The Hot Springs of Arkansas—America's First National Park

Administrative History of Hot Springs National Park

by

RON COCKRELL

SENIOR HISTORIAN

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

MIDWEST REGIONAL OFFICE

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2014

Recommended:

Superintendent, Hot Springs National Park — **Date** 15 July 2014

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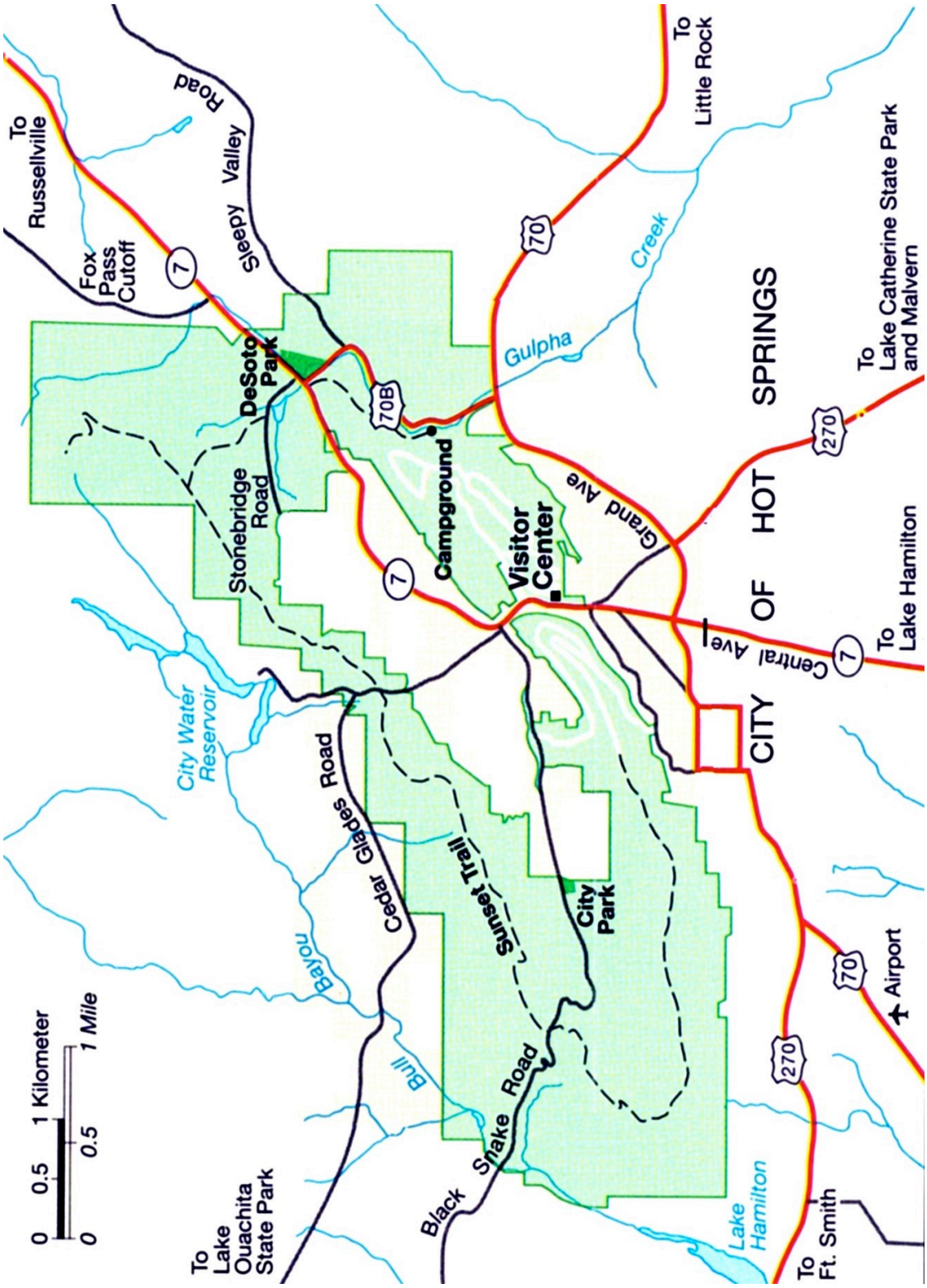
Figure 1: Boundary Map of Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas (National Park Service)



