph Adams Cram in Boston. He also had experience working at the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities with founder William Sumner Appleton, who recruited Waterman to help record endangered buildings. Prior to joining the NPS, Waterman worked for William Perry on the Colonial Williamsburg restoration. Nichols, who received a Masters degree in architecture from Yale University, left NPS in 1950 to become a professor of architecture and chair of the architectural history department at the University of Virginia. A noted Thomas Jefferson scholar, Nichols led the restoration of Jefferson's Rotunda.



The mountains provide a dramatic backdrop for the remains of this Kiva, which was considered unusually large for this region of the Rio Grande; Donald W. Dickensheets, photographer, 1940.



Sod House of Gustav Rohrich, Bellwood, Nebraska; W.C. Yanike, delineator, 1934; HABS No. NB-35-10. This small settler's dwelling was constructed in 1883 by Austrian immigrant Gustav Rohrich of sod from a nearby field. Rohrich lived here with his wife and three children. When recorded by HABS in 1934, this was the only one remaining of the many sod houses built in this region during the mid-nineteenth century.

While the Washington headquarters administered the HABS program and established its standards and guidelines, the field surveys were run by "district officers." These were individuals nominated by local chapters of the AIA and known for their experience with historic architecture. Many of the district officers were members of the AIA's Committee on Preservation of Historic Buildings, chaired by Leicester Holland, or active in local chapters and so were

already full indoctrinated in the goals of the program.^[4] Their ongoing involvement with local preservation projects meant that each district officer also brought their own experience and perspective to their HABS work. This is often reflected in their varying approaches to the surveys and the types of structures upon which they chose to focus. The principle duties of the district officers were to hire and oversee personnel, to determine which structures to survey,

and to see to the accomplishment of the work. For the most part, the district officers were Beaux-Arts trained “architect-historians” and thus were expected to be equally proficient at measured drawing and historical report writing. Many even took on the responsibility for the large-format photographs, rounding out the multi-disciplinary approach to HABS recording.

As is implied by the program title Historic American Buildings Survey, the process began as district officers conducted field reconnaissance aimed at identifying the structures within their region that were of historical and architectural importance. For each of these structures they prepared an index card. These cards served the dual purpose of creating a national “Master list of American Buildings significant for their historic or architectural value” (a precursor to the National Historic Landmarks

and National Register of Historic Places listings) and setting goals for the recording program by recognizing subjects for study.^[5] This was one of the ways that program administrators sought to guarantee the continued survival of the HABS program beyond the limited lifespan of the initial CWA (and later WPA) projects. As stated in the guidelines, “The importance of this index cannot be overestimated since it will most completely fulfill the functions for which the present survey is intended and will form an invaluable basis for any future program.”^[6] All totaled, the survey generated cards for about 7,000 structures nationwide, with about one-half receiving at least a photograph and one-third being measured and drawn by the close of most New Deal programs in 1941.^[7]

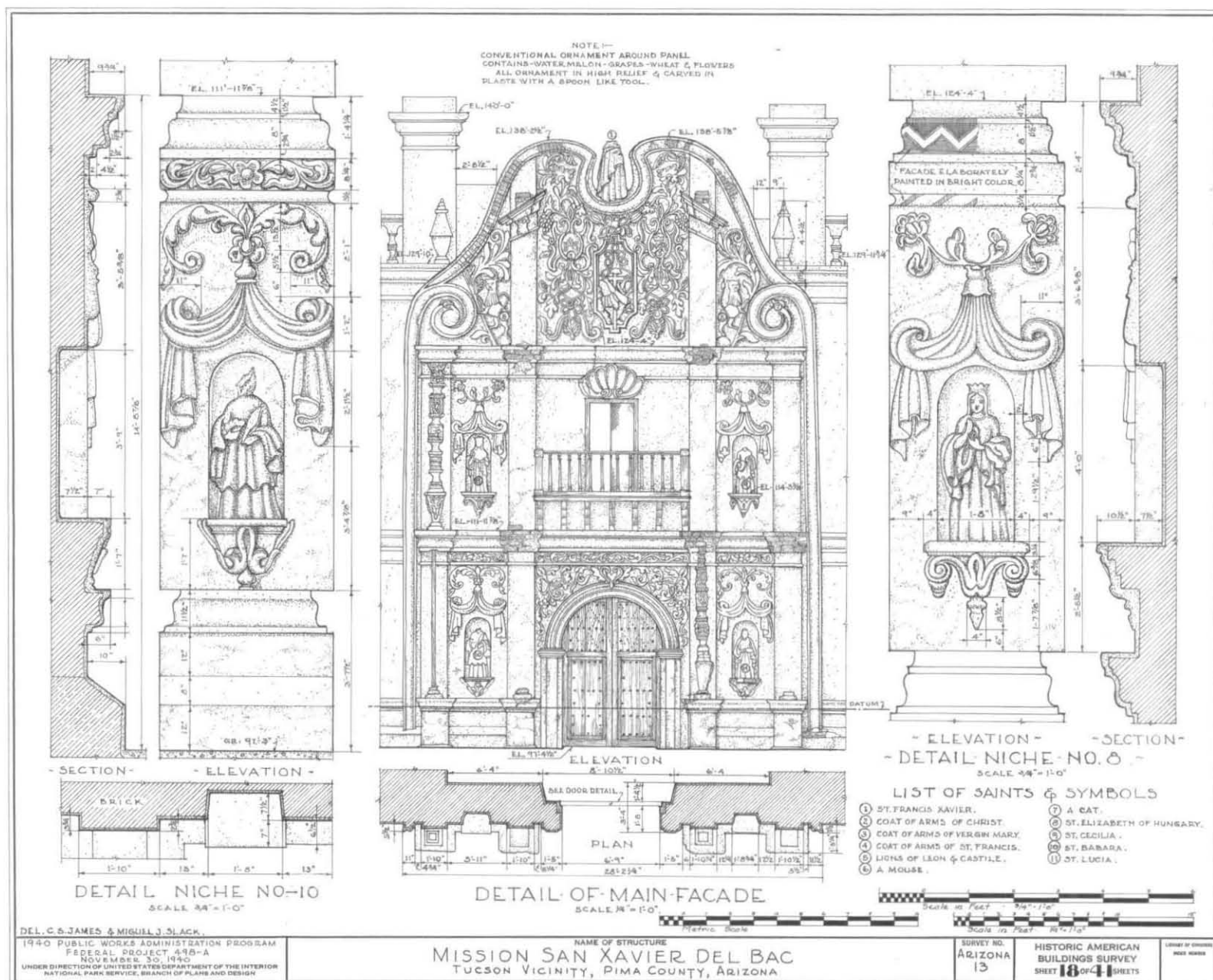
HABS administrators disseminated necessary information and set standards and procedures through the “Bulletins”



Gustav Rohrich stands proudly in front of the sod house that he erected on the Nebraska plains over fifty years prior; W.C. Yanike, photographer, 1934.

and "Circulars." HABS Circular No.1 explained the need for the program, and also described the broad range of building types to be recorded, highlighting those that had not previously "engaged the especial interest of the architectural connoisseur," such as Native American structures, the "hewn log cabins of the early pioneers,"

and buildings in old mining towns. Officials based final selection on the structure's architectural integrity and ability to exemplify a particular type, period, or pattern of development, with special priority given to those "in imminent danger of destruction." Bulletin No. 4 laid out the procedures for a systematic approach to measuring and



Mission San Xavier Del Bac, Tucson vicinity, Arizona; C.S. James & Miguel J. Slack, delineators, 1940; HABS NO. AZ-13. This is generally considered the finest, most intact of the Spanish missions in the United States. It was built in 1797 of indigenous materials such as adobe brick, mesquite logs, and saguaro strips, and includes brilliantly colored frescoes. It was designed by Ignacio Gaona in an eclectic mix of Moorish and Byzantine styles.



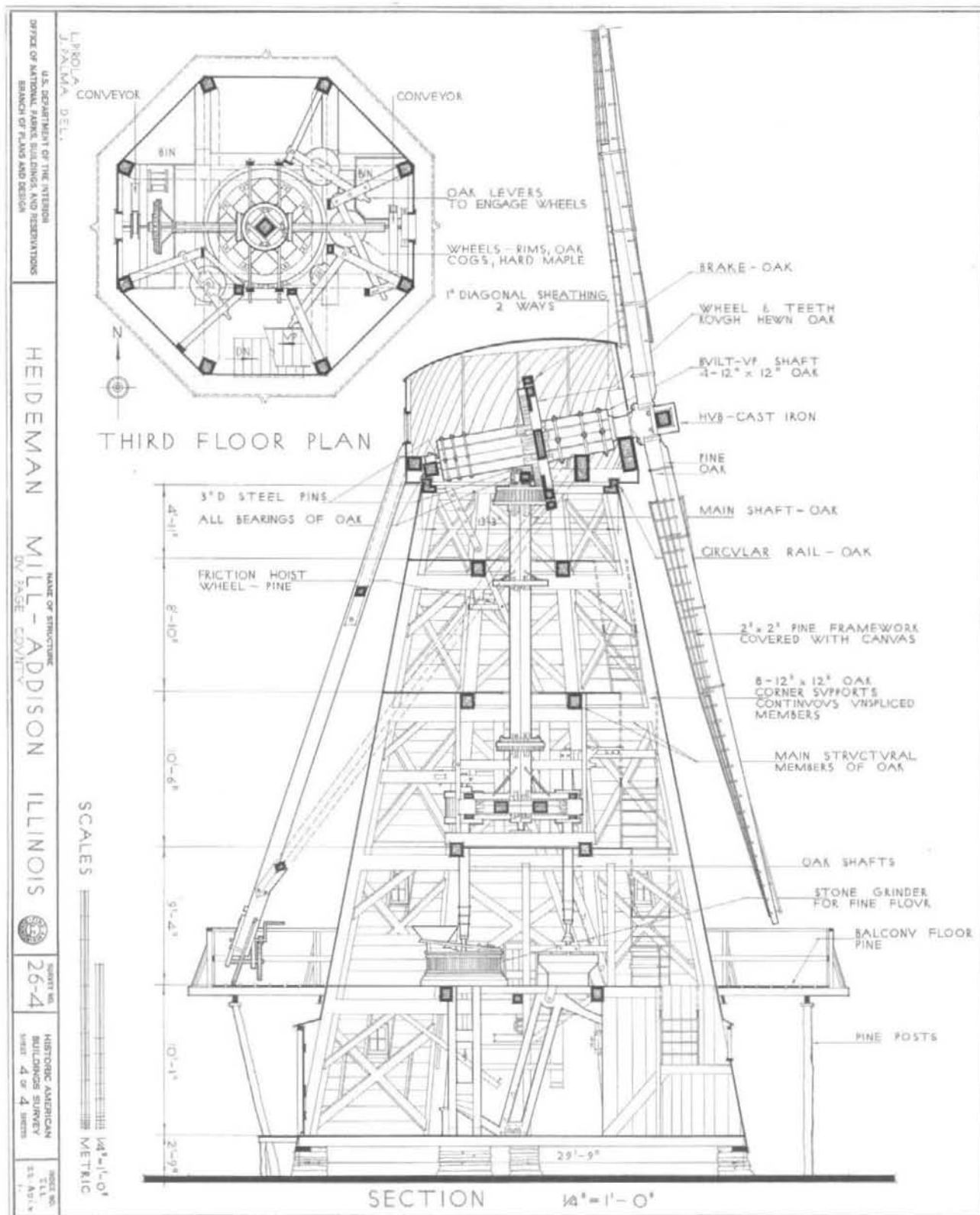
Hermitage Slave Cabins, Savannah vicinity, Georgia; C.E. Peterson, photographer, ca. 1934; HABS No. GA-225. The house and dependencies were designed by Henry McAlpin and built about 1820 using slave labor. While at the time of the HABS survey the plantation house had not been occupied since damaged during the Civil War, the slave cabins were inhabited by descendents of the original occupants.

Perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of the HABS surveys was the selection of buildings to be recorded, which was to represent “a complete resume of the builder’s art.”^[10] The collection therefore includes not just high-style buildings, but those that reflected the everyday life of Americans. According to the formal proposal for HABS:

It is intended that the survey shall cover structures of all types, from the smallest utilitarian structures to the largest and most monumental. Barns, bridges, mills, toll houses, jails, and in short buildings of every description are to be included so that a complete picture of the culture of the time as reflected in the buildings of the period may be put on record. . . . Absolute priority will be given to buildings of architectural or historical interest, or buildings of unusual type; or buildings

exhibiting unique or exceptional features of plan or design which have not been restored or remodeled and which are in imminent danger of destruction or material alteration.^[11]

Unlike the folio volumes created by architects in the private sector that consisted largely of drawings and photographs with little or no historical text, the HABS documentation aimed to be more inclusive. The drawings, histories, and large format photographs work together create a comprehensive understanding of the structure. By 1936 the HABS administrators realized the cumulative value of the documentation gathered through the state surveys. It was decided that each district officer would write an “Outline Summary” that placed his region’s architectural forms within their own appropriate historical and architectural



Heideman Mill, Addison, Illinois; L. Pirola & J. Palma, delineators, 1934; HABS No. IL-26-4. This heavy timber frame, wind-powered mill was erected in 1867 by Christian Heideman, the son of a German miller. It is of the "Dutch type" as identified by its moveable head, and was the first of several like it built in this neighborhood. Although no longer in use, at the time it was recorded, the mill was unchanged from its original design.

contexts. They anticipated compiling the reports and publishing them as a six volume *Outline of the Development of Early American Architecture*, organized geographically to include: New England, the Mid-Atlantic, the South, Mid-West, Southwest, and the Pacific Coast. An unprecedented undertaking, it was among the first attempts to articulate a broad perspective of the nation's architectural development. Unfortunately, they were unable to realize their goal before the close of the survey period, in 1941 (although some states would later publish HABS catalogs that fulfilled that purpose). What is significant about this exercise, however,

is the fact that the HABS founders clearly intended to advance beyond the mere emulation of old forms—as seen in numerous folio volumes and similar publications of the times—to place the structures within the framework of larger patterns of architectural development and to begin to create building typologies. As HABS administrators argued,

Not only has the survey preserved the form of many important and historic buildings for posterity, but also it has produced and brought together such a wide range of subjects in every part of the country that for the first



Henderliter House and Store (Robert Crittenden Residence), 2nd & Cumberland streets, Little Rock, Arkansas; Prather Reynolds, photographer, 1934; HABS No. AR-32-2. The house and store building was constructed by German Jesse Henderliter about 1830 of logs covered with siding. It is considered historically important as the 1835 meeting place of the last territorial legislature.



Miners' Union Hall, B Street, Gold Hill, Nevada; National Park Service, May 1940; HABS No. NV-15-14. This false-front style structure was erected during the late nineteenth century as the union hall for the local miners. Located just outside Virginia City, the town was established in 1862 to take advantage of the Comstock Lode, a major deposit of silver ore, and had a population of about 8,000 in its hey-day.

time it is possible to begin to realize the richness of the field of early American architecture ... The variety and extent of the HABS records in the Library of Congress and the first comprehensive outline of the history of American architecture are the two features which will make the Survey of permanent and increasing value.^[12]

Other program goals were more easily met. Many HABS architects saw as their main objective the creation of a

database of primary source materials, mining historic buildings for architectural motifs to be used for their own restoration and Colonial Revival design projects. In fact, the attention to detail within the HABS drawings sets is striking. And, perhaps even more than economic relief, HABS administrators touted the benefits of the program's "educational work" to the architects and draftsmen they employed. As was stated among the reasons for continuing the program,

This [benefit] is not only in [gaining] knowledge of the early structures themselves and of their architectural details, but also in [their] draftsmanship and an improved ability in designing both in the Colonial styles and others because of a closer knowledge of the functions of the different parts of the building and a sense of proportion which the early architecture of this country possessed to a remarkable degree, and which is brought home to the field workers through the measurements and drawings which they make.^[13]

This was particularly true during the later years of the survey era as better-trained architects moved off the unemployment rolls.

The initial HABS proposal called for a short-term program lasting only a few months, as was dictated by CWA guidelines. However, by mid January 1934 the program employed 772 people. Based on this accomplishment, program administrators Vint and O'Neill were able to successfully lobby for an extension of the original termination date of February 15, to May 1, at which time



Taylor-Cunningham House (first), Rogersville vicinity, Alabama; Alex Bush, photographer, July 1935; HABS No. AL-377-A. This log-constructed, "dog-trot" style dwelling was typical of the settler's homes built in many parts of the south during the nineteenth century. The Cunninghams built a second, more substantial and stylish house on the property in 1858. According to the photo caption, the section to the rear is the "old slave kitchen."

PROFILE OF A HABS DISTRICT OFFICER, FRANK CHOTEAU BROWN

Frank Chouteau Brown (1876-1947)^[i] was the HABS district officer for Massachusetts and then regional district officer for all of New England. His work for HABS was both noteworthy and typical of the qualifications and experience district officers brought to the Survey. A long-time resident of Boston, Brown was born and began his architectural education in Minneapolis. He then continued his studies at the Boston Art Club and through European travel. In 1902 he opened his own practice in Boston and joined the American Institute of Architects.

Brown specialized in designing domestic architecture and was an avid student of the historic structures that would inform his work. A skilled draftsman, his measured drawings were widely published in the *White Pine* monograph series on historic American architecture and his books such as *New England Colonial Houses* (1915). Brown served as editor of the journal *Architectural Review* from 1907 to 1919. He also brought an interest in architectural education to HABS, having published the primers *Letters and Lettering* (1902) and *The Orders of Architecture* (1906) early in his career. Brown joined the faculty at Boston University in 1916 and became head of the department of art and architecture in 1919. With his close friend William Sumner Appleton, founder of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, Brown tirelessly championed the documentation and restoration of New England's

historic architecture. He brought a regional view to the study and emulation of early American architecture indicative of the most accomplished practitioners of his era.

With the HABS district officer position, Brown was able to channel his years of research and delineation into a public archive. Brown also presided over the only piece of the planned *Outline of the Development of Early American Architecture* volumes to be published - the Massachusetts chapter. Leicester Holland at the Library of Congress wrote to Brown in 1935: "How you manage to do all you get done in Massachusetts is more than I can see. If we can only get proper travel allowances there will be no holding you."^[ii] Like most of his HABS counterparts, Brown advised the Park Service regarding the acquisition and restoration of local properties, such as the Shirley-Eustis House in Boston and the Derby House in Salem. Brown continued producing HABS drawings even as the WPA survey was discontinued. Upon his death in 1947, he was still working on numerous HABS projects in the Boston office he shared with Appleton.

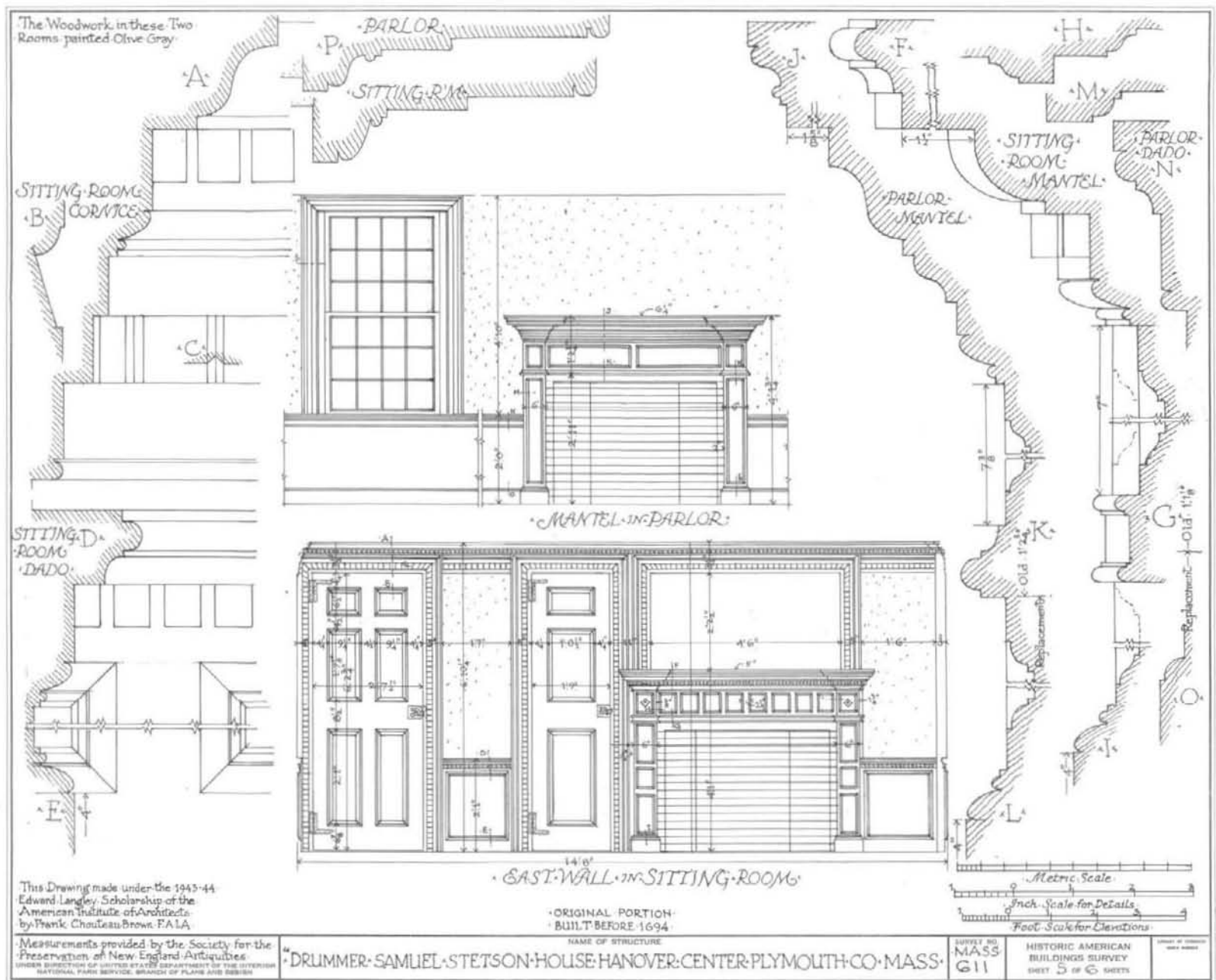
Notes, Profile of A HABS District Officer

- [i] On Frank Chouteau Brown see Withey and Withey, 81; and correspondence in Entry 7 - State Organization Files, RG 515 - Records of HABS/HAER, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD.
- [ii] Letter Holland to Brown, (28 February 1935), Box 9 - Massachusetts, Entry 7, RG 515, NARA.

all CWA funding was scheduled to end. The burden of securing funds then fell to the district officers and to John O'Neill as program coordinator. Through their resourcefulness, the surveys were able to continue as state-sponsored WPA funded initiatives. An exhibition of the HABS drawings and photographs, which opened on April 4, 1934 at the National Museum, also helped raise awareness about the program.^[14] Concurrent with the exhibition, and prior to the arrival of the May 1 terminus, Vint and Holland prepared a Tripartite Agreement between the National Park Service, the Library of Congress, and the American Institute of Architects that made HABS permanent. Documentation

would continue to be generated under the guidance of the National Park Service. With technical support and advice provided by the AIA, the procedures for the production of architectural documentation would be standardized. And through the involvement of the library, the collection would be maintained in a lasting, publicly accessible, national repository. As it was stated,

The scattered surveys that have heretofore been made through efforts of local organizations and individual enthusiasm have yielded heterogeneous results, with considerable duplication, and have been



"Drummer" Samuel Stetson House, Hanover Center, Massachusetts; Frank Choteau Brown, delineator, 1943; HABS No. MA-611. Brown was the former HABS district officer for Massachusetts, and like many, continued to produce HABS drawings after the WPA survey ended. This one was produced in conjunction with the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities and the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Brown's drawing skills ranked him among the best.

*of little practical value to the general public...
A comprehensive and continuous national survey
is the logical concern of the Federal Government.*

This unique combination of public-private support allowed for the continued survival of the program.

HABS also became a proving-ground for further federal involvement in the field of historic preservation. Interior Secretary Harold Ickes was interested in setting up a "Historic Buildings Branch" within NPS that would become the basis for the development of a program for a "Federal reconstruction and preservation plan."^[15] Assistant

Secretary Arthur Demaray, noting the growing number of HABS state surveys, suggested merely continuing the program for that purpose. Although ultimately not the goal of the HABS program, funding was provided to sustain it through 1935. Ickes also hired J. Thomas Schneider to explore the possibilities for a federal preservation program, which included a tour abroad to study European government-sponsored programs, historic sites and monuments. These and other efforts culminated in the passage of the Historic Sites Act of 1935. The Act gave the Secretary of the Interior responsibility for developing a national preservation policy which ultimately was far broader than originally envisioned. In his official statement Ickes cited the pioneering work of the Historic American Buildings Survey. As first attempted by HABS, an important aspect of the act was “a thorough survey of all historic sites in this country.”^[16] While the idea of a national survey was never forgotten, it was set aside for now as the fundamental goal became the acquisition, administration, and interpretation of historical parks. Still, HABS played a significant role in the creation of the 1935 act by providing a working model and by field testing preservation strategies, many of which are still in practice. As summarized by

HABS program director John P. O'Neill in a report of the first five years,

By submitting the original plan as a Civil Works [Administration] project, later by organizing and supervising the accepted program and eventually by participating in the three-party Survey Agreement, all prior to July 1934, the Park Service definitely assumed leadership in recording historic, architectural monuments for a national collection more than a year before the Historic Sites legislation, enacted in August 1935, imposed that responsibility upon the Service.^[17]

Like all New Deal sponsored programs, the last of the HABS surveys ended on the eve of America's entry into World War II. Although this marked the end of the survey era, the program still existed due to the Tripartite Agreement and the work of its partners, the AIA, Library of Congress, and the NPS. The program was maintained through World War II and the years that followed by donations to the collection, particularly by former district officers, and by NPS initiated recording projects.

Notes, A Complete Resume of the Builder's Art

- [1] Selected by NPS to join them were Dr. Waldo G. Leland, executive secretary of the American Council of Learned Societies and a historian on the NPS Education Advisory Board; Harlean James, executive director of the American Civic Association; Professor Herbert E. Bolton of the University of California and a past president of the American Historical Association. Ickes added architect Thomas E. Tallmadge of Chicago and I.T. Frary, curator of the Cleveland Museum of Art.
- [2] Due to a break in funding, O'Neill was regrettably let go in 1939, and replaced by Frederick D. Nichols who previously worked on the Washington, DC district survey.
- [3] Charles E. Peterson, "Thirty Years of HABS," AIA Journal, November 1963, 84.
- [4] Corkern, 85.
- [5] Historic American Buildings Survey, "Bulletin No. 15: Historic American Buildings Survey Index," 23 February 1934, 1. According to the bulletin, "This list will include all measured projects performed under the Historic American Buildings Survey, all structures suggested for consideration under that program, and all other structures which are deserving of permanent record for one reason or another."
- [6] The "Master List" was the first of four "products" of HABS, in addition to the measured drawings, photographs, and history, outlined by Peterson. Charles E. Peterson, *Our National Archives of Historic Architecture*, Reprinted From the Octagon, A Journal of the American Institute of Architects [July, Number—1936], 3.
- [7] The cards included brief historical notations that sometimes took the form of small sketch plans, making them a valuable supplement to the formal collection. The cards also included bibliographic references to previous documentation in an attempt to avoid duplication of efforts. These references became the basis for eliminating buildings from selection by HABS. Likewise,



Old Fort Randall Church, Pickstown vicinity, South Dakota; Roy Oglesby, photographer, 1947; HABS No. SD-4. The remnants of this pioneer-era church are all that remained of historic Fort Randall, which provided protection and supplies to settlements along the Missouri River. It was documented in 1947 by the Corps of Engineers in cooperation with the National Park Service in recognition of its significance.



Acoma Pueblo, Casa Blanca Vicinity, New Mexico; M. James Slack, photographer, 1934; HABS No. NM-6-11. Acoma Pueblo is the most copiously recorded site in the HABS Collection, with more drawings than any other. In fact, program founders recognized the importance of this ancient village before the survey even began, identifying it specifically as a must for recording.

structures viewed as protected by virtue of their ownership by governmental or private institutions were not measured and drawn, yet still received an index card (and, in some cases, a photograph or two). This methodology helps explain some of the seemingly inexplicable omissions from the collection, such as Washington's Mount Vernon, which remains undocumented by HABS.

- [8] HABS, "Bulletin No.4, Measurements and Field Notes," 22 December 1933, 5. However, many deteriorated structures were drawn as if new.
- [9] HABS, "Circular No. 1, 12 December 1933. Ibid. "Circular No. 1, 12 December 1933. A later bulletin provided a list of questions to be asked of the building's occupants, which by February 1935 had evolved into Bulletin No. 40's "Outline of Written Report" providing the basis for the current and expanded HABS history format. This original "outline" asked for: Owner, Date of Erection, Architect, Builder, Present Condition, Number of Stories, Materials of Construction, Other Existing Records, and Additional Data, which usually consisted of a narrative about the family and/or the evolution of the house. (The key elements of the current HABS format, a significance statement and the historical context that supports it, as well as a statement about the architectural character, were not part of the early Survey questions.)
- [10] HABS Circular No. 1, December 12, 1933.
- [11] HABS Bulletin No. 3, December 29, 1933.
- [12] Memo, reporting on the "Quality of Work: Evaluations," (author unnamed, but likely by O'Neill, official director of WPA projects who was responsible for reports), 1937, "HABS" File, RG 69, National Archives.

- [13] Memo (author unknown), Historic American Buildings Survey, "Need for the Program," 14 August 1937, HABS File, RG 69, National Archives.
- [14] The National Museum is currently known as the Arts & Industries Building.
- [15] E.K. Burlew, Administrative Assistant to Arthur Demaray, Assistant Secretary, 10 September 1934; as cited in Corkern, 96-97.
- [16] U.S. Congress, House Committee on Public Lands, Preservation of Historic American Sites, Buildings, Objects, and Antiquities of National Significance, Hearings on H.R. 6670 and H.R. 6734, 74th Congress, 1st. sess., 1935, p. 4; as cited in Corkern, 102.
- [17] John P. O'Neill, HABS Admin., Historic American Buildings Survey; A Brief Summary of the First Five Years, 1938, p. 2, HABS Collection.



Acoma Pueblo, Casa Blanca Vicinity, New Mexico; M. James Slack, photographer, 1934; HABS No. NM-6-20.



Congress Hall, 6th and Chestnut streets, Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Jack E. Boucher, photographer, 1964; HABS No. PA-1431. Built in 1789, Congress Hall was the meeting place for the United States Congress from 1790 to 1800, when Philadelphia served as the new nation's temporary capital. It also hosted the inaugurations of presidents Washington and Adams. It was recorded by a HABS summer team as a Mission 66 project.

Assembling a New Foundation

Revitalization of HABS during NPS Mission 66

The implementation in 1956 of a ten-year program to improve National Park Service (NPS) facilities and infrastructure, known as Mission 66, provided the opportunity to reinvigorate the HABS program. While focused on the construction of newly conceived visitor centers and other support structures, the program also provided funding for the preservation and rehabilitation of historic structures, in particular those acquired as new NPS National Historic Sites and potential park units. HABS assisted during the planning phase by providing the baseline documentation needed for restoration and interpretation of the new sites as well as those already under NPS stewardship.

At the same time, HABS worked to “complete the survey” of nationally significant structures that began in 1933. This became an increasingly more challenging task as the range of what was considered historic was extended beyond the original preference for pre-Civil War, and in particular colonial, era structures. HABS began working

with state and local preservation organizations to facilitate the documentation process while also assisting local communities with their preservation needs. The recording of threatened and endangered structures also remained a HABS priority. According to NPS Regional Director Ronald Lee in 1960, “The influence of HABS, now so effectively re-activated, is reaching out wherever historic buildings are threatened, or large-scale preservation programs are being formulated.”

HABS documentation was undertaken by the central office as well as the various NPS regional offices, and also utilized architecture students. While student groups had engaged in HABS documentation since the early days, this era marked the beginning of the formal summer recording program, still in operation today. Through this mechanism, HABS trains the next generation of preservationists by providing paid experience conducting field work, research, and documentation of historic structures to its standards.

From 1941 to 1956, HABS was officially inactive but remained a Park Service organization. During those years HABS was “dependent upon public spirited groups and individuals to add surveys to the collection.” According to Chief Architect Dick Sutton, “architectural schools, historical societies, and architects engaged in restoration work have continued to send in surveys as they are completed.”^[1] Attempts to resurrect the HABS field teams of the 1930s during the postwar years were often presented in terms of the need to “complete the survey,” meaning the identification of all significant historical and architectural sites and structures within each region of the country. Not only was the survey incomplete, but certain areas and building forms had been left unexplored. The focus at that time was largely upon colonial era buildings, and upon the Greek Revival buildings of the early republic. Logistics were also an issue. In addition, it was determined during the New Deal-era survey that buildings owned by government, by a historical association, or where the owner is “sufficiently alive to the responsibility as a custodian... to be trusted to protect and care for it” that the building would not be recorded. As Division of Design and Construction Chief Thomas Vint later explained the situation,

The subjects measured [due to logistical problems] therefore were those within easy reach of where the unemployed persons lived. This was a major control on what buildings were measured and photographed. As a consequence, the program was not a complete national survey of historic buildings. Another control that was put on our program in the 30's was that any structure that was in good hands to preserve it would not be measured and emphasis was given to those structures that might be lost. As a consequence many of the important buildings in the Country were not included.^[2]

The idea of creating the national listing called for in the 1935 Historic Sites Act had not yet been realized and was still very much on the minds of NPS administrators.^[3] The boom in new construction and accelerating demolition of historic structures during the 1950s added new urgency to this mission.

Around 1952, the AIA and the new National Trust for Historic Preservation initiated an inventory project through Preservation Officers appointed in many local chapters. The goal was to list and prioritize all the existing buildings built before 1900, and in some cases, more recently. This list (produced on what became known as HABS forms) was intended to inform HABS in the event of resuming active recording.

Overcrowding and deteriorating facilities prompted NPS Director Conrad Wirth to propose a major capital improvement initiative to President Eisenhower in 1956. Dubbed “Mission 66,” this 10-year program sought to upgrade and expand facilities in time for the Park Service’s 50th anniversary in 1966. Mission 66 also offered an infusion of staff and funding for planning and research projects such as HABS. A booklet called *Our Heritage*, published to promote Mission 66 to the public, included a reinvigorated HABS as a vital planning tool for the National Park Service. Here the idea of completing the survey was presented in terms of promptly recording historic buildings before “adequate information... [is] lost forever.”

The reactivation of HABS with Mission 66 funding came about due to the perseverance of Office of Design and Construction personnel. Chief Architect Dick Sutton proposed a series of field offices staffed by architects, photographers, and historians be instituted for a 10-year period in order to “complete the work of recording historic buildings.”^[4] At the end of this period, he envisioned a smaller Washington office staff to produce additional records as necessary and act as liaisons with the Library of Congress, American Institute of Architects, and National Trust. Sutton described an opportunity not only to revive the program, but also to provide a more complete picture of American architectural history by moving beyond the 1930s geographical constraints of working in areas needing relief employment, and by including structures built after the Civil War era as well as those previously bypassed in favor of endangered ones.

While the documentation methods and goals remained consistent, the operating structure of HABS needed to change with the times. The economic conditions were



Saddleback Lighthouse, Rockland vicinity, Maine; Cervin Robinson, photographer, 1960; HABS No. ME-79. The documentation of this 1839 lighthouse on the Penobscot Bay was part of the Maine Mid-Coast Survey, one of many state surveys undertaken with Mission 66 funding. Drawings were also produced by a student summer team.

drastically different in the booming post-war years. The 1930s survey model of district offices staffed by unemployed draftsmen was no longer feasible. Instead HABS work was increasingly done by architecture students and faculty working with NPS architects from the Offices of Design and Construction in Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington, DC. Students had participated in documentation projects since the 1930s, but this new emphasis on summer recording teams became the dominant model for HABS. In 1951, The Eastern Office of Design and Construction (EODC) began hiring

architecture students to document Independence Hall and other Philadelphia structures.^[5]

When he joined the Philadelphia office as Supervising Architect in 1957, Charles Peterson, along with Historical Architect Penelope Hartshorne Batcheler, led the teams of architectural students. The students were thus given opportunities for close study and delineation of historic American architecture that had become less central to architectural education. Many of these students became leaders in the growing field of historic preservation as the



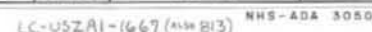
Shaker Centre Family Trustees Office, spiral stairway, Pleasant Hill, Kentucky; Jack E. Boucher, photographer, 1963; HABS No. KY-81. The Pleasant Hill Shaker community was settled in 1805 by European immigrants who were part of the "Kentucky [religious] Revival." The graceful stairway in this 1839-1841 structure is an example of the plain yet elegant craftsmanship that characterized the Shaker style. Its documentation was undertaken in preparation for restoration.

early model provided by HABS informed the genesis of a federal preservation system administered by the National Park Service.

Independence National Historical Park and other early NPS-initiated documentation projects were conducted in connection with the designation of National Historic Sites. HABS work often was completed as part of the transition from federally designated historic site to Park Service unit, including documentation for sites such as Salem Maritime

National Historic Site, the Cape Cod National Seashore, the Adams National Historical Site, and Harper's Ferry National Historical Park.^[6] The Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1958 (July 1, 1957 – June 30, 1958) provides a useful overview of HABS as first revived during the Mission 66 years.^[7] Administration of the program was provided by staff of the Division of Design and Construction in Washington, DC, Philadelphia, and San Francisco, with small increases in permanent personnel and a summer staff of eight supervisors and thirty-five student architects.

Salem, Massachusetts; Philadelphia, Gettysburg, and Hopewell Village, Pennsylvania; Fort McHenry, Maryland; Harpers Ferry, West Virginia; San Francisco, and Monterey, California; and Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina.



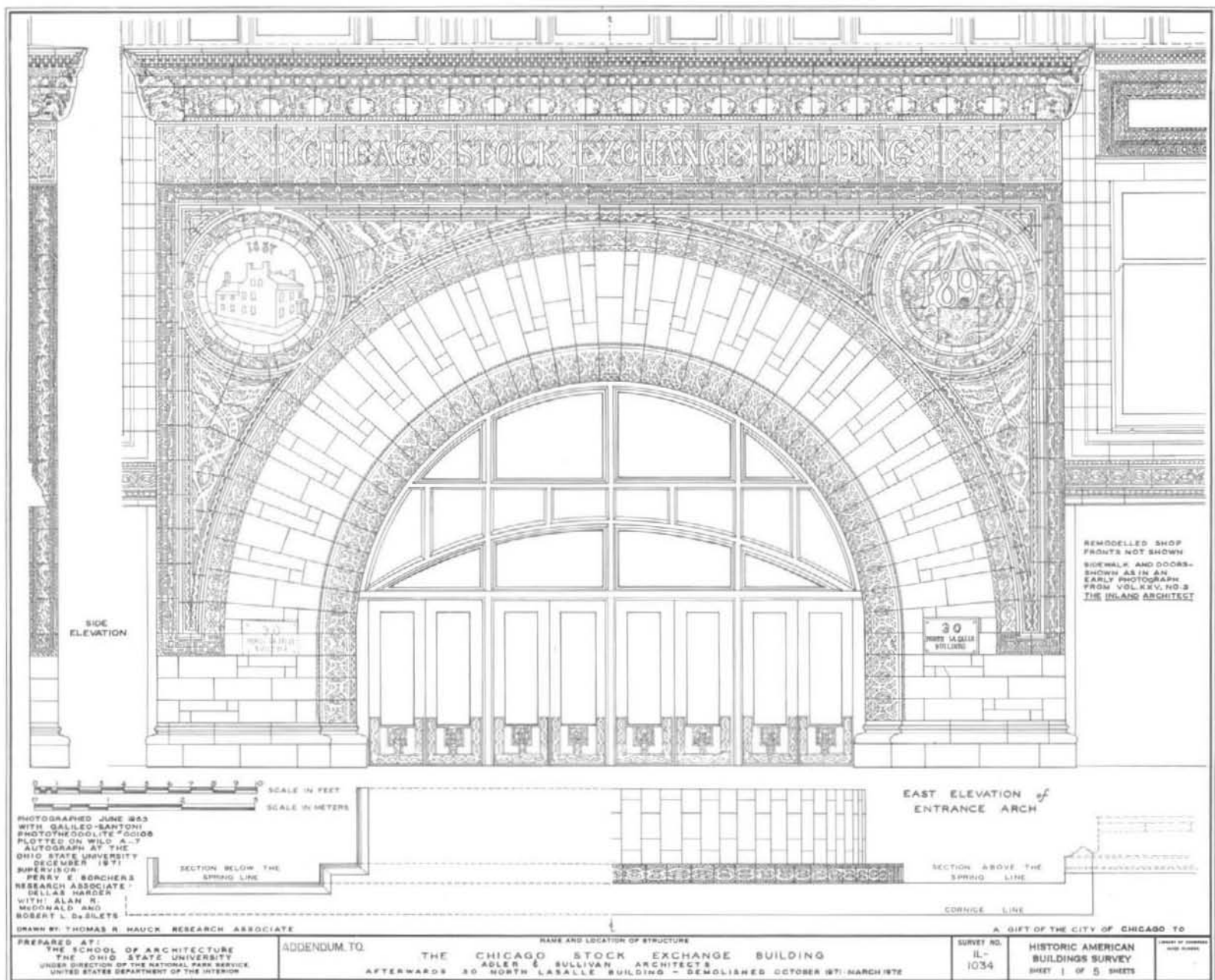
AMERICAN PLACE The Historic American Buildings Survey at Seventy-five Years



Ephraim Rich House, door sill, Pump Log Point, Truro, Massachusetts; Cervin Robinson, photographer, 1960. Built about 1830, the Rich House is a typical Cape Cod-style house of the region. It was recorded in 1960 as part of a larger study undertaken in preparation for the designation of the Cape Cod National Seashore.