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CHAPTER ONE

The Hot Springs of Arkansas

"What a beautiful and thrilling specimen," American artist and ethnographer George Catlin proclaimed in 1832, "for America to preserve and hold up to the view of her refined citizens and the world, in future ages! A *nation's Park*, containing man and beast in all the wild and freshness of their nature's beauty."[1] Originator of the national park concept, Catlin proposed such a park in America's central interior to preserve endangered native peoples along with beautiful scenery. Arkansas's Hot Springs Reserve, the first area Congress set aside in 1832 because of its natural values, did not receive its national park title until 1921.[2] In the same year Catlin articulated his vision for national parks, Congress reserved the unusual thermal springs for public use and enjoyment, thereby giving this area arguable boasting rights as the "first" national park. Because Congress expressed no vision or plan for the area, Americans logically assumed that as settlement increased, the reserve would eventually revert to state or local control. Early settlers ignored federal claims and coveted Hot Springs with its fabled healing abilities. They envisioned the natural wonder becoming a popular tourist destination point for health-conscious Americans.

Figure 2. Map of Arkansas showing Hot Springs

Although many decades would elapse before national parks became part of the American experience, her citizens viewed the Hot Springs of Arkansas as just such a special place and took great pains to visit there. Roots of this popularity can be traced to the first half of the nineteenth century. Indeed, by the Civil War's outbreak, Americans believed Hot Springs possessed tremendous natural value and acted in diverse legal, social, and economic ways to demonstrate Congress's wisdom in reserving it from the public domain. In many ways Americans

[1] William H. Truettner, *The Natural Man Observed: A Study of Catlin's Indian Gallery* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1979), 80. See also Harold McCracken, *George Catlin and the Old Frontier* (New York: Bonanza Press, 1959), 76-77.

[2] Unless noted otherwise, all primary historical sources derive from National Park Service archives at Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas.

before the Civil War used, abused, and thought of Hot Springs as if Congress had declared it a national park.

European colonial powers knew of Hot Springs and sought it out. Tradition holds that Hernando De Soto and his men were the first Europeans to see Hot Springs, but scholars have cast doubt on its veracity.[3] Expedition journals detailed prosperous American Indian villages with cultivated fields scattered across the region. In the seventeenth century, French explorers visited and claimed Arkansas, but found no significant human habitation there. Disease and drought combined to produce a massive die-off of the Native population. With central Arkansas devoid of indigenous hunters, numbers of deer, bear, and bison mushroomed. Into this hunter's paradise came forays of Natives from the periphery: Osage from the north, Quapaw from the east, and Caddo from the south. In this middle ground, the hunting parties clashed over the abundant game, with the aggressive Osage driving the Caddo out. While the Osage hunted north of the Arkansas River, the Quapaw, fundamentally weakened by epidemics, hunted south which included the Hot Springs "valley of the vapors."[4]

Europeans vied with American Indians for control. La Salle claimed the entire Mississippi Valley for France in 1682, calling the region "Louisiana." Four years later, the first trading post, later known as Arkansas Post, began exploiting Native groups to fuel an extractive economy based on animal products of skins, meat, tallow, and oil. The trade served as a means of white control over American Indian people that grew more encompassing over time as they became dependent on European trade goods. The French knew about Hot Springs and some partook of the healing waters. Following France's

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[3]This conquistador left Spain in 1539, arrived at Tampa Bay and marched across what is now the southeastern United States, crossing the Mississippi into Arkansas in June 1541. From the Little Rock area, the expedition marched to what many believed had to be Hot Springs because of journal entries referring to "very warm and brackish marsh" and "hot streams" in an area natives called *Tanico*. A federal commission enshrined the conquistador's supposed route in 1939, but contemporary research has placed *Tanico* to the northwest in the Carden Bottoms area along the Arkansas River. The de Soto connection later colored Euro-American perceptions, and ultimately influenced twentieth-century architectural style along Hot Spring National Park's Bathhouse Row. House of Representatives, *Final Report of the United States de Soto Expedition Commission*, 76th Cong., 1st Sess., January 23, 1939, H. Doc. 71, p. 254; David Sloan, "The Expedition of Hernando de Soto: A Post-mortem Report" in Jeannie Whayne, compiler, *Cultural Encounters in the Early South: Indians and Europeans in Arkansas* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1995), 15-18, 23, 25-26, 32; *De Soto Trail: De Soto National Historic Trail Study* (Atlanta: Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, 1990), 75-126; John Paige and Laura Harrison, *Out of the Vapors: A Social and Architectural History of Bathhouse Row* (Denver: Denver Service Center, National Park Service, 1987), 88, 93-4, 97. One bathing facility in particular reveled in promoting the de Soto connection to Hot Springs. See *Fordyce Bath House, Arkansas*, promotional pamphlet, no date [circa 1915]. Translation of the Spanish journals did not come until 1874 and immediately became incorporated in the first *Cutter's Guide to the Hot Springs of Arkansas* the same year. See Larry Rhodes, "Hot Springs and the Legend of Hernando DeSoto," *The Record* (Hot Springs, Arkansas: Garland County Historical Society, 1995), 68.

[4] Williams, C. Fred, et al., editors, *A Documentary History of Arkansas* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1984), 4; Terry P. Wilson, *The Osage* (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1988), 26-27; Willard H. Rollings, "Living in a Graveyard: Native Americans in Colonial Arkansas," in Whayne, *Cultural Encounters*, 38-40; and "Historic Indians in Arkansas," "The Osage Indians," "The Caddo Indians," "The Quapaw Indians," typewritten summaries from the series "First Encounters--The Indians" (Little Rock: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, no date).

defeat in the Seven Years' War, she ceded her holdings to Spain in 1762. As part of the Spanish borderlands, Arkansas remained a neglected backwater only lightly settled. The first detailed account of Hot Springs came from Jean Filhiol, who journeyed from New Orleans into the Ouachita highlands in 1786 to report on the flora, fauna, and minerals there. Filhiol recorded observing boiling water emerging from the rock and it being cooled by nearby springs. While Filhiol said nothing regarding American Indian use of Hot Springs, he noted the presence of a few hundred white settlers scattered along the Ouachita River, denouncing them as "the scum of all sorts of nations," "fugitives," and those who "excel in all the vices." Filhiol learned from the Quapaw that they knew nothing of the vanished nations once occupying Arkansas.[5]

Arkansas's changing colonial masters were unable to hold on to the land. Spain outlawed American immigration in 1792, but by 1800, the year Spain retro ceded Louisiana to France, Americans outnumbered all other nationalities. When Napoleon sold Louisiana to the United States in 1803, President Thomas Jefferson looked favorably on the vast unoccupied areas in Arkansas as potential resettlement zones for Eastern tribes being encouraged to emigrate to the West. As an unofficial federal policy decades before the Indian Removal Act of 1830, Arkansas played host to a succession of Eastern American Indian peoples, including the Shawnee, Choctaw, Delaware, Cherokee, and Chickasaw tribes, all of whom were later pushed further west by land-hungry whites.[6]

Figure 3. William Dunbar

Even Jefferson heard about the Hot Springs of Arkansas and wanted to know more. The president commissioned William Dunbar to lead an expedition to the Ouachita to investigate it in December 1804. Assisted by physician George Hunter, the Dunbar expedition stayed one month and recorded their findings. The men had to wait for the water to cool before drinking it. They found an open log cabin and several crude huts, indicating a warm-weather encampment used by health-seekers. Dunbar's guide, accompanied by two wealthy planters, visited the previous year and received miraculous cures for their respective ailments, stiff limbs, paralysis, and consumption. The guide also told about an American Indian suffering from dropsy who had bathed, drank, and sweated three times a day over two weeks at Hot Springs making a complete recovery. He also told them about claims of a Spanish land grant, but doubted an official patent had been filed.[7]

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[5] Charles Hudson, "Introduction," in Whayne, *Cultural Encounters*, xv; Morris S. Arnold, *Colonial Arkansas, 1686-1804: A Social and Cultural History* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1991), 3-8, 83; Williams, *A Documentary History of Arkansas*, 4; M. Carmen Gonzalez Lopes-Briones, "Spain in the Mississippi Valley: Spanish Arkansas, 1762-1804" (Ph.D. diss., Purdue University, 1983), 1, 4, 95; and Jean Filhiol, "Description of the Ouachita," 1786, translated by H. Wynn Rickey, 29 January 1935.