The Park Service managers were assisted in policy making by a HABS Advisory Board that included some of the original district officers, such as Earl Reed in Chicago, Richard Koch in New Orleans, and John Gaw Meem in Santa Fe. HABS also experimented with photogrammetric documentation through contracts with Ohio State University and a private company in Alexandria, Virginia. The Historic American Buildings Inventory initiated by the AIA continued, with 1,072 inventory forms completed that fiscal year.

Of course the partnership with the Library of Congress and facilitating use of the collection by the public remained key goals of HABS. To that end a revised supplement to the first HABS catalog published in 1941 was created in 1959. In addition to incorporating the recent work done within the Park Service, the 1959 supplement recognized the variety of donations and other contributions that had been trickling into the collection even since active recording was discontinued in 1941.



The **Chicago Stock Exchange Building**, 30 North La Salle Street, Chicago, Illinois; Thomas R. Hauck, delineator, 1965-1971; HABS No. IL-1034. The Stock Exchange was designed by renowned architects Adler and Sullivan and was an important early skyscraper, the first in Chicago to make use of caisson foundations. It was measured using phototheodolite technology and drawn by a HABS summer team with Mission 66 funding.

As later articulated by Thomas Vint, the specific task of the HABS program during the Mission 66 era was to comprehensively record 100 sites each year, and to supplement that work by photographically recording an additional 1,000 sites (with an average of six views each). Reporting in January 1959 on goals for the coming year,

Vint stated their intent to record seventy-seven nationally significant buildings that were “unanimously selected by eminent historical and architectural authorities,” including forty-six that were owned by the National Park Service.^[8] It was further stated that HABS would “collaborate with the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings... for the

CASE STUDY OF FORT LARNED, NHS, KANSAS

During the Mission 66-era HABS documentation often provided baseline information for restoration and development of newly acquired park units and critical technical assistance during the transition from private to public historic site. In the 1950s and 60s, expansion of the national park system increasingly included historic sites representing periods of American history receiving new scholarly attention. In 1955, NPS staff identified Fort Larned in central Kansas as an important potential National Historic Site representing America's westward expansion and mid-19th century military history. Fort Larned was occupied by Army troops guarding the Santa Fe Trail from 1859 until 1878. The fort, including a collection of sandstone structures built by the Army in 1866-68, had been privately owned and used for ranching since 1884. Local interest in preserving the fort led to the creation of the Fort Larned Historical Society to offer public tours starting in 1957. Fort Larned was designated a National Historic Landmark on December 19, 1960. Congress authorized

acquisition of the site in 1964 and the National Park Service officially added Fort Larned National Historic Site to the park system in 1966.

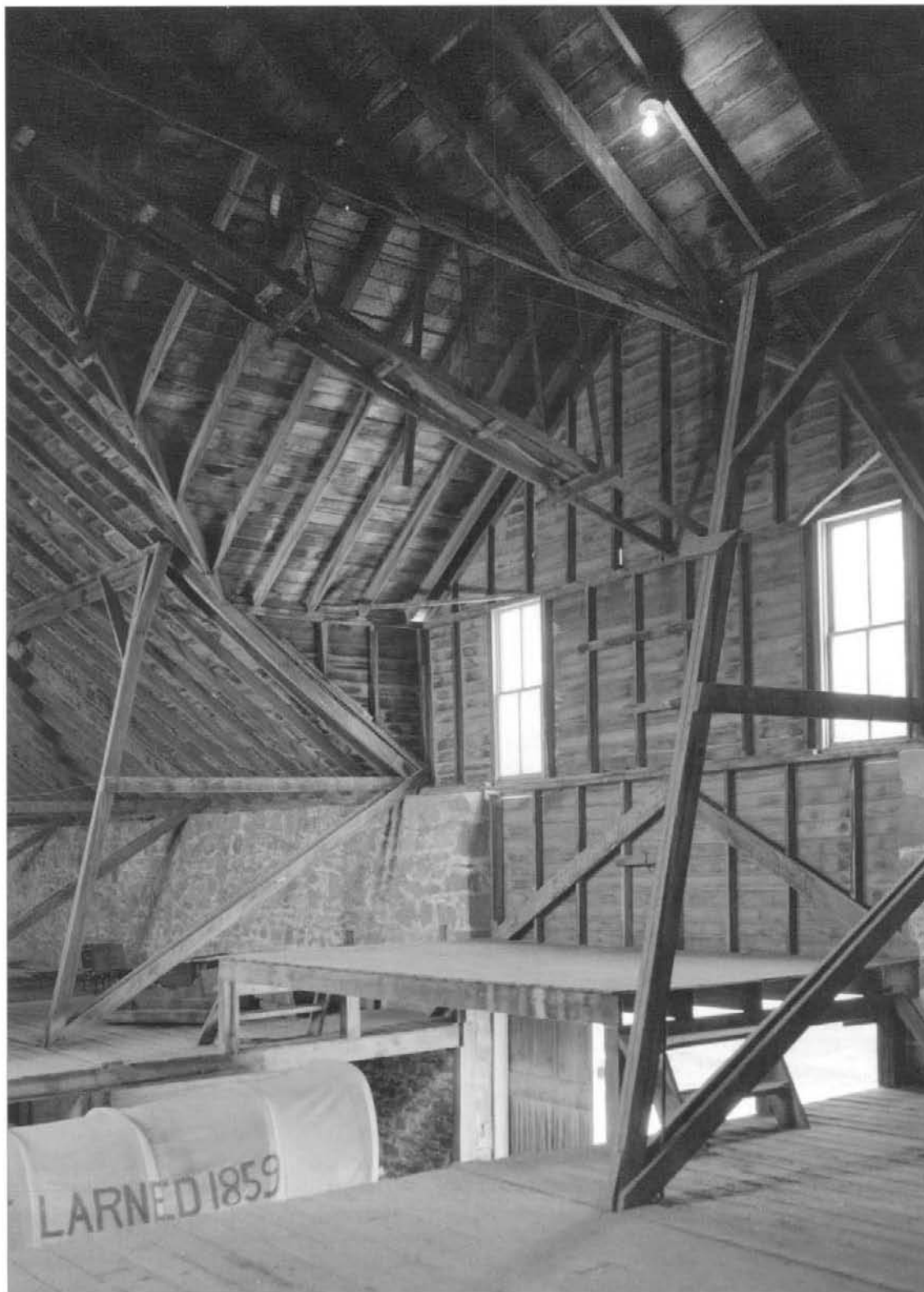
HABS documentation of Fort Larned was administered through the Western Office of Design and Construction under the direction of Charles S. Pope, Supervising Architect, Historic Structures. Using Mission 66 funding, WODC hired five Kansas State architecture students and Professor Morris H. Beckman, AIA to document Fort Larned during the summer of 1965. Large-format photographs were taken by David von Riesen of the Kansas State Photo Service department. This team prepared drawings and photographs of the nine historic structures at Fort Larned, including the commanding officer quarters, blacksmith and wheelwright shop, quartermaster storehouse, officers' quarters, and barracks. The documentation provides a detailed snapshot of the site right before acquisition and restoration by the National Park Service.

purposes of determining which [sites] possess exceptional value as commemorating or illustrating the history of the United States." As a further indication of the priority given to NPS properties, the memo stated that HABS would "continue research in the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction of historic structures necessary for use on structures which are under the administrative jurisdiction of the National Park Service."

Mission 66 also provided opportunities for regional architectural documentation projects that recalled the wide ranging survey of the 1930s. A summer field office led by EODC Architect Henry Edwards and Yale University faculty member Osmund Overby documented a variety of eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings in Vermont during 1959. Many of these structures had been identified during the 1930s survey, but never drawn or otherwise studied. A similar, multi-year effort was launched for central coastal Maine. The Maine Mid-Coast Survey used teams of students led by University of Florida Professor F. Blair Reeves to produce documentation during the summers

of 1960, 1962, and 1965. Former Illinois district officer Earl H. Reed organized HABS student summer projects survey teams in 1963, 1964, and 1965. Their documentation focused on Chicago architecture, particularly the proto-modernist work of H. H. Richardson, Louis Sullivan, and Frank Lloyd Wright, such as the Chicago Stock Exchange Building. This overlapping of HABS documentation and contemporary scholarly interest in the work of the Chicago and the Prairie Schools was a noteworthy foray into the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries for the Survey.

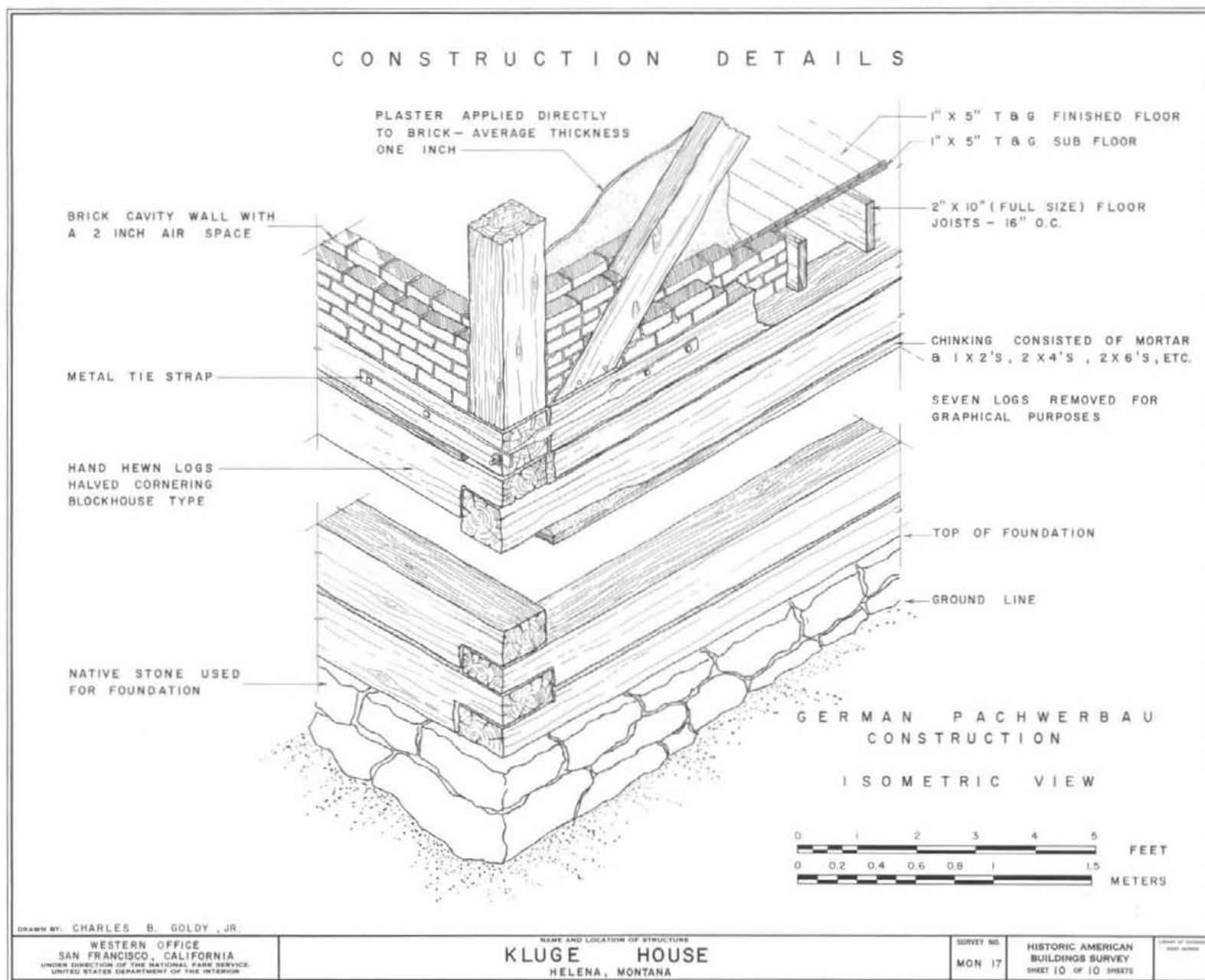
Funding for Mission 66 also allowed NPS architects from the EODC and WODC to travel with student teams to document more remote sites. Clearly there was an effort underway to fill major geographic gaps in the collection and record important vernacular types. For example, WODC architects working with students from Montana State documented a number of log structures in Montana during 1965. In addition to other Kansas sites, teams of Kansas State students worked with WODC to document the historic buildings at Fort Larned in 1964 and 1965.



Fort Larned Quartermaster Storehouse, Larned, Kansas; David von Riesen, photographer, 1965; HABS No. KS-26. The 1867 sandstone storehouse held supplies for this essential government outpost along the Santa Fe Trail, between Fort Leavenworth and Fort Riley to the east, and Fort Union, New Mexico to the west. Fort Larned was also a base for Indian campaigns. It was documented in preparation for becoming a new NPS unit.



John F. Singer House, 1318 Singer Place, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Jack E. Boucher, photographer, 1963; HABS No. PA-433. This 1869 Gothic Revival mansion was known in its day as one of the most pretentious and elegantly appointed homes in Pittsburgh. It was built for an iron manufacturer. The photographs accompany drawings produced by architecture students from the Carnegie Institute of Technology.



Kluge House, Helena, Montana; Charles B. Goldy, Jr., delineator, 1965; HABS No. MT-17. This detail of the Kluge House illustrates the German "Pachwerbau" method of construction. It was recorded by students from the University of Montana as part of a HABS team under the direction of the Western Regional office of NPS and funded by Mission 66.

This former army fort along the Santa Fe Trail had recently been acquired by the National Park Service and designated a National Historic Site. Close to the Washington office, student teams documented aspects of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal in 1961, as part of the continued effort to manage and interpret that historical park. The Western Regional office of NPS used Mission 66 funds to hire

students from the University of Montana to help them record sites such as German "Pachwerbau" constructed Kluge House, in Helena, Montana. Likewise, students from the Carnegie Institute of Technology prepared measured drawings and other documentation for sites like the elegant Gothic Revival Singer House in Pittsburgh.

By the 1960s, NPS leadership was committed to continuing HABS as part of a greatly expanded federal preservation system. Regional Director Ronald Lee featured HABS in a memorandum to Director Conrad Wirth on the Park Service's role in historic preservation, open spaces, and urban renewal. He saw the Park Service's work in preserving landmarks in major urban areas such as Philadelphia, New York, Boston, St. Louis, and Washington, DC as vitally important to broadening the cultural and geographic scope of the park system. Establishing popular park units in urban areas brought a much larger percentage of the population into contact with the NPS. Even more broadly, advisory programs such as HABS, the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, and the National Recreation Study could assist with preservation initiatives beyond the National Park system. Lee wrote specifically of HABS:

Historic American Buildings Survey crews have gathered, and are gathering much data of great interest and value to urban planners. HABS contributed notably to the background for the College Hill plan in Providence, Rhode Island. They have also given valuable assistance in Annapolis, Maryland, where a major historic preservation program is underway. The influence of HABS, now so effectively re-activated, is reaching out wherever historic buildings are threatened, or large-scale preservation programs are being formulated.^[9]

This period of development culminated with the end of the Mission 66 initiative, the fiftieth anniversary of the National Park Service, and passage of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act.

Notes, Assembling a New Foundation

- [1] Letter, Dick Sutton to Miss Christie McFall, (19 August 1955), Box 1, RG 515, NARA.
- [2] Memorandum, Thomas Vint, Chief of Design and Construction to Members of the HABS Advisory Board, 27 January 1958, Records of the Advisory Board, General Correspondence 1953-1979, RG 515, National Archives. And in fact, some regions were unable to sponsor HABS surveys at all. This was generally either because there was no sponsor or AIA contact to undertake the work, or not enough architects on the rolls of the unemployed to make it work. Also, because the initial program began in January, in northern regions where the weather conditions were unfavorable, no survey was attempted.
- [3] The History Branch was eventually formed for the purpose of creating a national listing, supplanting HABS—at least in theory—as the listing agency. In actuality, the goal was not realized until the creation of the National Register in 1966.
- [4] Memorandum, Chief Architect to Chairman, Steering Committee, Mission '66, (30 March 1955), Box 1, RG 515, NARA.
- [5] While the summer program started at Independence Park in 1951, it then expanded to include the new park at Harper's Ferry, West Virginia and was taken up by the Washington and San Francisco offices. Peterson, "Thirty Years of HABS," 85. The precedent for student work, however, was set in the 1930s at the University of Virginia, the University of New Hampshire, Armour Institute of Technology (now Illinois Institute of Technology), Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Clemson College, and George Washington University. Peterson, "Our National Archives," 4.
- [6] Extract from the minutes of meeting of Advisory Board, Grand Teton National Park, September 7-9, 1955. It is stated "Whereas, since 1953 the national Park Service has developed a very successful program of summer employment of architectural students for recording *historic buildings recently acquired by the Service*," National Archives RG 515, Records of the Advisory Board, General Correspondence, box 1, 1953-1968.
- [7] Annual Report to the National Advisory Board of HABS, Fiscal Year 1958, Box 1, RG 515, NARA.
- [8] Memorandum, Thomas C. Vint, Chief of Design and Construction to Chief of Programs, "Historic American Buildings Survey Program 1959-1966, 7 January 1959; National Archives RG 515, Records of the Chief of Planning, 1951-1968, box 1.
- [9] Memorandum, Regional Director to Director, (28 July 1960), Notebook No. 9, RG 23 Mission 66 Collection, Harper's Ferry.



John G. Wilson Building, Shenandoah Street, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, West Virginia; Jack E. Boucher, photographer, 1958; HABS No. WV-229. Originally built as a store and residence in 1825, it was converted for use as the Stagecoach Inn in 1830. Troops were quartered here during the Civil War.



Richfield Oil Building, 555 S. Flower Street, Los Angeles, California; Marvin Rand, photographer, 1968; HABS No. CA-1987. HABS worked with the Southern California Coordinating Committee for Historic Preservation to record this icon of modern architecture before it was demolished in 1968. Built in 1929, the Richfield building was influenced by the Art Nouveau and Cubist styles, and considered a marvelous blending of applied arts and architecture.

A Framework to Build Upon

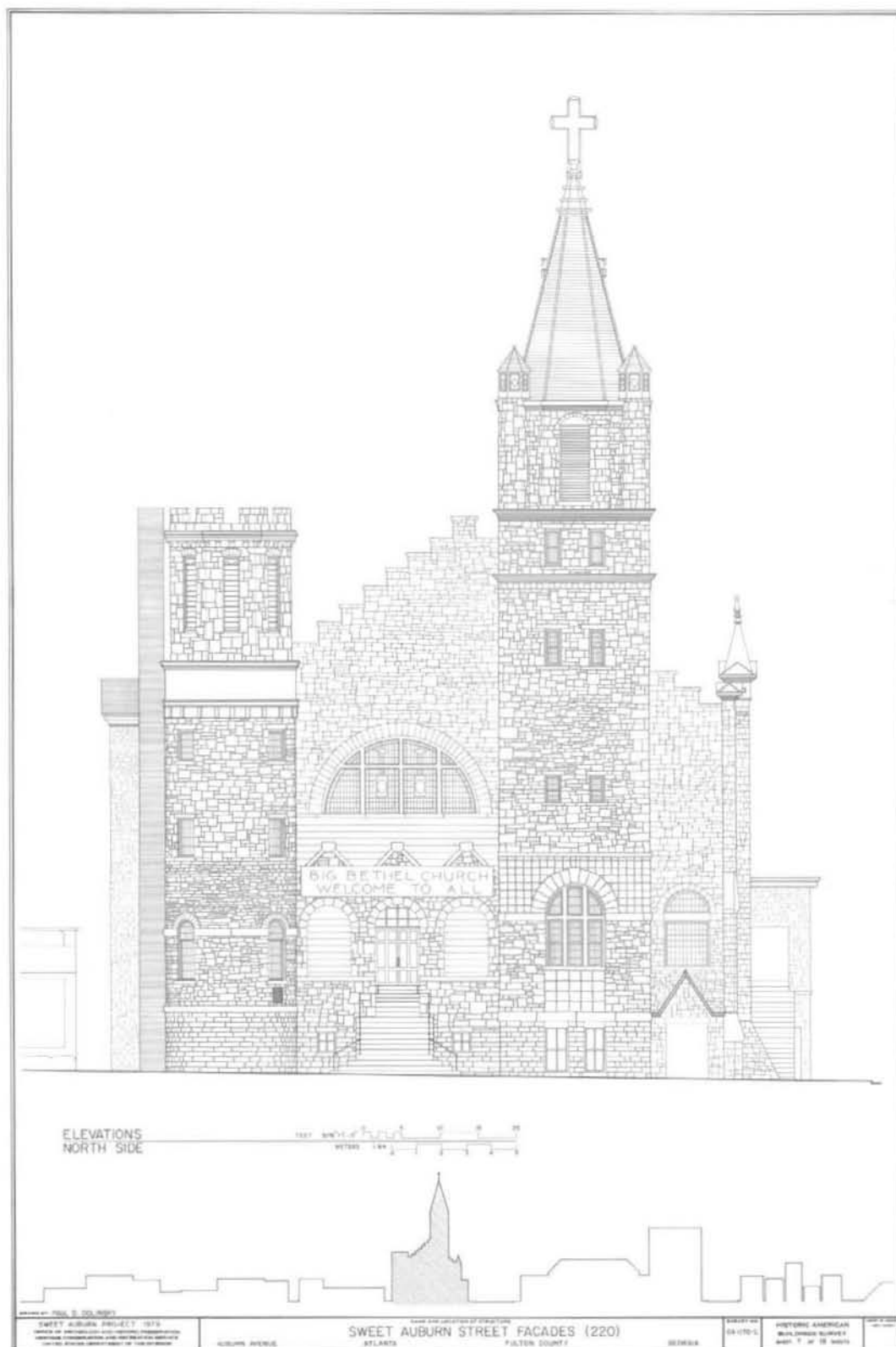
HABS and the Impact of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966

In 1966, the enactment of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) marked the beginning of a new era in federal preservation. The addition of significant cultural resource programs created new opportunities for federal outreach and increased professionalization. The establishment of the National Register of Historic Places, for example, fulfilled the “survey” role envisioned by HABS and so allowed HABS to focus on its core mission—producing and making available to the public documentation of significant architectural resources. The 1966 Act invoked the language used to justify the HABS program a few decades earlier, citing the nation’s vanishing architectural heritage and the vital need to preserve a legacy of our culture for future generations. The Act deemed it “necessary and appropriate” for the federal government to provide support to private agencies and to state and local governments undertaking historic preservation initiatives.