[6] Rollings, "Living in a Graveyard," 60; and Lopes-Briones, "Spain in the Mississippi Valley," 238-39, 266, 268.

[7] Eron Rowland, compiler, *Life, Letters, and Papers of William Dunbarof Elgin, Morayshire, Scotland, and Natchez, Mississippi, Pioneer Scientist of the Southern United States* (Jackson Press of the Mississippi

Americans possessed considerable knowledge about Hot Springs long before Jefferson submitted Dunbar's report to Congress. In mid-February 1805, the *Orleans Gazette* reported that George Hunter believed Hot Springs "amongst the greatest natural curiosities in the country... possess[ing] extraordinary medicinal virtues." Further, Hunter asserted there were "few parts of Louisiana that hold out greater temptations to emigrants." The report made its way eastward appearing in many newspapers and the Hot Springs of Arkansas began appearing in emigrants' guides.[8]

As a result of Dunbar's visit, Americans assigned increased cultural value to Hot Springs. Its fabled healing powers prompted whites to make even more fantastic claims. To bolster these claims, they concocted a body of myth and folklore concerning American Indian use, primarily that Hot Springs was a sacred "land of peace," a neutral ground where warring tribes put down their weapons and collectively resorted to the medicinal healing qualities of the water and vapors. One of the first accounts came from Dr. Joseph Macrery's visit. The Natchez physician, convinced of the site's healing powers, apparently heard tales from the Ouachita's Euro-American settlers, all of whom swore about the springs "efficacy in curing or relieving pains, paralytic affections, and inability to motion generally."[9] Thus began an exercise in myth-making that produced a compelling and voluminous body of lore. Whites fantasized about alleged American Indian use not only to add to the area's allure, but to convince other whites of Hot Springs's value.[10]

Land-hungry settlers arrived soon after to stake their claims. In 1807, Louisiana planter Jean Emanuel Prudhomme came for health reasons and built a log cabin. The

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Historical Society, 1930), 142; See also, John Francis McDermont, editor, *The Western Journals of Dr. George Hunter, 1796-1805: Transactions of the American Philosophical Society Held at Philadelphia for Promoting Useful Knowledge: New Series--Volume 53, Part 4, 1963* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1963) 8, 101, and 104; and Stanley Frank Norsworthy, "Hot Springs, Arkansas: A Geographic Analysis of the Spa's Resort Service Area," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1970, 20-21. Investigation of the Spanish land grant claimed by Jean Filhiol yielded a finding of forgery, upon which Filhiol filed an appeal with GLO. See Clarence Edwin Carter, compiler and editor, *The Territorial Papers of the United States, Volume XXI, The Territory of Arkansas, 1829-1836* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1954), 155.

[8] *Message from the President of the United States Communicating Discoveries Made in Exploring by Captains Lewis and Clark, Doctor Sibley, and Mr. Dunbar; with a Statistical Account of the Countries Adjacent, February 19, 1806* (Washington, D.C.: A and G Way, Printers, 1806); James Richardson, editor, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents, Volume 1, 1789-1897* (Washington, D.C.: Printed by Order of Congress, 1900), 398-399; Norsworthy, "Hot Springs, Arkansas," 24. One of the earliest guides showing a trace from Natchitoches to Hot Springs includes William Darby, *The Emigrant's Guide to the Western and Southwestern States and Territories* (New York: Kirk and Mercein, 1818).

[9] Macrery letter on 1804 visit to Hot Springs, *Medical Repository*, vol. 9 (1806) 47-50.