HABS began partnering with various organizations to document their historic structures as a means of breathing life into depressed downtowns, and alleviating the effects of urban renewal and other threats. Also, under Section 106

of the NHPA, a mitigation program was initiated whereby historic sites that are altered or demolished as the result of federally funded projects are to be recorded to HABS standards. It was intended that the documentation be included in the HABS collection at the Library of Congress as a permanent record for future generations.

Another result of the NHPA legislation was the increased professionalization and specialization of federal preservation programs that has served to greatly expand the depth and breadth of architectural study and documentation. This trend was most significantly manifested within HABS by the creation of the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) in 1969. Although HABS had included in its recording efforts structures such as mills, workshops, bridges, and lighthouses, HAER was created specifically to document America’s industrial and engineering achievements. The early HAER drawings reflect the attention to architectural design and construction indicative of HABS documentation that eventually gave way to a stronger focus on industrial processes.



Big Bethel Church, Auburn Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia; Paul Dolinsky, delineator, 1979; HABS No. GA-1170-C. The church is part of the "Sweet Auburn" Historic District, once called the "richest Negro street in the world." It was later compromised by a highway project. Its documentation was sponsored by the Atlanta Office of Economic Development, the Urban Design Commission, and the Auburn Avenue Revitalization Committee.

"If we wish to have a future with greater meaning, we must concern ourselves not only with the historic highlights, but we must concern ourselves with the total heritage of the nation and all that is worth preserving from our past as a living part of the present."^[1]

This summary statement to the findings presented by a Special Committee on Historic Preservation^[2] in their book *With Heritage So Rich* encapsulates the urgency felt by many in the mid 1960s as urban renewal swept away neighborhoods and communities in the name of progress and economic growth. Construction boomed. Urban and suburban development proceeded apace. Highways cut across swaths of the countryside, bypassing towns and bisecting communities. Architectural signs of progress, irreverent to the past and jarring in scale, replaced the buildings and symbols of past eras in broad, indiscriminate strokes. This visual intrusion into neighborhoods nationwide was compounded by a seeming lack of direction to the steamrolling nature of the process. This trend was further compounded by other social and cultural upheavals of the era such as civil rights, women's rights, the cold war arms (and space) race, and the Vietnam War. The rapid pace of redevelopment created a moment of awareness of preservation that went outside the movement itself, from the local areas affected to the upper echelons of government that could enact change. HABS worked with numerous communities to record resources compromised by these changes, and so the subjects of recording became decidedly more urban. One example was the "Sweet Auburn" Historic District, once called the "richest Negro street in the world," but compromised by a highway project. Many historic resources were lost, and in fact HABS was now called upon to record buildings that were knowingly facing the wrecking-ball.

Outside of HABS, the preservation movement needed shoring up. Professional guidance, both in preservation planning and in the technical aspects of conservation, remained in short supply. The private wing of the national preservation movement was codified in 1949 as the National Trust for Historic Preservation,^[3] but was perennially under-funded. HUD lacked the authority to grant or loan monies for restoration projects, yet had the ability to channel federal funds toward the acquisition of open space and the relocation of historic structures in designated urban renewal areas.^[4] No organization had the authority

to coordinate the activities of federal agencies, or those agencies' programs and objectives with those implemented by state and local entities.^[5] And the Federal Highway Program was only beginning to consider a roadway's impact on architectural, archaeological, and paleontological artifacts.^[6] Doing what they could, the National Trust teamed up with HABS on a number of preservation initiatives during the 1970s. For example, HABS recorded resources in Madison, Indiana, designated by the Trust as one of its first "Main Street" revitalization projects.

At the time, the overarching perspective and concerns of preservation were national in scope. Preservation policy was inherently federal, hinging upon a number of significant Acts. The Antiquities Act of 1906 was directed to the protection of resources already on public land.^[7] The creation of the National Park Service with the Organic Act of 1916 charged the Service with promoting and regulating the "use of national parks, monuments, and reservations [...] to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein, [...] all the while providing] for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for future generations".^[8] The Historic Sites Act of 1935, again, concentrated on the preservation of historic and cultural resources of national stature.^[9] More specifically, the 1935 Act called for the identification or recognition of properties of exceptional value that commemorated or illustrated American history.^[10] Because it was conducted with an eye toward potential units of the National Park System, the historic sites survey ultimately gave rise to what is now known as the National Historic Landmarks program. The inventory generated by the survey of historical and archaeological sites, buildings, and objects also has been credited with raising public awareness of American history and fostering a desire to preserve tangible evidence of that past.^[11]

The survey required by the Historic Sites Act and performed under the auspices of the Park Service accounted for only those landmarks considered and evaluated as having



200 Block of Main Street, Madison, Indiana; Jack E. Boucher, photographer, 1971; HABS No. IN-230-7. The bulk of the recording of the commercial core of Madison was undertaken in 1978, following the 1977 designation of the city as a pilot site for the National Trust for Historic Preservation's "Main Street" preservation program. Sponsors included Historic Madison, Incorporated and the Indiana Historical Society.

national significance because there were no provisions for evaluating those of lesser significance.^[12] Without a coordinated national system of legal protection or recognition at all levels of government, such sites, buildings, and objects, if unappreciated, were in danger of disappearing from the American landscape. The authors of *With Heritage So Rich* recognized this systemic problem in existing federal preservation law. They also, with relief, pointed to the presence of the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS).

Already within the regulations, with its purposes aligned with the Historic Sites Act provision to "secure, collate, and preserve drawings, plans, photographs, and other data of historic and archaeological sites, buildings, and objects,"^[13] HABS bridged the gap between the national focus of the Historic Sites Inventory that identified NHLs and the desire expressed for consideration of "our total heritage." The importance of HABS was highlighted in *With Heritage So Rich* because of the program's sweeping, all-inclusive scope. Its subjects were multi-cultural,^[14] urban and rural, secular and profane, vernacular and high style. HABS



The Cleveland Arcade, 401 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio; Martin Linsey, photographer, 1966; HABS No. OH-2119. The Cleveland Arcade is a noteworthy example of a glass-enclosed commercial retail space, one of the most unique contributions to the urban scene of the nineteenth century.

recorded “all examples of American architecture worthy of public concern and protection.”^[15] The materials produced by HABS, moreover, were readily available at the Library of Congress; in fact, the collection already had proved to be “indispensable” to various preservation projects. Yet, the authors expressed alarm. By their estimate, nearly half of the buildings documented by HABS had been destroyed.

The recommended tonic for the ailing preservation movement involved crafting federal legislation and establishing regulations to shape and implement the national policies at a state and local level. The “national plan” recommended by *With Heritage So Rich* included: a policy to guide federal agencies; the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as the federal, state, and local agency liaison between public-private groups and the general public, and as the mediator between federal programs; the National Register of Historic Places and companion programs on state and local levels; and economic and tax incentives to encourage conservation, preservation, and restoration. Out of the book *With Heritage So Rich* came not only an expression of the critical need for historic preservation but also the impetus for the necessary legislation.^[16] The National Historic Preservation Act was passed later that year. In addition to the plan outlined in *With Heritage So Rich*, NHPA as amended in 1976 specifically provided a grants program for surveys, planning, acquisition, and development (the Historic Preservation Fund); established an environmental review process and an independent agency to conduct the reviews; and as amended in 1980, designated the State Historic Preservation Officer as the conduit between the states and the federal government.^[17] HABS either engaged in or was the beneficiary of state and local recording projects of significant resources. For example, the Cleveland Arcade—designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1975—was one of fourteen sites state wide recommended for recording for the HABS collection by both the American Institute of Architects and the Western Reserve Historical Society.

The passage of NHPA in 1966 launched preservationists’ “decade of decision” during which subsequent laws and regulations further defined collective responsibilities to America’s cultural and natural heritage.^[18] For example, in 1969, the National Environmental Policy Act went into

effect; in 1971, the legal mandate of NHPA was extended by Executive Order 11593 which directed that all federal agencies catalogue and care for the important buildings under their administration. Four years later, the Public Buildings Cooperative Use Act enabled the General Services Administration to acquire and use space in historic buildings. NHPA was amended to extend the reach of preservation to certified local governments in 1980, and to Native American and other cultural groups in 1992.

NHPA strengthened both the legal authority of preservation and the professional resources available to preservationists through the creation of a comprehensive national policy, the creation of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the creation of the National Register for Historic Places. Administered by the National Park Service, the National Register is part of a coordinated, public-private effort to identify, evaluate, and protect America’s historic and archeological resources. It is the official federal list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Properties listed in the National Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. Today there are over 80,000 listings, including all historic units of the National Park system and the 2400 plus NHLs.^[19]

As are those buildings recorded by HABS, National Register properties are distinguished by having been documented and evaluated according to uniform standards. The foundation for nominations to the National Register is the criteria on which the properties are assessed. The criteria were designed to help state and local governments, federal agencies, and others identify important historic and archeological properties worthy of preservation. Officials could then ensure that the properties receive consideration in planning and development decisions.^[20] Sections 106/110 of NHPA as amended gave teeth to the National Register, reiterating the responsibilities of federal agencies for historic properties under their care and the responsibilities of those parties embarking on a federal or federally-assisted project involving any historic property included in the National Register.^[21] The Advisory Council needed to be given time to weigh in on the proposed initiative and any adverse effects had to be mitigated before federal funds would be released. Of particular importance was the protection of NHLs.



Johnson Wax Corporation Building, 1525 Howe Street, Racine, Wisconsin; Jack E. Boucher, photographer; HABS No. WS-284. The Johnson Wax building is one of the best known designs of famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Built between 1936 and 1939, it is noted for its open space, cantilevered balconies, glass-tube ribbon windows, and unusual lily-pad columns.

URBAN RENEWAL

The urban renewal projects of the post-World War II period can be interpreted as both idealistic and forward-thinking, and impulsive and misguided programs promoted by urban leaders whose cities were, in many ways, deteriorating around them. The physical result of this mainly residential, commercial, and civic redevelopment, when coupled with associated highway construction, was the wholesale loss of entire historic neighborhoods, both the actual community and the physical places in which its members lived and worked. Urban renewal stands as an unsettled realm of recent American history and will likely remain so as its buildings and landscapes face their own threats of demolition and radical rehabilitation.

In the 1920s and 1930s, an ever-expanding automobile culture, overcrowding in urban neighborhoods, and the rise of a regional consciousness, led planners to champion regional planning initiatives focused on population decentralization. These emergent concepts came to full fruition in the decades following World War II when sustained economic growth provided the means for the mass relocation of people and resources to the metropolitan periphery. Regions still largely identified with their historic centers, but “downtown” became increasingly irrelevant except as a location for employment or the destination for an occasional night out; postwar Americans increasingly lived, or at least dreamed of living, in the suburbs. Suburbanites coasted downtown on new, federally subsidized expressways—the construction of which had either demolished or geographically isolated many neighborhoods—before parking in the hulking garages or on surface lots that replaced aging buildings in the city center. The antipathy of contemporary architectural thought toward history and a more generalized consumer embrace of almost anything “new” further deepened the nation’s disassociation with and sympathy for its once vital cities.

Postwar urban renewal proponents sought to visually and economically revitalize American cities by breaking the self-reinforcing cycle of physical and economic decay. They sought to replace districts viewed as derelict, dirty, and beyond rehabilitation—most, not coincidentally, occupied by poor, mainly black residents—with sleek buildings set into park-like open landscapes. Backers of urban renewal

frequently promoted the new development as racially and socioeconomically integrated enclaves that featured new housing units with modern space and amenities generally only available in the suburbs. Upheld as an ideal solution to a multifaceted problem, urban renewal schemes would reinvigorate cities, slow middle-class depopulation and associated revenue loss, and even function as a panacea for a host of economic and social ills.

The immediate effect of urban renewal projects was devastation. Residents of areas slated for clearance were forcibly removed from their houses, business, and neighborhoods through eminent domain. With little or no public assistance, they had to find accommodation elsewhere in the city and rarely were given the option to return once redevelopment was completed. The longer-term outcomes of urban renewal are more varied. Many of the apartment and townhouse developments intended for middle- and upper-middle-class residents were and continue to be successful, yet within a neighborhood they frequently exhibit an aloof, occasionally garrison-like, character bearing similarity to the socioeconomic division and isolation common to suburban subdivisions. Racial integration might also be cited as an achievement; however, its full potential and impact was undoubtedly reduced because the heyday of urban renewal paralleled the heights of the civil rights movement and the passage of related legislation. In particular, the Fair Housing Act (Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968) gave at least middle-income African Americans greater ability to achieve ownership of a free-standing house in the suburbs.

The effects of urban renewal on historic preservation in America are also mixed. Urban renewal and interstate highway construction are widely known to be the primary causes of postwar urban demolition. It is estimated that by 1966 fifty percent of the properties then recorded by HABS had been lost, and the program’s “preservation through documentation” philosophy became all the more urgent as thousands of unrecorded buildings faced the wrecking ball.^[1] Renewal areas did often retain a selected scattering of individual neighborhood landmarks, such as churches or schools, or an odd block of exceptional houses, reflecting “preservation” when the concept of historic districts was only emerging and the appreciation

of vernacular architecture was virtually unknown. Indeed, one National Park Service regional officer commented that selective preservation of key historic buildings was an important component of both urban renewal projects and the not-unrelated creation of urban-based historical parks, observing: "most cities are proud of their history and want to preserve at least some [but not all] of their landmarks."^[ii] Yet, for increasing numbers of people, the marooning of a few benchmark historic buildings within otherwise devastated acres was at best a token gesture, stripping the survivor of its urban context and instituting a not-always-successful mix of old and new.

The staggering extent and rapidity of demolition was quickly met by an unprecedented level of preservation activism, which culminated in the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. By establishing a system of preservation in the United States and fostering the growth and evolution of a national preservation consciousness, it might very well be argued that the benefits of this legislation have outpaced the cultural losses that spurred its conception. The conflict between urban renewal and preservation maintains relevance in the twenty-first century, yet in an ironic manner that was likely not predictable a half-century ago. Urban renewal districts are now reaching the age when they can legitimately be evaluated as historic resources in their own right. Within the system set up by the 1966 Act, preservationists must weigh the significance and physical integrity of districts doubly burdened with buildings whose aesthetic qualities are not yet appreciated, and whose historical contexts are linked to problematic, however well-intentioned, public policy and its implementation.

Notes, Urban Renewal

[i] Michael Wallace, "Reflections on the History of Historic Preservation," in *Presenting the Past: Essays on History and the Public*, ed. Susan Porter Benson, Stephen Brier, Roy Rosenzweig (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), 173, for statistic; James C. Massey, "Preservation Through Documentation," *Historic Preservation* 18 (Jul-Aug 1966): 148, for HABS and urban renewal.

[ii] Ronald F. Lee, NPS Region 5 Director to the Director of the National Park Service [Conrad L. Wirth], 28 Jul. 1960, red notebook #9, RG 23—Mission 66, 1955-1966, Harpers Ferry Center Library, Harpers Ferry, WV.

While the Advisory Council assisted agencies with Sections 106/110 compliance beginning in 1980, HABS benefited from the requirement that documentation of historic or architecturally significant properties be completed prior to federally funded action that resulting in demolition or alteration.^[22] Section 110 stipulated that the documentation be deposited in the Library of Congress, or another appropriate agency so designated by the Secretary of Interior, in accordance with the opening passages of NHPA that called for drawings, photographs, and other materials on historic buildings. Executive Order 11593 clarified HABS's role in the mitigative process as early as 1971, specifically stating that the materials had to come to the HABS collection and eliminating any potential alternative repositories.^[23] In this way, as an archive, HABS complemented the work of those organizations that were, and are, entrusted with the conservation, preservation and maintenance of America's historic resources. The legally prescribed mitigation documentation has done much to sustain the HABS collection, and by the late 1990s, accounted for one-third of the entries.

Although mitigative documentation would not assuage the authors of *With Heritage So Rich*, it does supply primary data on endangered sites for scholarly examination. In effect, the guidelines for creating HABS documentation to the Secretary of Interior's Standards provided the methodology for any practical application of Sections 106/110 recording.^[24] The HABS standard also became a model for the statewide survey and registration programs required by Section 110, as State Historic Preservation Offices inventoried, field noted, and described the historic and cultural resources within their states, county by county. The legacy of field work lies in a renewed appreciation for the vernacular expressions of America's multicultural past and present found not only in the work of HABS but also in organizations its methodology and scope inspired, such as the Vernacular Architecture Forum, that promote the study and appreciation of the nation's total heritage, not just the highlights.



Isaac M. Wise Temple, Plum & Eighth streets, Cincinnati, Ohio; Jack E. Boucher, photographer, 1971; HABS No. OH-643. This synagogue was designed in the Moorish style by James Keyes Wilson, the first president of the Cincinnati Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and was erected in 1863-1865. It was considered to be among the best designs of its type in the country.

With regard to disciplines of architecture, history, and preservation, the purpose and structure of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and its subsequent amendments was one result of contemporary changes impacting the way Americans documented, understood, and interpreted their built environment. Yet it also became a catalyst for even greater evolution within these allied fields.

Beaux-Arts pedagogy and architectural practice, coupled with the widespread appeal and influence of the Colonial Revival movement, provided much of the methodological foundation for the early HABS survey including the professional character of its primary practitioner: the “architect-historian.” The years following World War II saw the Beaux-Arts architectural methodology overturned by Modernist principles. Broadly speaking, these principles saw little usefulness in the knowledge and study of history and they had a profound effect on design in this country. The changes were reflected in the HABS documentation as well; the drawings become more mechanical and less spontaneous as architectural details were relegated to their own sheets and the information previously conveyed by annotations was left to the historical reports. The reports, in turn, expanded in length and complexity as increasing demands placed on historians to provide evidence for the historical merit of the structure resulted in a greater emphasis on contextual development.

By the time of the initial passage of the NHPA, architecture and architectural history had become largely estranged from each other. Architectural education moved forward without history and the associated demise of the architect-historian created a scholarly gap filled by the embryonic discipline of architectural history. In post-World War II America, architectural historians were most frequently male, generally found in departments of art history, and preoccupied with establishing an architectural “canon” based largely on national and international stylistic trends and categories.^[25] Perhaps illogical in hindsight, these historians of buildings had very little to do with the grassroots, historic preservation movements gaining traction across the country, which traditionally had been defined by women saving buildings through local campaigns situated on the “sentimental, emotional, and associational power of particular places.”^[26] The relatively conservative approaches espoused by architectural historians at this

time were also more and more at odds with the rise of social history in the American academy, a development that was redefining the purpose, focus, and outcome of historical studies.

It was within this dynamic atmosphere that the United States Congress authorized the NHPA, legislation that outlined an immense preservation system overseen by the federal government, but practiced largely at the local and state levels.^[27] The system generated a need for skilled practitioners who could facily draw upon the knowledge and insight in formerly disparate arms of scholarship and activism, and understand both the architectural canon as well as the indivisibility of the built environment from its historical contexts. Through such programs as the National Register of Historic Places, the NHPA created equal footing for historic properties of local, state, or national significance, implementing a broad and flexible approach for comprehending a property’s significance promoted by HABS since its earliest days.^[28]

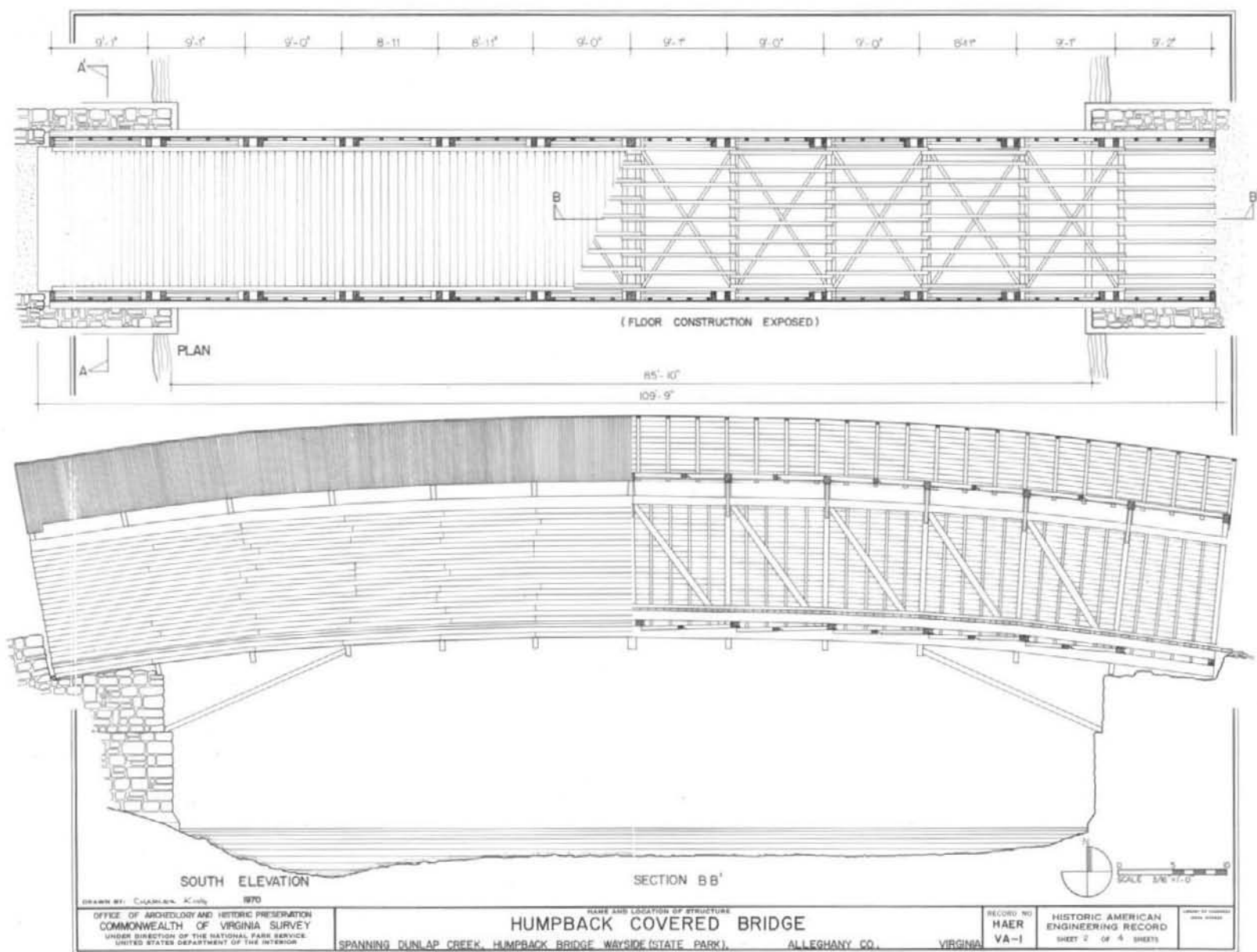
In the decades following the NHPA passage, ever-increasing numbers of government preservation professionals and private consultants have done much to unite the once divided territory of “architectural historian” and “preservationist.”^[29] Although still not fully reconciled, this transition has been greatly aided by continued, parallel academic and scholarly developments directed toward an even more multidisciplinary approach to the built environment and its relevant historical contexts. This approach is informed by new methodology and widening research areas within the fields of social and cultural history, archeology, sociology, and the increased acceptance that vernacular buildings and landscapes are as important as the designed and high-style.^[30] As in the field as a whole, HABS has benefited from the on-going maturation of historic preservation since passage of the NHPA. Its historians have educational backgrounds usefully structured through mixed programs and coursework in American studies, history, architectural history, and preservation. As this knowledge has transferred into practice, the expectations for HABS historical work has been significantly raised and is now understood to be as indispensable to full documentation as measured drawings and photography.



The Republic Building, 209 S. State Street, Chicago, Illinois; Richard Nickel, photographer, 1960; HABS No. IL-1004. This early skyscraper was designed by Holabird & Roche and built in 1905 on Chicago's Loop. It included fireproof, steel frame and terra cotta construction. The documentation was donated by Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, and was undertaken prior to the building's demolition in 1961.



Detail, Republic Building. The three-part window seen here—consisting of a large, fixed central panel flanked by smaller double-hung sash windows—came to be known as the “Chicago Window.” It was used in many of the city’s landmark, early twentieth century skyscrapers.



Humpback Covered Bridge, Spanning Dunlap Creek, Humpback Bridge Wayside State Park, Alleghany County, Virginia; Charles King, delineator, 1970; HAER No. VA-1. This was the oldest surviving bridge in the state. Its curved kingpost form was unique to American bridge design. It was recorded as part of the first statewide survey conducted by the newly created Historic American Engineering Record.

As further evidence of the coming of age of federal preservation programs,^[31] in 1969, the Historic American Engineering Record was established as a sister program to HABS, to focus on documenting the industrial and engineered components of America's built environment. HAER developed out of a close working alliance between HABS and the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of History and Technology (now the Museum of American History). In

a similar manner to HABS, HAER is supported through an agreement between NPS, the Library of Congress, and the American Society of Civil Engineers. This agreement was later ratified by four other engineering societies: the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, and the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical and Petroleum Engineers.

Appropriate subjects for documentation are individual sites or objects, such as a bridge, ship, or steel works; or larger systems, like railroads, canals, electronic generation and transmission networks, parkways and roads. As the most ubiquitous historic engineering structure on the landscape, bridges have been a mainstay of HAER recording; HABS itself documented more than 100 covered bridges prior to 1969. In recent years, maritime documentation has

become an important program focus. Not until 2000 would the demand for further specialization generate another associated program from HABS; at that time, the Historic American Landscapes Survey was born with the hopes of bringing the landscape to the forefront of the documentation, rather than considering it as the anchor for the historic and cultural resources within and on it.

Notes, A Framework to Build Upon

- [1] *With Heritage So Rich* [Report of the Special Committee on Historic Preservation], Landmark Reprint Series (1966; reprint, Washington, DC: Preservation Press, 1983), 194.
- [2] The report was commissioned and published by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and a Special Committee of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. It came out in January of 1966, although the committee was called together in 1964 and traveled abroad in 1965 to evaluate European preservation models.
- [3] *Federal Historic Preservation Laws*, as amended 2006 edition, 24-27.
- [4] Housing Acts, 1961 and 1965. *With Heritage So Rich*, 190-91.
- [5] *With Heritage So Rich*, 192-93.
- [6] *Ibid.*, 192.
- [7] *Federal Historic Preservation Laws*, (as amended) 2006 Edition, 5-6.
- [8] *Ibid.*, 7.
- [9] *Ibid.*, 12-19.
- [10] *Ibid.*, 12. This is prescribed in Section 2 of the Historic Sites Act.
- [11] Barry Mackintosh, *The Historic Sites Survey and National Historic Landmarks Program: A History* (DC: DOI, 1985).
- [12] *With Heritage So Rich*, 190; Barry Mackintosh, *The National Historic Preservation Act and the National Park Service: A History*, (DC: DOI, 1986).
- [13] *Federal Historic Preservation Laws*, 12.
- [14] *Past Meets Future: Saving America's Historic Environments*, edited by Antoinette J. Lee (Washington, DC: Preservation Press, 1992). [Papers presented at NTHP Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA, October 1991]. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of NHPA, the Trust conference addressed how far the preservation movement had come, and identified current needs. One of particular importance was the recognition of the need to consider multicultural topics, of the need for cultural diversity. See also, Antoinette J. Lee, "Discovering Old Cultures in the New World: The Role of Ethnicity," in *The American Mosaic: Preserving A Nation's Heritage*, edited by Robert E. Stipe and Antoinette J. Lee (Washington, DC: US/ICOMOS, 1987), 179-206, especially 195 regarding the HABS project in Nicodemus, Kansas.
- [15] *With Heritage So Rich*, 191.
- [16] *With Heritage So Rich*, 189-95; Robert E. Stipe, "Historic Preservation: The Process and the Actors," in *The American Mosaic*, 1-34; John Fowler, "The Federal Government as Standard Bearer," in *The American Mosaic*, 35-80.
- [17] J. Myrick Howard, "Where the Action Is: Preservation and Local Governments," in *The American Mosaic*, 119-22; Elizabeth A. Lyon, "The States: Preservation in the Middle," in *The American Mosaic*, 81-112.
- [18] The phrase "decade of decision" was the title of a speech given by National Trust Chairman, Gordon Gray, to the 1966 Annual Meeting. At the bicentennial, preservationists called for a "decade of progress." *With Heritage So Rich*, 12-13.



Susan Downey House, High Street, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, West Virginia; Jack E. Boucher, photographer, 1958; HABS No. WV-23. Used over the years as a residence, store, tavern, and boarding house, this is a good example of the types of buildings present here during the Civil War. It was photographed prior to its restoration as part of a new park unit.

[19] See www.nps.gov/history/nr accessed 19 March 2008.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Executive Order 11593, codified by the 1976 amendment to the Act.

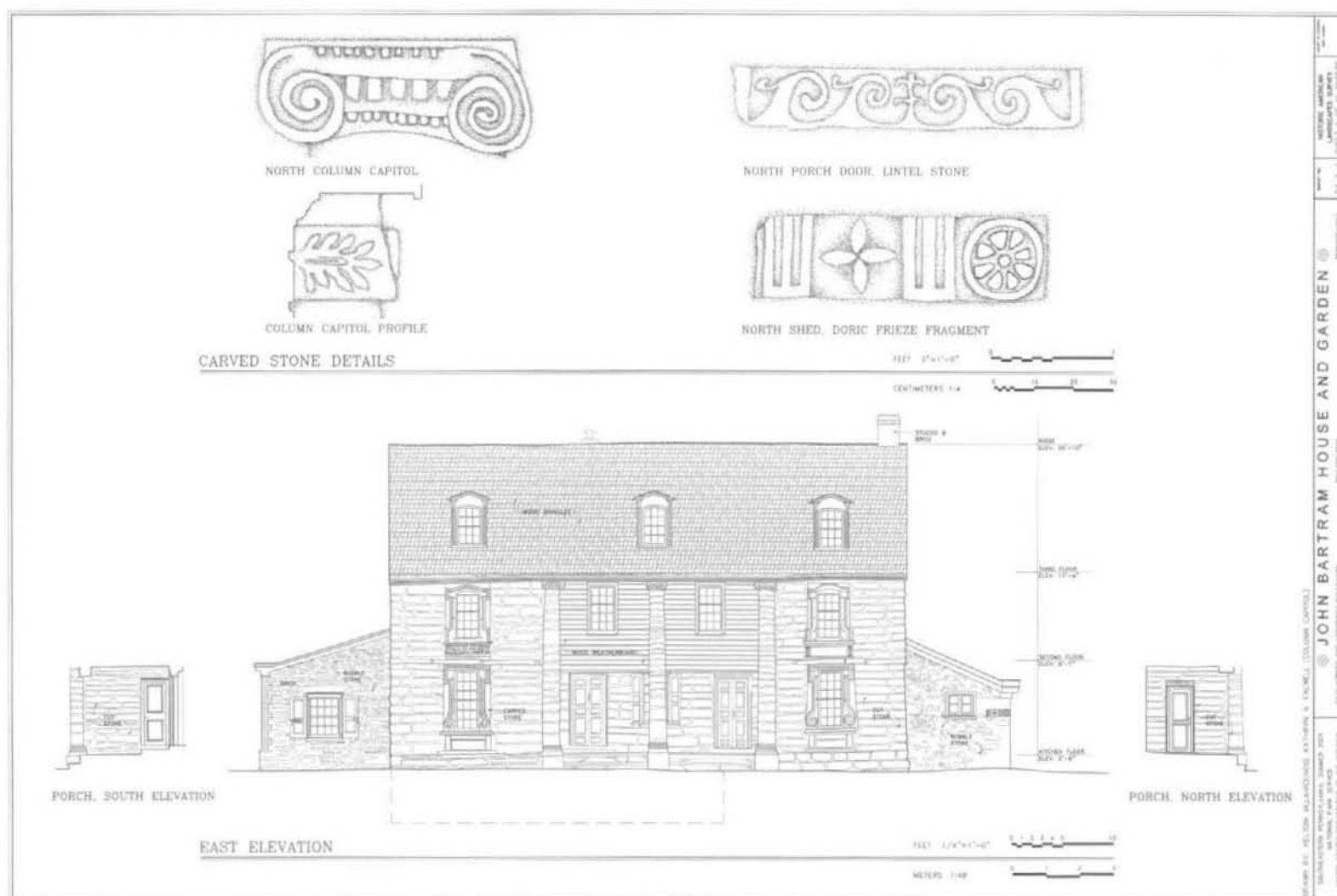
[22] *Federal Historic Preservation Laws*, 63.

[23] Mitigation documentation dates to the 1971 order, and by 1980, devolved to the Regional Offices of the Park Service.

[24] See *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Architectural and Engineering Documentation: HABS/HAER Standards*. Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1990.

[25] For the relationship between architectural history and preservation in the United States, see Daniel Bluestone, "Academics in Tennis Shoes: Historic Preservation and the Academy," and Richard Longstreth, "Architectural History and the Practice of Historic Preservation in the United States," both in *JSAH* 58 (Sep. 1999): 300-307, and 326-333.

- [26] Bluestone, 301.
- [27] For a comprehensive discussion of government-sponsored and guided preservation in the United States, see the essays in *The American Mosaic*.
- [28] Longstreth, 327, for equal importance to local, state, national.
- [29] Bluestone, 304.
- [30] For more on vernacular architecture, see Paul Groth, "Making New Connections in Vernacular Architecture," *JSAH* 58 (Sep. 1999): 444-451, and essays in the 25th Anniversary Issue of *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 13:2 (2006/07).
- [31] On private sector growth between 1966 and 1976, see Gregory E. Andrews, "Historic Preservation in the Private Sector," in *The American Mosaic*, 209-21.



John Bartram House & Garden, West Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Kelton Villavicencio and Kathryn A. Falwell, delineators, 2001; HALS No. PA-1-A. The house was constructed 1728-1770 by John Bartram, America's first botanist. The documentation was supported by a congressional appropriation for HABS recording in Southeastern Pennsylvania, and aided in the rehabilitation and reinterpretation of the site. It was the first Pennsylvania site to be recorded for the Historic American Landscape Survey.



Church of the Advocate, Diamond Street, Philadelphia, PA; Joseph Elliott, photographer, 2000; HABS No. PA-6672. This Landmark site is among the nation's finest French-influenced Gothic Revival churches. In the 1960s and 1970s it served as the staging ground for the Black Power movement. Its documentation was intended to bring attention to the neglected historic resources within the neighborhood; the netting visible in the photo was installed to catch falling plaster.

Reinforcing Our Structure

Enhanced Standards, Methodologies, and Outreach

In 1983, the publication of *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Architectural and Engineering Documentation* established HABS/HAER methods as the benchmark for recording by government agencies. The Secretary's Standards outline acceptable practices for documenting historic sites and structures to ensure the adequacy and reliability of the information, and the uniformity and archival stability of the materials. They are used in conjunction with the *Guidelines* which summarize specific requirements and formats for drawings, historical reports, and photographs. During this era, HABS worked with a number of State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) to record a selection of historic sites that best represented that state's own particular architectural heritage. HABS was also called upon to provide documentation in support of important government sponsored initiatives such as the creation of National Heritage Areas like the Southwestern Pennsylvania Industrial Heritage Area (1988), and the Cane River Heritage Area (1994); and Congressional funding for regionally targeted preservation efforts such as those conducted in Southeastern Pennsylvania and Birmingham, Alabama.

The 1980s witnessed the introduction of new drawing technologies such as Computer Aided Drafting (CAD). The gradual move from hand drawing to CAD enabled the recording of large-scale structures such as the Lincoln, Jefferson, and Washington memorials. Likewise, traditional hand-measuring has been augmented by digitally rectified photogrammetry and three-dimensional laser scanning. Informal digital photography serves as a drawing and reference tool along with the large-format black-and-white archival photography necessary for official documentation. The collection has also benefited from new technologies as the documentation was made available to the public via the internet as part of the *American Memory* project of the Library of Congress. Another important initiative was the creation in 1983 of the Charles E. Peterson Prize, a student competition for the best set of measured drawings prepared to HABS standards. The prize is intended to encourage participation in the documentation process. And in 2000, the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS) was created to explore the intersection between the built and natural environments.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Architectural and Engineering Documentation, first published in the Federal Register in September 1983, was created primarily to provide guidance for mitigation documentation in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The Standards are essentially those outlined by the HABS and HAER programs and concern the development of documentation for endangered sites and structures. Most of the mitigation documentation is coordinated through the regional offices of the NPS. The level of documentation created is dependent on the significance of the structure(s)—a determination that is often made on

advice of the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs). Mitigation is a major contributor of records into the collection, particularly with regard to vernacular structures and those of state and local significance.

Similar to the “surveys” of the early years, during the 1980s and 1990s, HABS conducted a number of statewide documentation projects of historic sites in partnership with State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs). These survey level recording efforts were largely photographic, but many included short-form historical reports. The first undertaken was in South Carolina in 1986, adding over 800 images of



Indian Fields Methodist Campground, St. George, South Carolina; Jack E. Boucher, photographer, 1988; HABS No. SC-595. The camp meeting reflects the impact of the nineteenth century evangelical movement in America. These frame structures, consisting of two rooms on each floor, encircle the central tabernacle where religious meetings are held. Its recording was part of the statewide HABS survey in cooperation with the State Historic Preservation Office.



Day-And-Night Diner, 456 North Main Street, Palmer, Massachusetts; Jack E. Boucher, photographer, 1987; HABS No. MA-1231. The Day-And-Night is a wonderfully intact example of the Worcester Lunch Car. Built in 1923, the diner is constructed of sheet metal and its exterior enameled in cream with red details. It was recorded as part of a statewide HABS survey sponsored by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

about sixty structures to the collection. The sites, all of which are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, included such varied examples as a cotton gin, a Carnegie library, a Methodist camp ground, and a house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Similarly in Massachusetts, buildings were selected based on the theme of community to include publicly accessible historic properties such as Faneuil Hall, the Oliver Ames Free Library, the Essex Town Hall, the Eero Saarinen designed auditorium at MIT, and the Day-and-Night, a popular roadside diner. In Alaska, HABS and HAER worked together to record a diverse collection

of regionally specific architectural forms such as fisheries, canneries, copper and gold mining sites and their associated company towns, rustic settlers' cabins in the Alaska woods, and native Alaskan dwellings. The Alaska survey also highlighted many of the Russian Orthodox Churches, buildings that serve as reminders of the earlier and somewhat sporadic presence of Russian hunters and traders.

In a few instances, HABS received Congressional appropriations for documentation within specific areas. In these cases, the selection of sites was determined



Saint George Russian Orthodox Church, St. George Island, Alaska; Jet Lowe, photographer, 1989; HABS No. AK-50-5. The church, with its characteristic onion dome, reflects the influence of Russian exploration into the Alaska territories. It was built in 1936 by the native Aleut population in the style of the original church built in 1833 by the Russian-American Company. Its documentation was part of a statewide HABS study of Alaska.

significance to the region's historical and architectural development, with priority given to those that are endangered. Appropriations give HABS the opportunity to add to scholarship information on important individual structures or building types not previously studied, and where funding for such activity is otherwise lacking. HABS partners with local preservation organizations who use the documentation for rehabilitation, interpretation, and community development initiatives. In 1992, HABS received a congressional appropriation for the documentation of historic sites in Southeastern

Pennsylvania, funding that supported an annual summer field team. An example project was the documentation of twenty-seven of the approximately 150 extant Friends meeting houses associated with the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. The project recognized the region's ties to the Society of Friends (Quakers), as Philadelphia was the heart of Quaker William Penn's colony. Work on the meeting houses culminated in two National Historic Landmark (NHL) nominations, and the documentation was used by the Society and the Athenaeum of Philadelphia in an exhibition and symposium on Quaker history and



Bradford-Marshallton Friends Meeting House, Marshallton, Pennsylvania; Jack E. Boucher, photographer, 1999; HABS No. PA-1105. The meeting house was built in 1759 and is still in use, although without central heat or electricity. It was divided by partitions into identical apartments for men and women, as aptly demonstrated by this photograph. Its documentation was part of a study of the Friends meeting houses of the Delaware Valley.