[10] Empirical evidence garnered through archeology or ethnography does not exist. Mark Blaeuer, "'Didn't All the Indians Come Here?': Separating Fact from Fiction at Hot Springs National Park," draft manuscript, January 1998; Supt. Roger Giddings to Manager, Midwest Archeological Center, Mark Lynott, 8 October 1997, memorandum, H2215; HSNP Archeological Survey Forms; Charles M. Baker, *Archeological Inventory of Hot Springs National Park* (Fayetteville: Arkansas Archeological Survey, 1973), 7-11; Fred W. Allsopp, *Folklore of Romantic Arkansas* (New York: The Grolier Society, 1931), 142-46; and Marcus Phillips and Sandra Long, *Indian Folklore Atlas of Hot Springs National Park* (Hot Springs, Arkansas: Garland County Historical Society, 1994), 8-9, 19-40.

same year, Isaac Cates and John Perciful followed suit. In 1809, Perciful, cultivating fields along the Ouachita, purchased Prudhomme's claim and supplemented his income by renting crude huts and selling produce and game to the trickle of summertime health-seekers. Two families from New Orleans arrived in 1809 and erected temporary dwellings. Five years later, at least two dozen rude structures dotted the area. In 1811-12, violent earthquakes along the New Madrid fault caused such devastation that Congress in 1815 granted relief to victims by permitting them to claim 160 acres of public land in the surrounding region. In Arkansas, this pertained only to land north of the Arkansas River. Land to the south did not qualify because of Quapaw rights. Many New Madrid victims sold their certificates to speculators, who in turn used them to select valuable land. Elias Rector, a relative of General Land Office (GLO) Surveyor General William Rector, and Samuel Hammond purchased a New Madrid certificate from Francois Langlois. They used it in 1819 to apply for a patent for all of Hot Springs, ignoring squatters already there. When the GLO commissioner denied the patent based on pre-existing Quapaw rights, his decision received the attorney general's concurrence.[11]

With Euro-Americans determined to secure and exploit the increasingly popular Hot Springs, they resorted to any legal means to achieve these ends. In response to settlers' demands that American Indian rights be extinguished, the United States negotiated an August 24, 1818, treaty whereby the Quapaw ceded most of their land, including their Hot Springs hunting area. With official establishment of Missouri Territory to the north in 1818, Arkansas Territory formed and local agitation only intensified against the tribe's sizeable eastern reservation. Euro-American demands led to treaties in 1824 and 1833 extinguishing all remaining Quapaw claims. Even the territorial assembly petitioned Congress in 1820 to grant it Hot Springs for public benefit and to avoid private monopolization that might deny the healing waters to the "afflicted poor." Solons further justified their request on the false assertion of the land being "extremely poor and worth very little for farming purposes." The Senate denied the application citing a lack of precedent.[12]

As if to fill a void, the westward flow of immigrants began in earnest in the late 1810s. Upon conclusion of the War of 1812, powerful American Indian confederacies were smashed and nothing stood in the way of Euro-Americans reaching and crossing the Mississippi River. Seemingly endless acreage lay unclaimed and Americans rushed to

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[11] Dallas T. Herndon, *Centennial History of Arkansas*, Volume 1 (Little Rock: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1922), 859-60; and Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration, *Arkansas: A Guide to the State* (New York: Hastings House, 1941), 156. Cates came from Alabama to cure his rheumatism. He built a trough in one spring, allowing the water to flow over him. Restored to health, Cates moved back to Alabama. See Lucy Marion Reeves, "Glimpses of Yesterday," *Arkansas Gazette* (24 May 1936). James J. Conway, survey certificate for Francis Langlois, 16 July 1820; Charles S. Bolton, *Territorial Ambition: Land and Society in Arkansas, 1800-1840* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1993), 22, 64; and Herndon, *Centennial History of Arkansas*, 866-67. The attorney general's decision ultimately went to the U.S. Supreme Court, which upheld it. Bolton noted that surveyors working for William Rector were renown for "saving choice land for themselves." See page 58.