St. Stephen's Slovak Catholic Church towers, Cambria City, Pennsylvania; Jet Lowe, photographer, 1988; HABS No. PA-5672. Cambria City lies near the yards of the Bethlehem Steel Company. The church that towers over the rooftops of the working-class houses reflects the heritage of the immigrant steel workers. HABS/HAER conducted a multi-year study to identify, record, and interpret the historic resources within the Southwestern Pennsylvania Heritage Area.

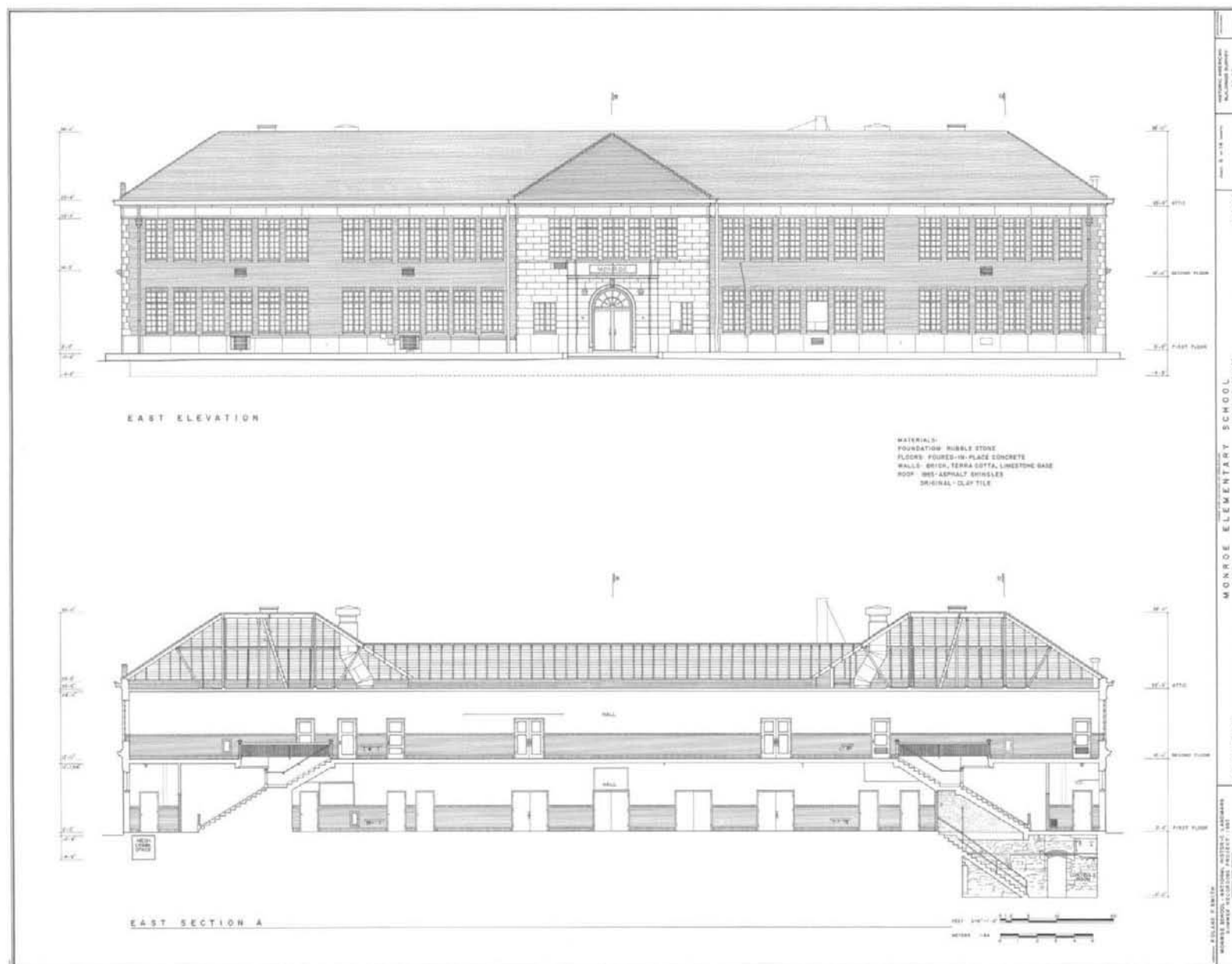
culture. The HABS recording of Laurel Hill Cemetery, the second oldest rural cemetery in America, also resulted in the first ever NHL designation for cemetery design. HABS documentation guided the reinterpretation and rehabilitation of the John Bartram House, the eighteenth-century dwelling of the colonial botanist; and of The Woodlands, one of the best and earliest examples of neoclassical domestic architecture in America. HABS projects brought attention to two endangered sites that have since been saved—the 1918 Chester Power Station, a pioneer in the design and engineering of power plants,

and the 1799 Lazaretto Quarantine Station, one of the oldest public health facilities in the country. A project to record landmarks in North Philadelphia's neighborhoods, such as the French Gothic-style Church of the Advocate, Wagner Free Institute of Science, and Girard College, became the focus of local preservation organizations and the University of Pennsylvania to promote urban revitalization.

Also in recent years, HABS has recorded new NPS National Historic Sites prior to their public opening as an integral part of their preservation and interpretation plans. These

sites were the Monroe School in Topeka, Kansas involved in the landmark *Brown vs. the Board of Education* Supreme Court case; and Manzanar, a World-War II Japanese relocation center, in Inyo County, California. The Monroe School was the school for African-American children who were denied entry into the nearby Sumner School for whites. The legacy of the Brown decision is as the impetus of the modern Civil Rights movement because it provided a legal

framework for challenging institutional discrimination. Manzanar National Historic Site was established to preserve the stories of the internment of nearly 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II, and to remind us of the fragility of American civil liberties. When HABS recorded the site in 1994, it included the concrete pads for the temporary wood-and-tar-paper structures that served as housing, the stone guard houses, and remnants of the



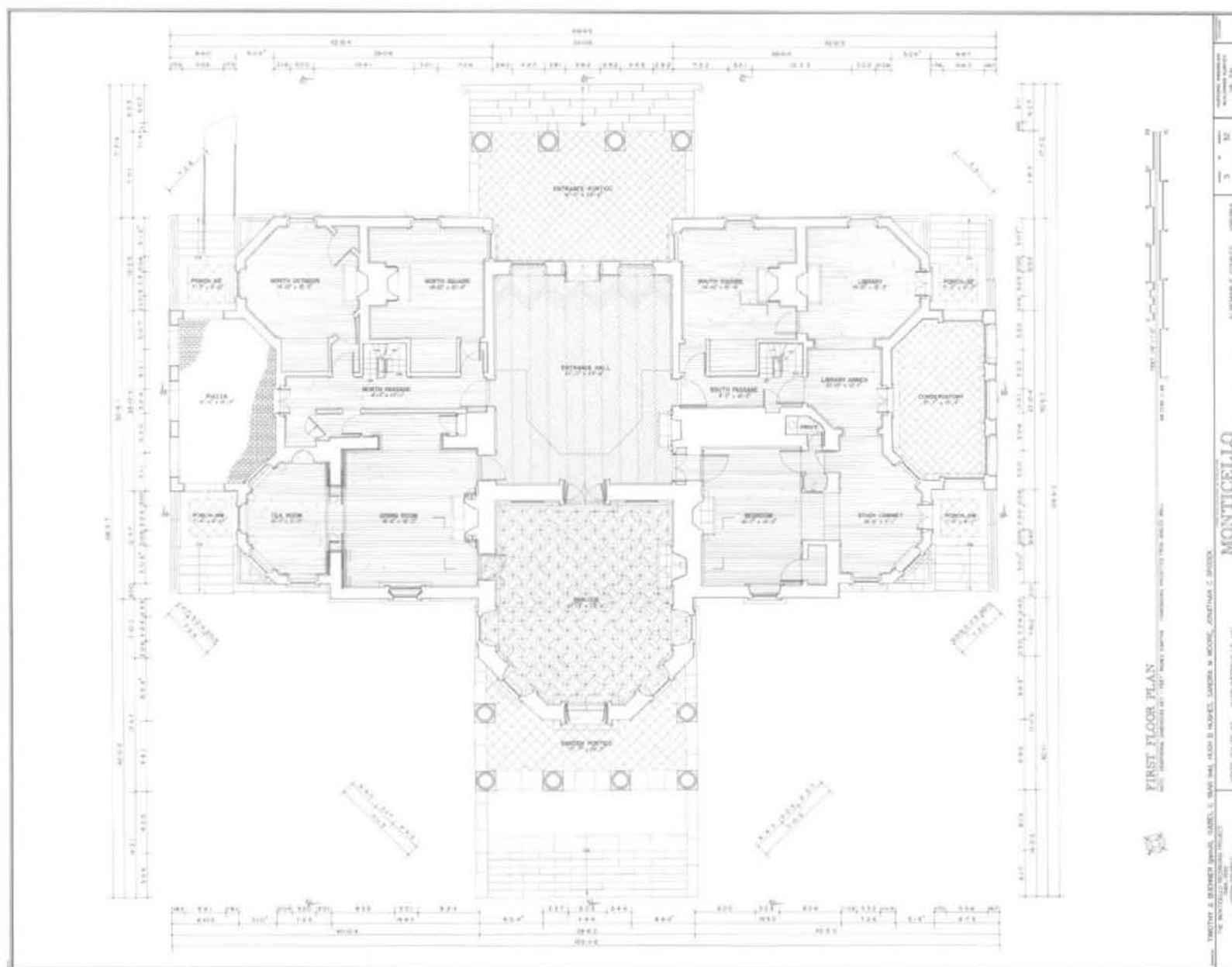
Monroe Elementary School, 15th & Monroe streets, Topeka, Kansas; Roland R. Smith, delineator, 1993; HABS No. KS-67. The Monroe School is associated with the landmark *Brown vs. the Board of Education* Supreme Court decision of 1954 that ended school segregation. The decision is considered the impetus of the modern Civil Rights movement because it provided a legal framework for challenging institutional discrimination. It was recorded after being designated a NPS National Historic Site in 1992.



Manzanar War Relocation Center, Independence vicinity, California; Brian Grogan, photographer, 1994; HABS No. CA- 2399. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor during World War II, persons of Japanese descent living on the west coast were forced into internment camps such as this. It was designated a NPS National Historic Site in 1992, and HABS was asked to document it in preparation for its restoration and interpretation.

rock gardens built by the internees, against a backdrop of a barren, mountainous landscape. Today, HABS continues to support NPS efforts to maintain and interpret their historic properties through documentation. More recent examples include the recording of the Lincoln, Jefferson, and Washington memorials; farmsteads at Antietam and Monocacy National Battlefields in Maryland, Fort Union in New Mexico, and various structures within the Natchez National Historical Park in Mississippi.

HABS also works with state parks and with other government agencies to document their historic properties. With California State Parks, HABS recorded the Weaverville Joss House, the oldest, continuously used Chinese temple in North America, and the military installations on Angel Island in San Francisco Bay. Documentation of the New Deal-era Elephant House at the National Zoo, owned by the Smithsonian Institution, occurred before changes were made in an effort to provide an improved habitat for the animals. Finally, HABS collaborates with local house



Monticello, Charlottesville vicinity, Virginia; Timothy A. Beuhner, Isabel C. Yang, Hugh D. Hughes, Sandra M. Moore, and Jonathan C. Spodek, delineators, 1992; HABS No. VA-241. The landmark home of Thomas Jefferson, third president of the United States, was begun in 1769 and evolved over the next forty years or more. The house was designed by Jefferson himself and influenced by contemporary French architecture, and the Roman classicism made popular by the work of Andrea Palladio.

adapt traditional HABS methods to CAD technology, it soon became apparent that the benefits of CAD were almost too numerous to mention. The ability to include all the requisite detail in a single drawing (instead of having to manually redraw items at larger scales), the ability for multiple draftsman to work simultaneously on a single drawing, the ease of copying replicated items, the ability to plot drawings

at any scale, the combining of the drawing and inking processes, and the ease of disseminating drawing files are but a few of these benefits.

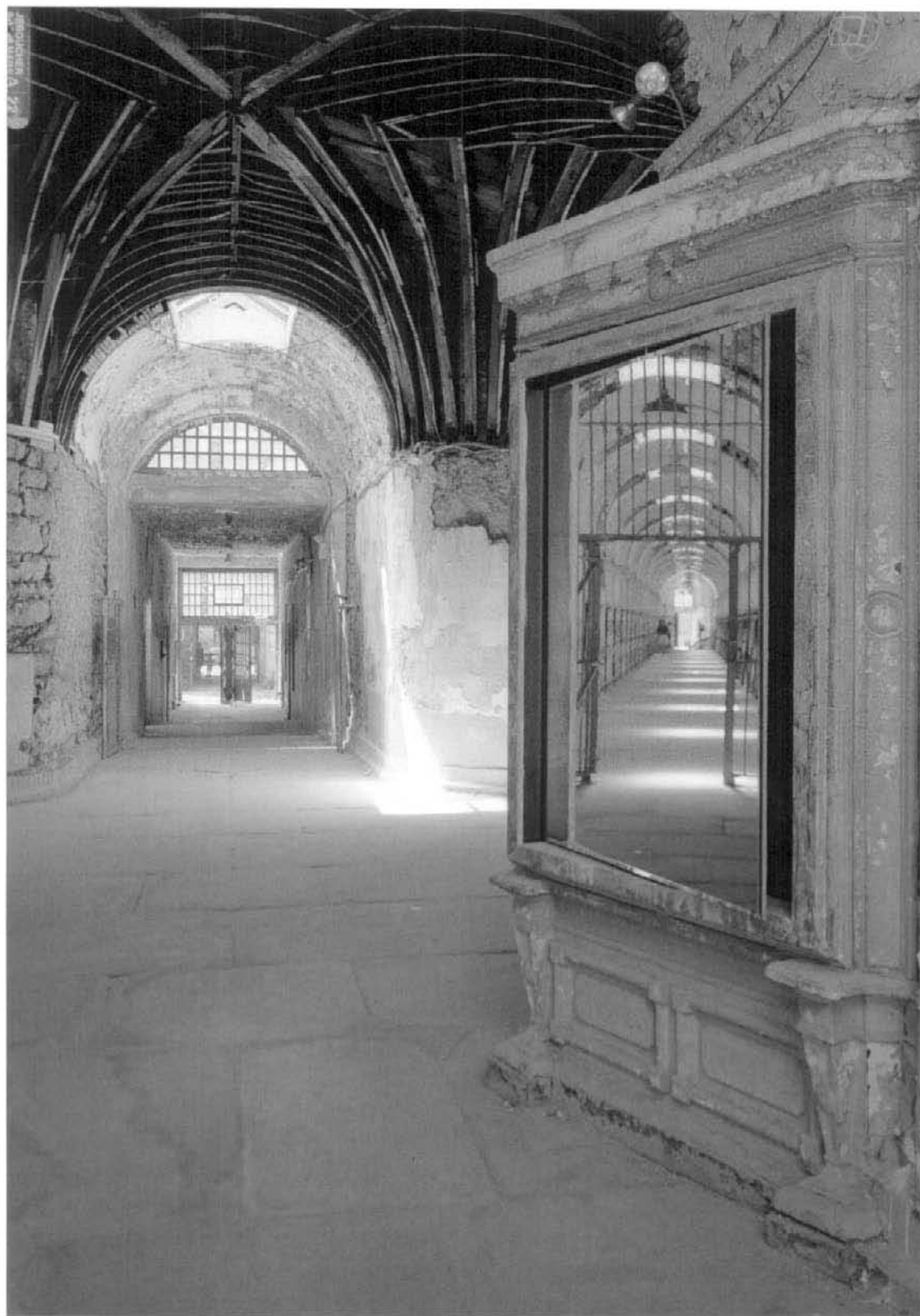
Since the production of HABS drawings is frequently the first step in a building restoration project, the need for digital data by project sponsors for use in facilities



Mark Twain House, 351 Farmington Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut; Jack E. Boucher, 1995; HABS No. CT-357. The home of author and humorist Samuel Clemens was completed in 1874. It was designed by Edward Tuckerman Potter and Alfred H. Thorp in the eclectic European-inspired picturesque then popular with the well-to-do. The Clemens were known for their opulent life-style, and entertained many notable literary figures at this house.

management has been a significant driving force in the adaptation of CAD by the HABS office. And the fact that data can now be sent digitally to the Library of Congress as an adjunct to the hard copy permanent records, means that HABS projects can now be made available on-line almost immediately upon transmittal.^[1] Although delineation by hand remains an acceptable and viable option, and HABS continues to receive donations of such projects, in 2008 all in-house HABS projects were undertaken using CAD.

The traditional HABS field measuring methodology has likewise been transformed by new digital technologies. Most HABS projects still involve the use of pencil field note sketches on graph paper and the use of standard measuring tapes. However, a number of new techniques have enhanced the ability of HABS teams to capture information and data while on site, especially where issues of size, height, access, time, and complexity of detail are significant factors. Concurrent with the adoption of CAD to document the



Eastern State Penitentiary, Fairmount Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Jack E. Boucher, photographer, 1996; HABS No. PA-1729. The penitentiary was built 1823-1836 and designed by architect John Haviland in a pattern consisting of central hub and radiating corridors lined with cell blocks. The mirrors allow guards to view activity in the corridors from a central location. Now open to the public, the documentation was intended to aid in interpretation.



Washington Monument, National Mall, Washington, D.C.; Jack E. Boucher, photographer, 1993; HABS No. DC-428. This view of the tip of the Washington Monument, taken by helicopter, was part of an effort to accurately record existing conditions as a prelude to restoration efforts. This important memorial to our nation's first president was designed by Robert Mills and erected between 1848 and 1884.

Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, HABS embraced the use of digital-rectified photogrammetry, primarily to capture the intricately sculpted stone and bronze detail integral to both buildings.

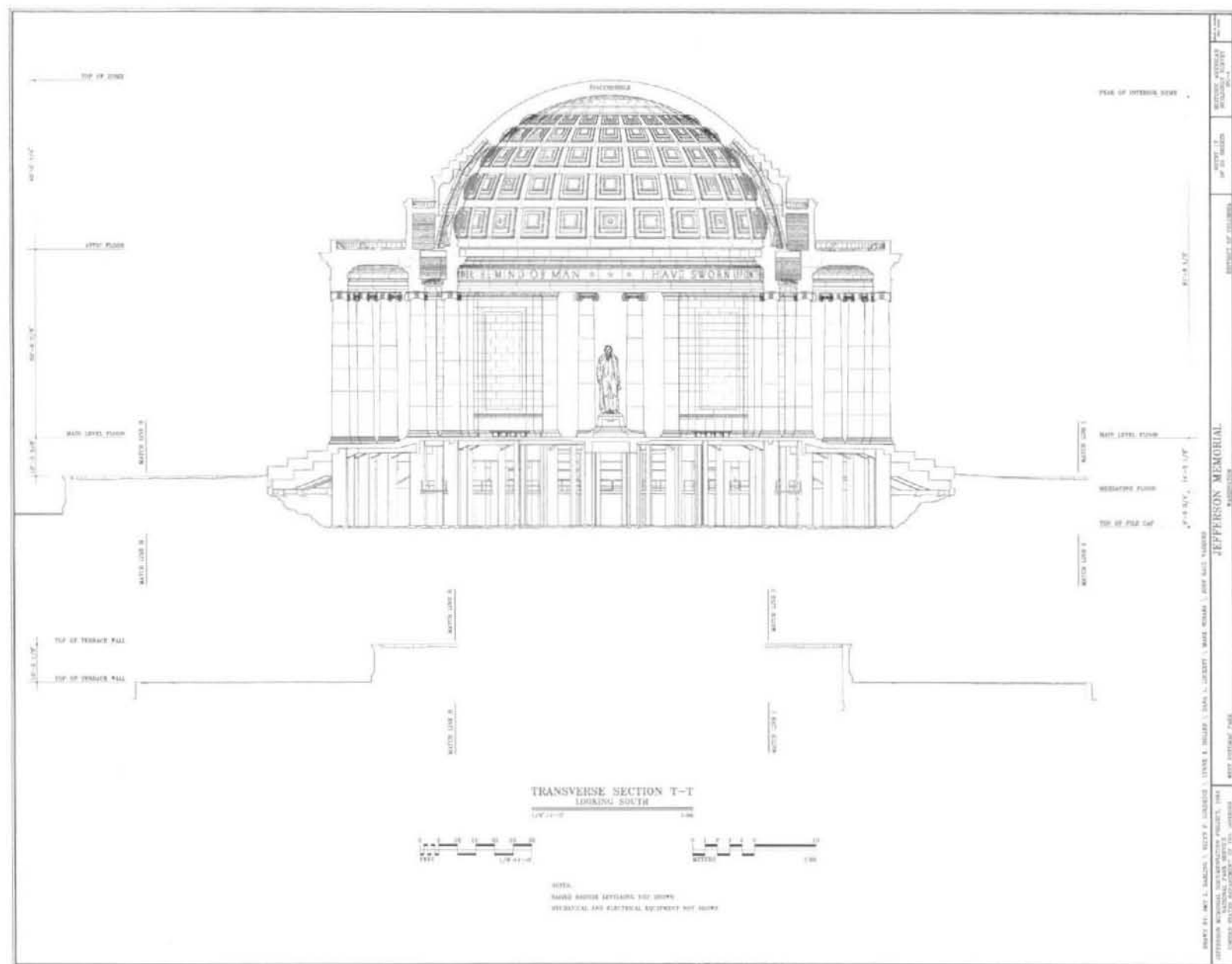
Photogrammetry, the science of using photographs to extract dimensional data, had traditionally involved the use of fragile glass plate negatives and a large, specialized

machine (a stereo plotter) in order to produce a drawing—a cumbersome and tedious process. The advent of new photogrammetric cameras and corresponding software (which resolves issues of scale and perspective distortion) has facilitated and simplified the process, which can now take place on a desktop computer. HABS has found digital-rectified photogrammetry useful in a number of situations, perhaps most notably when the four sides of the Washington

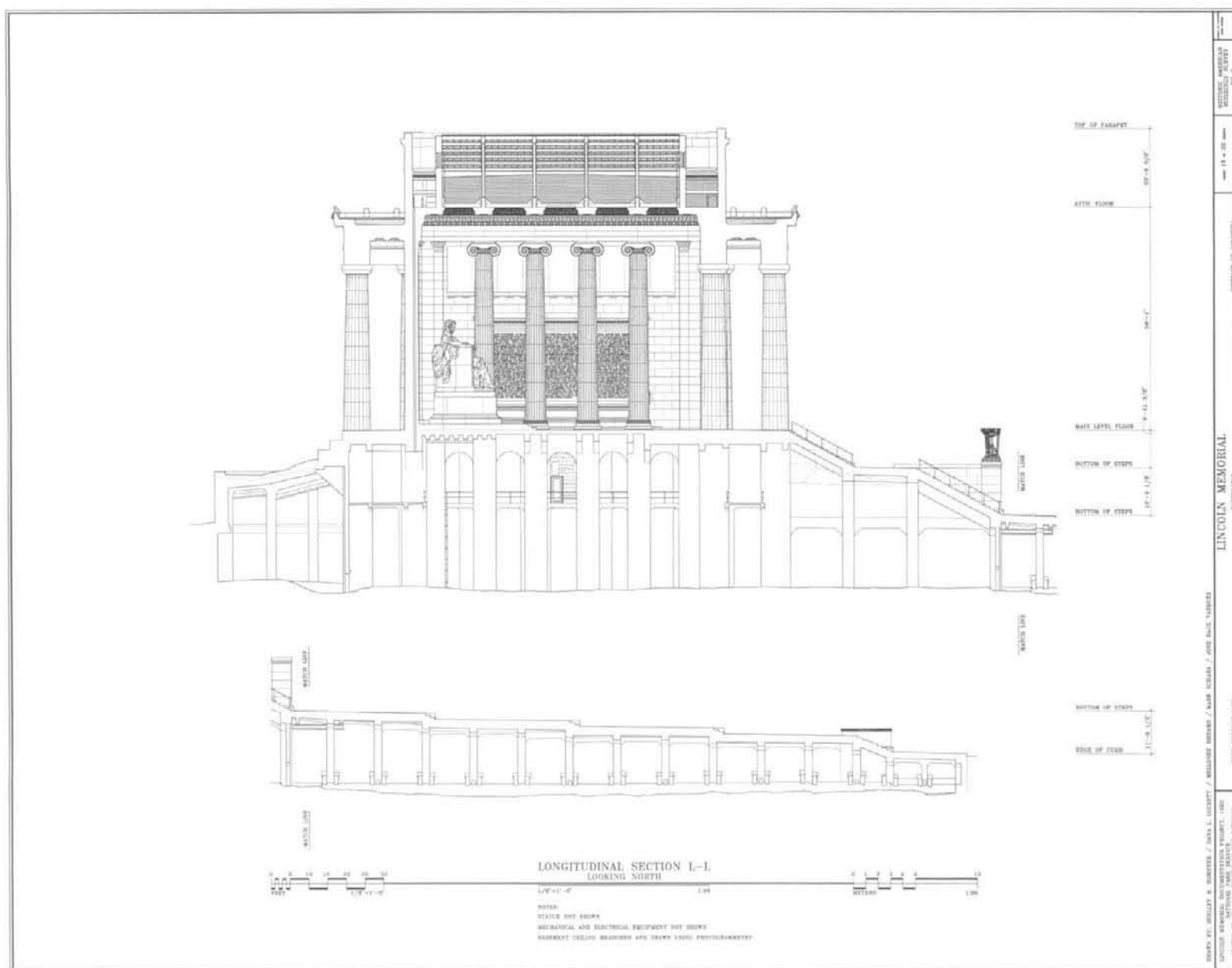
Monument were photographed from the U.S. Park Police helicopter in order to determine the precise locations of the exterior stone joints for the structure's elevations.

Likewise, inexpensive digital cameras have proven a boon for HABS field teams. Traditionally, teams used 35mm photography in order to capture images in the field for reference purposes back in the office. This process

invariably involved issues of logistics and expense, not to mention the inevitable time lag required for the development and printing of the photos. Digital photography has made these issues moot. In addition, clear, straight-on photos of relatively small and flat details can easily be brought directly into CAD, scaled, and then traced—a timely and effective way to capture field data. Digital photography has not replaced large-format,



Jefferson Memorial, West Potomac Park, Washington, D.C.; Robert Arzola, Amy L. Darling, Ellyn P. Goldkind, Lynne E. Holler, Dana L. Lockett, Mark Schara, Jose Raul Vazquez delineators, 1994; HABS No. DC-4. Erected 1939-1943, the Jefferson Memorial was designed by John Russell Pope and is recognized today as the last great American Beaux Arts monument. It is an integral part of the National Mall, picturesquely located along the tidal basin, and on axis with the White House and the Washington Memorial.



Lincoln Memorial, West Potomac Park, Washington, DC; Shelley M. Homeyer, Dana L. Lockett, Mellonee Rheams, Mark Schara, and Jose Raul Vasquez, delineators, 1993; HABS No. DC-3. This memorial to Abraham Lincoln was designed by Henry Bacon in Greek Temple form and includes a statue of Lincoln by Daniel Chester French. It was built between 1919 and 1922. The memorial was among the first sites drawn by HABS with the use of photogrammetry and Computer Aided Drafting.

black-and-white for formal documentation, however, due to the need for the permanence and archival stability provided by the original negative.

Laser technology has also proven extremely useful for capturing information in the field. For the past decade HABS has employed a laser total station, a surveying device, on numerous projects. The total station shoots a laser to a

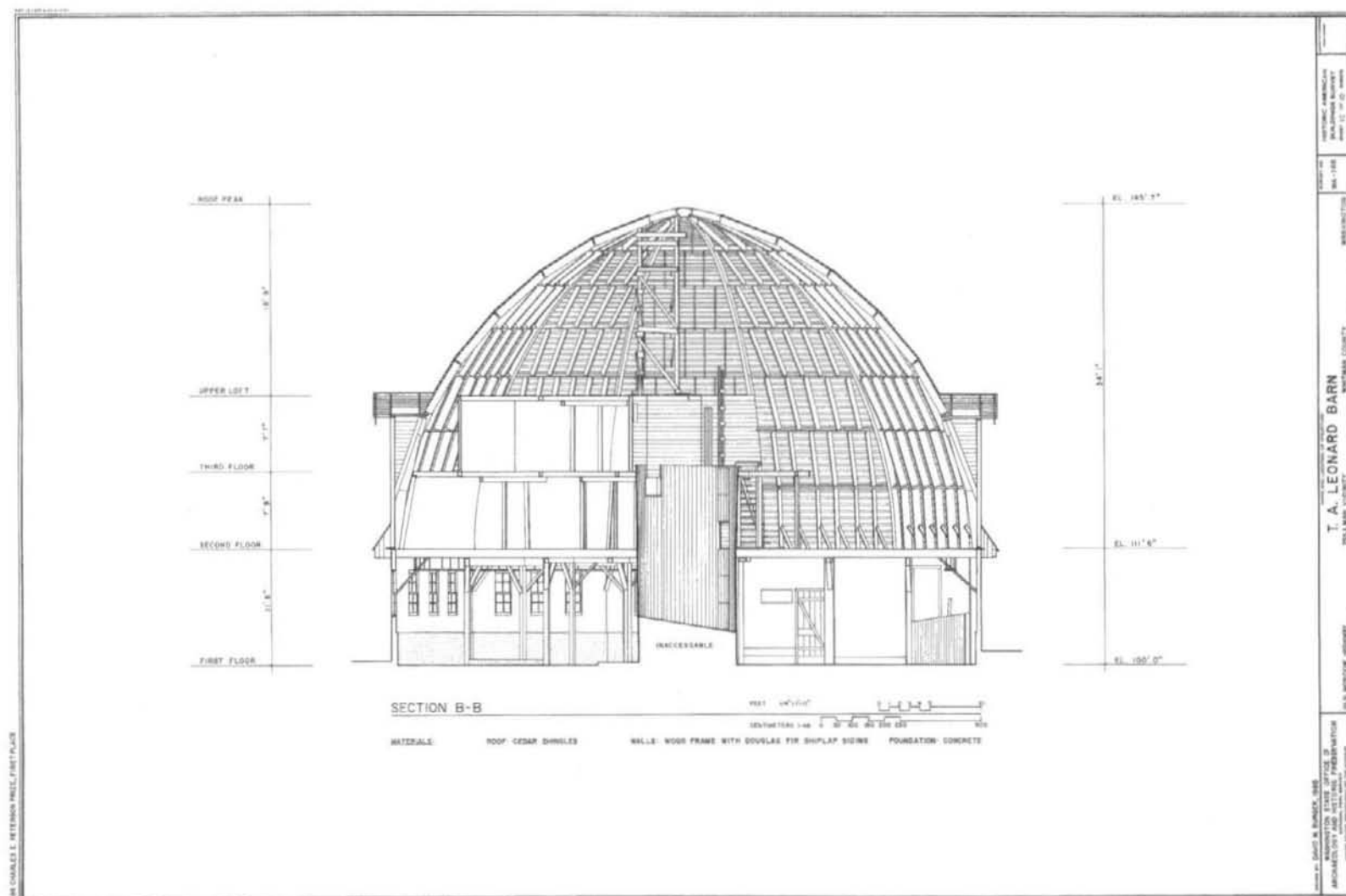
surface or a hand-held reflective target, determining, by angle and distance, the point's three-dimensional location in space, relative to the station. The data can be brought directly into CAD, where, by "connecting the dots," a three-dimensional model can be constructed. The total station has become the standard device for the production of HABS site plans. It is also particularly useful for large structures, and those involving considerable distances.

One of the most extensive undertakings involving the total station was the 1999-2000 project to document Murallas del Viejo San Juan, the historic city walls built by the Spanish in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which are more than two miles in total length and close to seventy feet tall in places.

The most recent major addition to the HABS arsenal of digital field devices is the three-dimensional laser scanner. This device rapidly shoots multiple laser points across a predetermined field, resulting in a three-dimensional "point cloud." Using relatively sophisticated software, surfaces can then be mapped to the points, and subsequent "slices"

taken to produce standard two-dimensional drawings. The laser scanner has proven to be especially appropriate for large and highly sculptural structures, such as the current, ongoing project to document the Statue of Liberty.

Inevitably, all HABS projects involve issues of logistics, time, and cost, and each of the methodologies described has its own advantages and drawbacks. The practical result of intelligent project planning is that, in fact, nearly all projects typically involve a combination of the various field documentation methodologies discussed above, including traditional hand measuring. Each of the devices described is simply an item in the HABS "tool kit." While, as noted,



T.A. Leonard Barn, Old Moscow Highway, Pullman vicinity, Washington; David Berger, delineator, 1985; HABS No. WA-168. Erected in 1917, the Leonard Barn is one of the few remaining of numerous round barns built in the state during a period of agricultural experimentation. The drawings were produced by students at Washington State University as an entry in the Charles E. Peterson Prize, a competition held annually since 1983.



Henry Williams House, Nicodemus, Kansas; Clayton B. Fraser, photographer, 1983; HABS No. KS-49-T. Nicodemus, Kansas represents the earliest and most prosperous Midwestern settlement associated with the massive westward migration of former slaves out of the south during reconstruction. Although no longer as populated as it once was, the town is recognized as a unit of the national park system.

advances in digital technology have revolutionized the documentation process, ultimately, as with any technology, it is the selective and appropriate use of the “tools” available which results in a successful documentation project.

An important student initiative created in 1982, the Charles E. Peterson Prize, honors one of the founders of the HABS program. The prize, which is cosponsored by the Athenaeum of Philadelphia and the American Institute of

Architects, is intended to increase awareness, knowledge, and appreciation of historic buildings among university students while adding to the permanent HABS collection at the Library of Congress. To date, more than 2,000 students from sixty-eight colleges and universities have participated by completing more than 500 entries and almost 5,000 sheets of measured drawings. The students have been, for the most part, architecture students in addition to architectural history, historic preservation and American

THE CANE RIVER NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA



Cane River Gin Company, Highway 119, Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana; Jack E. Boucher, photographer, 2002; HABS No. LA-1312. The documentation of the Gin Company was part of a larger, multi-year effort to record the history and architecture of the Cane River Heritage Area that will aid in the preservation and interpretation of this region.

The Historic American Buildings Survey and the Historic American Engineering Record have prepared documentation in a number of National Heritage Areas, including that in the Cane River region. National Heritage Areas are places designated by Congress in recognition of a cohesive, yet distinctive landscape peppered with natural and cultural resources. There are thirty-seven National Heritage Areas today, each locally-managed through public-private partnerships, agreements that include federal, state, and local governments. Working through such partnerships fosters collaborative planning around a theme, industry or geographical feature that influenced the region's culture and history, and encourages the development and implementation of shared goals for

the preservation and interpretation of that heritage. For the Cane River National Heritage Area in Natchitoches, Louisiana, it is the water that binds the diverse community together. Natchitoches is a cultural crossroads, where Native Americans, Africans, Europeans, and Anglo-Americans met, interacted, and settled along the Cane River. The creolization of these varied cultural traditions made for a vibrant, multi-cultural society. It also provides a rich heritage for us today, to visit, to study and to appreciate.

The heart of the Cane River National Heritage Area follows the meandering waterway, winding south to the parish boundary line. Most of the land is privately held, yet this

National Heritage Area also embraces one National Park, comprised of Oakland and Magnolia plantations, and three State Historic Sites. The state entities are three forts, a reconstruction of the original French Fort St. Jean Baptiste, the Spanish fort and mission of Los Adaes, and the American Fort Jessup. It also encompasses seven National Historic Landmarks: the historic district of Natchitoches, plus Magnolia, Oakland, Melrose, the Kate Chopin House, Los Adaes, and Fort Jessup, as well as regionally significant plantations, houses, churches, and schools.

From frontier exploration to plantation agriculture, the story of the Cane River is indelibly etched on the landscape. Architectural forms and building technologies, from bousillage to roof structures of the raised Creole house, from piece-sur-piece log construction of outbuildings to wood frame and masonry plantation houses, from small scale shotgun houses to hulking cotton gins, reflect the interdependency between the river and land. Remnants of the arpent land parcels are visible in the fence lines and hedgerows, landscape features quietly reminding viewers of Louisiana's French antecedents. Commercial centers, both in town along Front Street and downriver at the plantation stores, and transportation routes, by water, road, and rail, connected Natchitoches to a wider trade network and further encouraged a cultural mingling through the introduction of people and goods. Cemeteries and archaeological sites add to an understanding of life as it was along the Cane River.

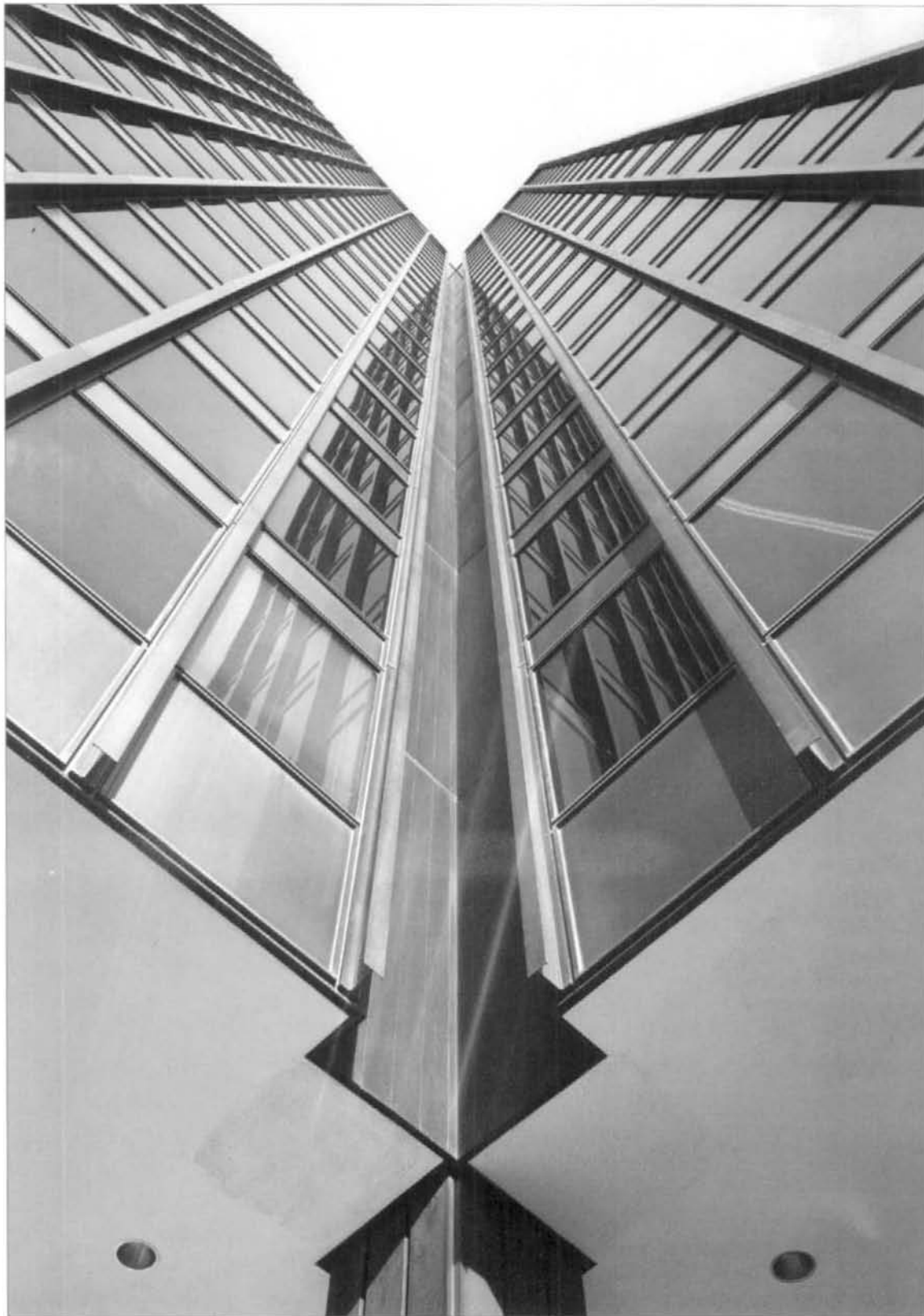
Since its establishment in 1994, concurrently with the Cane River Creole National Historical Park, the National Heritage Area has coordinated a comprehensive research program, encouraged the preservation of the cultural landscape, the documentation of cultural traditions and historic resources, and heritage tourism. Work by the Historic American Buildings Survey recording various buildings, streetscapes, and landscapes in the National Heritage Area has helped achieve these goals, providing large format photography, measured drawings, and historical research on places of import to the community.

studies majors. The projects vary in scope, ranging from the famous Pavilions at the University of Virginia to the T. A. Leonard Round Barn in Washington State.