[12] Quotation in "Memorial to Congress, February 15, 1820," in *Territorial Papers, Arkansas Territory*, 147-48 and "Senate Committee Report Regarding Seat of Territorial Government, May 2, 1820," 174-75; and W. David Baird, *The Quapaw Indians: A History of the Downstream People* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 39, 57, 61, 68, 80.

appropriate choice parcels. Frontier areas embraced new settlers because they were eager purchasers of local agricultural surpluses, thereby infusing specie into the cash-starved economy. GLO survey efforts could not keep up with the land rush. In theory, squatters were to be ejected by the U.S. Army, but in practice freeholders impatiently waited unmolested for federal surveyors and land sales, lobbying for passage of pre-emption laws permitting them to buy improved land cheaply. Because of Hot Springs's isolation in the Ouachita Mountains, survey teams worked their way slowly across the territory. With claims and counter-claims escalating, the GLO declined to intercede and resolve disputes there. Further, depression sparked by the Panic of 1819, end of credit sales in 1820, and general scarcity of currency combined to slow the pace of Arkansas land sales.[13]

Figure 4. Stephen H. Long

Expert eyewitness testimony about Hot Springs fed public interest. Major Stephen H. Long's expedition to the Rocky Mountains passed through on New Year's Day 1818. Long chronicled the amazing sight of cold springs erupting in the midst of thermal ones. His account appeared in a national publication, the *American Monthly Magazine*. Providing more first-hand accounts to a curious public, expedition botanist and geologist Edwin James returned the following year and detailed a nearby novaculite quarry of quality oilstone rivaling those from Turkey. At Hot Springs, he marveled at the effortless ability to boil a fifteen-minute egg and to make coffee by immersing a kettle in the thermal pools. James observed small log-cabin sweathouses built over a few springs, and up to thirty seasonally-occupied huts.[14]

The comforts of daily life slowly materialized to meet public demand. In 1820, Joseph and Nancy Millard erected a new cabin for travelers. Clientele during this era included some wealthy planters from Mississippi and Louisiana, New Orleans elite, and affluent citizens from Arkansas's nascent towns. Many spent the entire summer there recovering their health. As visitation increased, the first utilitarian hotel appeared in 1828, managed by Ludovicus Belding and family who charged one-dollar per day. The *Arkansas Gazette* crowed about the new accommodations calling them "ample...

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[13] Daniel Feller, *The Public Lands in Jacksonian Politics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), 14-17; Bolton, *Territorial Ambition*, 58-59; and William D. Baker, "Beginning Point of the Louisiana Purchase Survey National Historic Landmark, Arkansas" (Washington, D.C.: National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1993).

[14] "A Description of the Hot Springs, Near the River Washitaw, and of the Physical Geography of the Adjacent Country; in a Communication from Major S. H. Long, of the U.S. Corps of Engineers, to the Hon. Samuel L. Mitchill, Dated St. Louis Missouri, February 23, 1818," in *American Monthly Magazine and Critical Review* No. 2, Vol. 3 (June 1818), 85-87; and Edwin James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains, Performed in the Year 1819 and '20, by Order of the Hon. J. C. Calhoun, Secretary of War; Under the Command of Major Stephen H. Long* (Philadelphia: H. C. Carey and I. Lea, 1823), 287-88, 292. Revered American botanist Thomas Nuttall recapitulated second-hand accounts in Savoie Lottinville, editor, *A Journal of Travels into the Arkansas Territory During the Year 1819* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1979), 240-41.

including good fare, clean linen, silver forks and spoons, much attention to guests, and moderate charges." Comparisons were made to health resorts at Sweet Springs and White Sulphur Springs, both in Virginia. In 1830, Asa Thompson provided the first crude bathhouse, small cabins with plank tubs, with a special shack serving as a vapor bath. The population in 1830 stood at eighty-four people in Hot Springs Township with fifteen heads of households.