In 2000, the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS) was established as a companion program to HABS to specifically record America's historic landscapes. In a similar tripartite agreement to that underpinning HABS, the National Park Service partnered with the Library of Congress and the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) to support the nascent HALS program. The creation of HALS reflects the growing awareness of historic landscapes as important touchstones of national, regional, and local identity. Historic landscapes vary in size from small gardens to several thousand-acre national parks. In character they range from designed to vernacular, rural to urban, and agricultural to industrial spaces. Vegetable patches, estate gardens, cemeteries, farms, quarries, nuclear test sites, suburbs, and abandoned settlements all may be considered historic landscapes. Historic landscapes foster a sense of community and place, but they are also delicate places, affected by the forces of nature, as well as by development, vandalism and neglect. They undergo changes that are often unpredictable and irreversible. For these reasons and for the benefit of future generations, it is important to document these places.^[1] Since 2000, a number of pilot projects were undertaken to help develop guidelines for recording that address the unique characteristics of landscape as opposed to structures. Designated as HALS No. PA-1, John Bartram's House and Garden site was among the first to be recorded in recognition of the botanist's contributions to the field.

Notes, Reinforcing Our Structure

- [1] The CAD files themselves are not yet available on-line due to issues regarding the update and maintenance of the files by the Library.
- [2] American Society of Landscape Architects, Historic Preservation Professional Interest Group Subcommittee on HALS and the Garden Club of America, "Historic American Landscapes Survey: Documenting America's Landscape Heritage" a brochure (Washington, DC: ASLA, 2000).



One Charles Center, Baltimore, Maryland; James Rosenthal, photographer, 2004; HABS No. MD-1158. This prototypical mid-century skyscraper, designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and completed in 1962, was photographed as part of a survey project with Maryland Historical Trust. The architecture of the recent past is now seen as an important subject for the HABS collection.

Providing the Building Blocks

The HABS Program Today

HABS continues to record significant examples of America's architectural heritage through the production of drawings, histories, and photographs made publicly accessible through the Library of Congress. The primary mission is to provide a record for future generations. While providing no historic designation and carrying no regulatory power beyond mitigation, HABS documentation is used by government agencies, State Historic Preservation Offices, local preservation organizations and private institutions and individuals to rehabilitate, interpret, manage, and promote historic properties. Documentation regularly appears in magazines such *The Old House Journal*, the National Trust's *Preservation*, and the NPS *Common Ground* magazine, as well as in scholarly journals. It has been used to produce numerous exhibitions and brochures, and full-length books such as the Norton/Library of Congress Press Visual Sourcebooks in Architecture, Design & Engineering series and most recently Jack Larkin's *Where We Lived*, published by the National Trust. Through initiatives such as the summer recording program and the Peterson Prize, HABS continues to work to educate the next generation of preservationists, while at the same time augmenting the collection.

Today the HABS, HAER, and HALS collection contain records on nearly 40,000 historic sites and structures nationwide, encompassing over 60,000 measured drawings, 250,000 large-format photographs, and untold pages of history. It is one of the most heavily used special collections in the Library of Congress. According to the library,

The encyclopedic coverage of American's built environment, the exceptional clarity of the visual materials, and the general lack of copyright restrictions account for thousands of online catalog searches each month. In more than 35,000 surveys, researchers can discover a comprehensive range of building types, engineering technologies, and landscape features dating from pre-Columbian times to the present day and located throughout the United States and its territories.

While at seventy-five HABS has much to be proud of, changing currents in architectural education and recording technologies pose challenges that HABS and its partners are working to address.



Homewood House, 3400 North Charles Street, Baltimore, Maryland; James Rosenthal, photographer, 2003; HABS No. MD-35-75. Built 1802-1806, this five-part Palladian style house is considered among the finest federal period houses in America. It was erected for, and possibly designed by, Charles Carroll, Jr. as a home for himself and his bride. In 1902 it was donated to Johns Hopkins University which maintains it as a house museum.

The Historic American Buildings Survey was originally proposed as a New Deal initiative intended to last four months, but the idea behind its establishment was so inspired that the program endured changes in both architectural fashion and political administration to remain relevant and vibrant today. That idea was not just the creation of an archive of the nation's architectural heritage, but one that represented a "complete resume of the builder's art" from the high-style to the humble vernacular. The collection was also intended to provide a hedge against losses to the built environment—a concept that is as valid today as it was when HABS was launched in 1933 as the first federal preservation program. The significance of HABS resides in the scope and public accessibility of the collection, as well as in the establishment of national standards for recording historic architecture. The collection is offered as a resource for those of all ages interested in American history and architecture, and the drawings, histories, and photographs are widely used as baseline information for initiatives ranging from rehabilitation to interpretation.

Nevertheless, at seventy-five, HABS faces many challenges, ranging from shrinking federal budgets to changing trends in architectural practice, and questions about whether or not to adopt new recording technologies that could ultimately compromise its standards for quality and archival stability. Despite widespread interest in the collection today, fewer students and professionals undertake recording to HABS standards than have in past decades. This is in part a factor of methodological shifts in architectural education. HABS is very grateful for the loyal cadre of educators who still lead student drawings teams, but architecture programs, for the most part, have turned away from the study of historic buildings as a means of understanding principles of design and construction. Producing drawings and photographs to HABS standards can be costly and time-consuming. As an alternative, many are turning to new recording technologies such as laser scanning and digital photography. While promising to save time and money, these technologies lack the permanence of traditional mediums used to create HABS records. Their use can also undermine the hands-on experience advocated by HABS and others interested in the study of historic resources.

Still the future does hold potential for renewed interest in historic architecture as an area of investigation for students. Statistics indicate that the majority of current architectural design projects involve pre-existing structures. At the same time, organizations such as the American Institute of Architects, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and popular publications such as *Dwell* magazine are touting historic preservation as a "green" alternative to new construction. Advocates also point to the benefits of preservation in promoting the protection of older neighborhoods that might otherwise be disrupted by "tear-downs" of early fabric in exchange for repetitively styled and energy-consuming "McMansions."

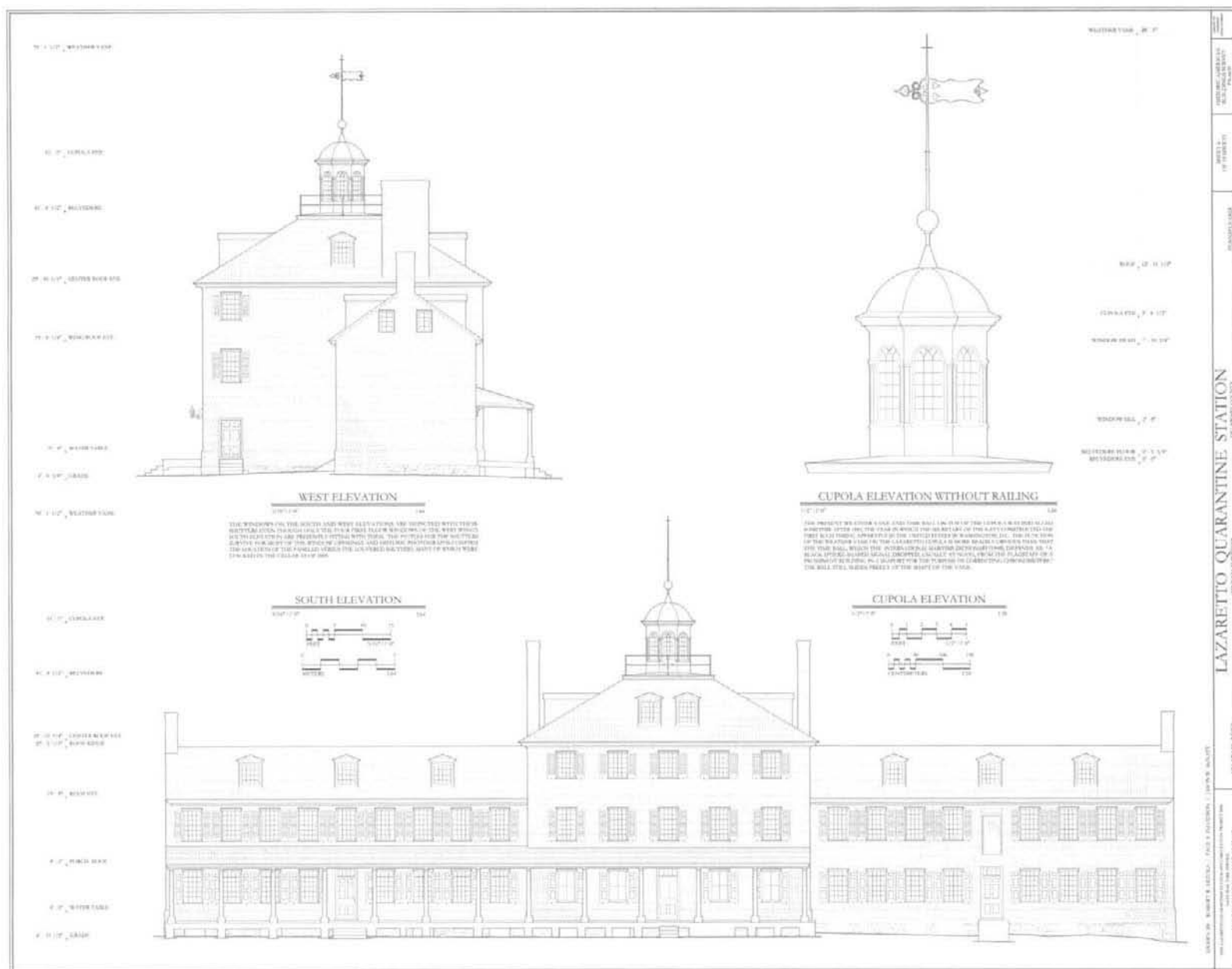
But what of the use of new technologies for the documentation of historic sites and structures? Should HABS sacrifice the archival stability of black-and-white, large-format photographs for digital images without the negatives needed to guarantee reproduction in the future? Should it reduce its drawing standards to encourage greater participation? Or should HABS forgo the careful hand-measuring and field noting used to produce its drawings for the past three-quarters of a century? Many of the architects and historians who depend upon the accuracy of HABS records oppose these ideas. Yet the collection has experienced a reduction in contributions. This is particularly true in the area of the vernacular architecture that has always constituted the backbone of the collection. A recent symposium sponsored by HABS and the Vernacular Architecture Forum confirmed these trends. This pattern coincides with a significant lack of the financial resources needed to keep pace with efforts to record the endangered resources alone. Moreover, equal to HABS' concern for quality, and the life-span of computer files and digital imagery, is the learning potential of their methodology. For HABS, thorough field work and research are an important part of the process, aimed at providing not just a permanent record, but an approach to the study and understanding of historic buildings. For these reasons, HABS has been reluctant to initiate significant changes to current practice. However, faced with such challenges, it must be asked—is HABS still of value to the American public? If so, can it continue in the manner that it has in the past?

To mark the 75th Anniversary and to help HABS to address these and other questions, HABS and the Library of Congress cosponsored a symposium on November 14, 2008. Six speakers addressed various aspects of the value, use, and methodology of HABS. As a curator and founding Director of the Center for Architecture, Design and Engineering (Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress) C. Ford Peatross maintained that HABS is a significant aspect of a long-held tradition within the Library for collecting information about America's architectural heritage. The standard formats established by his early predecessor, Leicester Holland, became a key factor in the cataloging and public accessibility of HABS. The combination of high-quality graphics and a lack of copyright make the HABS collection and those of its companion programs HAER and HALS, the single most important contributor to the Library's publication initiatives such as the current Norton/Library of Congress Visual Sourcebooks in Architecture, Design and Engineering. Historian, educator, and museum curator for Old Sturbridge Village, Jack Larkin, addressed the importance of HABS records in recreating patterns of everyday life and in examining cultural values expressed through architecture. Its iconic images, Larkin claimed, speak to the lifestyles and folkways of America. Larkin acknowledged that not all the practices reflected in the HABS documentation are "welcoming"—referring specifically to those addressing slavery—but that the diversity of the collection added to its historical richness.

The next two speakers addressed the issue of HABS methodology and the value of examining sites and structures in the field. Camille Wells, who has taught architectural history at the University of Virginia, University of Mary Washington and the College of William and Mary, asserted that the contributions of the HABS collection cannot be overstated, due to its accessibility, consistency, and reliability. However, as someone who has created documentation according to HABS guidelines, Wells cautioned against applying the same standard to every building, and spending time making the drawings more architecturally pleasing than meaningful. Comprehensive HABS documentation cannot always be practically applied, especially to the very buildings to which the program professes to be most attuned—the vernacular

and endangered. Wells encouraged her audience to arrive at a site with questions, to be observant of changes in the building fabric, and to let the buildings speak. By so doing, HABS field teams can extract what is most telling, and convey that information in the documentation. Professor of Architecture at Texas A&M University and founding Director of their Center for Heritage Conservation, David Woodcock, shared his insights on the usefulness of the hands-on HABS recording process to the next generation of American architects. The basis of architectural inquiry, Woodcock proclaimed, is observation, recordation, analysis, and appreciation. Having guided students for many years, Woodcock believes that the HABS drawing process is a natural tool for examining ideas about buildings. He cautioned that historic buildings are not always what they seem at first. The active learning and discovery prescribed by HABS methodology helps his students develop analytic and interpretive skills—what Woodcock defines as “real world experiences”—that cannot be duplicated in the studio.

The last two speakers discussed the application of new technologies within HABS. Anne Weber, a Senior Associate with Farewell, Mills, & Gatsch Architects in Princeton, NJ and the winner of the first Charles E. Peterson Prize in 1983, shared how HABS is used within the architecture profession, and the pros and cons of new recording technologies. Weber commented that, while architects often refer to HABS documentation as a source for information and as models for rehabilitation, they can rarely afford to apply HABS standards to their drawings. More to the point, for their purposes, HABS-level detail and analysis are generally not required. Weber mentioned the need to be able to adopt all kinds of recording practices depending on the scale and complexity of the site. Resolving to “give back” by applying HABS standards to her own work when feasible, Weber cautioned that relaxing HABS standards would be traveling a dangerous path. Our last speaker, Kathryn Arrington, a Digital Library Specialist for the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, presented ways in which HABS and the Library are already embracing technology to improve the quality of the reproductions and the user experience. She discussed the volume and variety of uses for the HABS collection, which received about 420,000 on-line visits last year—about 1,150



Lazaretto Quarantine Station, Tinicum Township, Pennsylvania; Robert Arzola, Paul Davidson, and Jason McNatt, delineators, 2006; HABS No. PA-6659. Erected between 1799 and 1801, the Lazaretto was among the earliest purpose-built and is the oldest extant, quarantine-related structure in the nation. Constructed by the Philadelphia Board of Health following the devastating yellow-fever epidemic of 1793, its plan emerged from a generic English formula first manifested in American by the 1755 Pennsylvania Hospital.

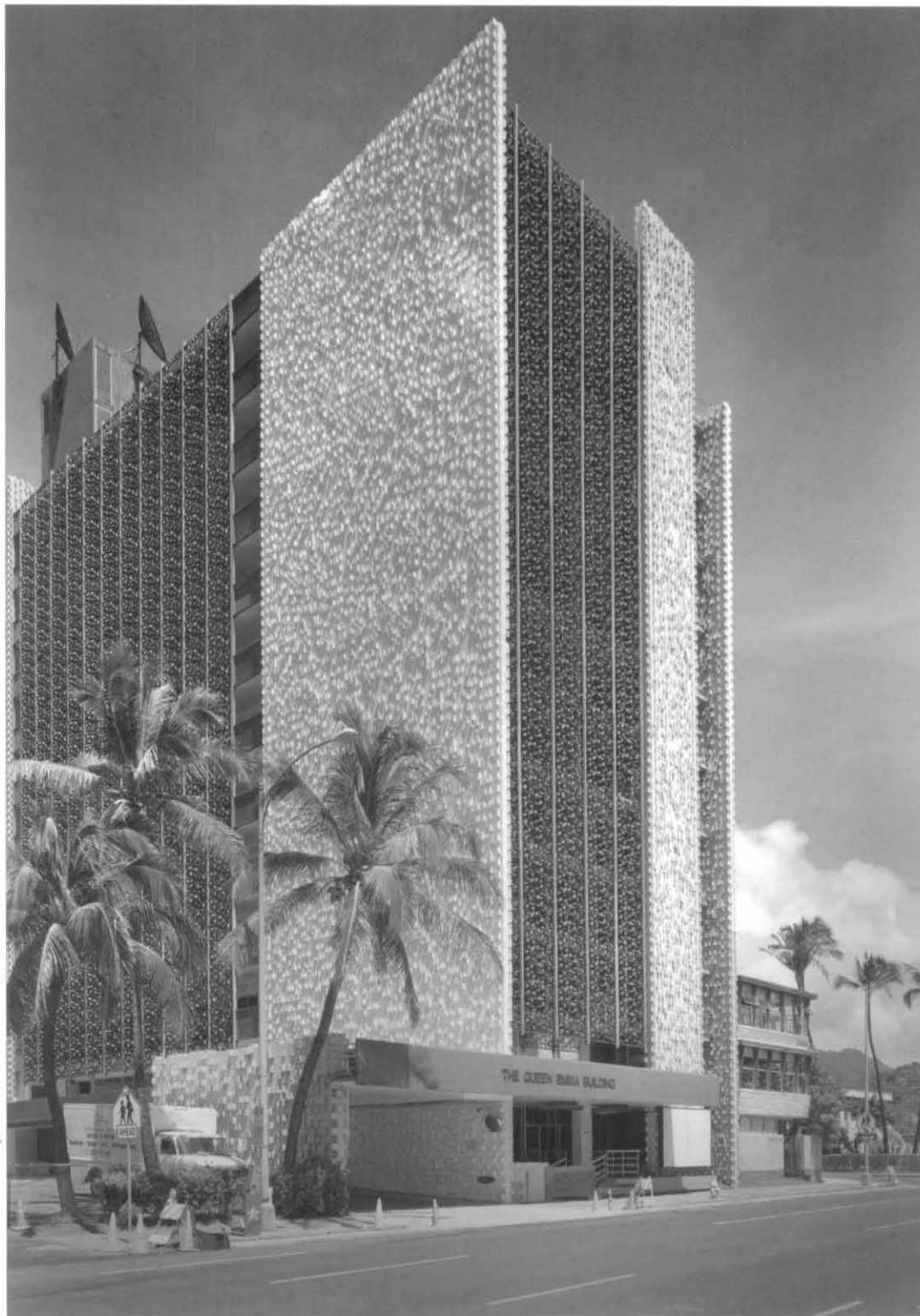
users per day. According to Arrington, HABS materials are no longer the principal domain of academics and professionals, but have infiltrated the world of popular culture.

The symposium presenters affirmed that the HABS collection is a vital source for historical and architectural

documentation. The increasing utilization of the records, both in the volume of users and the variety of applications, speaks to its ability to convey important information about our cultural heritage and to capture the imagination of the American public. HABS recording standards, while at times seemingly onerous, are necessary in order to maintain the uniformity, quality, reliability, and archival

stability of the documents upon which so many have come to depend. In addition to concerns about maintaining quality standards, historians and architects alike value the intensive recording methodology employed in the field as a means for learning about buildings. Still, HABS must develop strategies to encourage participation in the recording process. Such strategies should include providing more outreach to students and professionals interested in undertaking documentation to HABS standards, and codifying levels of recording that are appropriate to the significance of the site or structure and the resources available. The latter is particularly applicable to vernacular and endangered sites that might otherwise go unrecorded. Step-by-step guidelines for field work should be developed to provide better instructions as a supplement to current guidelines, recognizing that historians and preservationists are just as likely as architects to engage in the drawing process. Regarding the use of new technologies for

recording, it is clear that HABS walks a fine line between keeping current with new innovations and maintaining standards of quality, verifiability, and archival stability. Digital photography will remain confined to field notes until the quality of large-format imaging can be duplicated and issues of storage and archival permanence can be solved. As for measured drawings, HABS has already begun using laser scanning to record structures where size and accessibility are factors, but will have to address the need for decipherable field notes in order to maintain program requirements for the verifiability of the information. While questions remain, the symposium was beneficial in framing the issues facing HABS today. The 75th Anniversary has been a time for reflection, and the insights gained from the symposium and exhibition will help HABS to evaluate current practices as it sets a course towards the future in its role as standard-bearer for architectural documentation at the national level.



The Queen Emma Building, Queen Emma Square, Honolulu, Hawaii; James Rosenthal, photographer, 2007; HABS No. HI-525. Built in 1964 the Queen Emma Building was voted one of the Ugliest Buildings in Honolulu for its use of abstract materials, but perhaps it is just too soon to judge. As was said in the 1930s of a building in a style of the Victorian-era disdained by architects of the times, "I have no doubt but that it is probably as queer and ugly as to make it 'unique' enough to be delineated by the HABS of Michigan—where they may lack some of the more quiet and aged material that we have come to prefer!"