Published material as well as word-of-mouth exchanges helped draw public attention to Hot Springs. Appearing with increased frequency in the 1820s and 1830s, a variety of testimonial letters were published in newspapers and the same letters were printed by other newspapers, as the news made its way throughout the nation. These eyewitness accounts praising the area's curative powers for a growing list of diseases and physical maladies convinced many to make the journey to Hot Springs and "take the cure." Published anonymously, the visitor exclaimed, "They have produced extraordinary cures in rheumatism, paralysis, liver complaint, enlargement of the spleen, eruptions, pulmonary complaints, obstructions and chronic disorders of every kind.... Old and fixed venereal complaints are also eradicated by their use." The observer related several miracle cures. A paralyzed man experienced a full recovery in six weeks. A schoolteacher, stooped over for a decade, became cured over three seasons of thermal baths. An African-American with severe rheumatism earned a cure after six weeks. A man dying of liver disease following three years of medical treatment became cured after three months. The writer explained that for the first several weeks, symptoms became aggravated by the springs even in parts of the body where afflictions had vacated. "In the language of the people and the patients," the writer noted, "it unsettles the disorder and draws out the pain." Those easily discouraged usually left without giving the waters a chance to heal their ailments. The more determined were rewarded for their patience: "All those who come here to use the waters do so at first to an excess--bathing and sweating three or four times a day. The sweat bath is very debilitating...." Attributing the difficulty of travel as the reason few families came to Hot Springs, the writer opined, "I have not the least doubt but that some years hence these springs will be the Saratoga of Louisiana."[15]

Comparing Hot Springs to Saratoga and the premier Virginia mineral springs represented early boosterism; a concerted attempt to draw increasing numbers of health-seeking tourists to infuse more capital into the local economy. It represented a growing American tradition. Tourism originated during New England's early national period when "pleasure travel" provided important sources of capital. Commercialized tourism commenced in the 1820s with the "northern" or "fashionable tour" from New York City to Niagara Falls and Saratoga Springs where resort hotels for tourists were built. Hot Springs was not atypical in heralding its virtues to attract visitors and their money. By harnessing a tourist trade based on health, boosters sought to attract the amenities of

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[15] Quotation from *Arkansas Gazette* (9 July 1828); Work Projects Administration, *Arkansas*, 156-57; Herndon, *Centennial History of Arkansas*, 860; *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Pulaski, Jefferson, Lonoke, Faulkner, Grant, Saline, Perry Garland and Hot Spring Counties, Arkansas* (Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1889), 529; *Manuscript Census Returns, Fifth Census of the United States, 1830, Arkansas, Population Schedule*, National Archives Microfilm, Roll 5, 159-60; and "The Hot Springs," *Arkansas Gazette* (26 August 1829).

civilization not only to ameliorate the harsh frontier conditions there, but to improve their own living standards and community's economic viability.[16]

Resort hotels, an American contribution to modern culture, evolved into two distinct architectural types. Hotels built in the American West, conformed to the regional style of early nineteenth-century seaside and mineral-spring resorts of Massachusetts, New York, and New Jersey. Antebellum South resorts, which conformed to outdoor recreation, romantic notions concerning nature, and styles utilized by favorite son Thomas Jefferson, were ignored outside the region. Following the Civil War, however, this dichotomy became inverted, and the Southern-inspired resort archetype spread throughout the nation and across the globe. Southern health resorts outside Virginia included Piedmont Springs and Wilson's Spring, North Carolina; Indian Springs and Warm Springs, Georgia; Blount Springs and Bladen Springs, Alabama; and Montvale Springs, Tennessee. Hot Springs of Arkansas constituted the westernmost popular springs in the antebellum South.[17]

While the European tradition of resorts and hotels has roots in ancient Egypt and Rome, Americans incorporated Old World elements to create a new democratic model available to all citizens able to pay. Most resorts emphasized the health-restoring qualities of their air and water. America's originator of the spa concept, Gideon Putnam, first added improvements to Saratoga Springs in 1804. High society tended to dominate such places where recreational activities like horse-racing became more popular than mineral water. Most importantly, physicians began advocating such places for their patients.[18]

Title disputes made permanent improvements there impossible, but Hot Springs boosters nevertheless strategized to attract more tourists. As they dreamed of making capital developments and reaping handsome profits, their hyperbole escalated. One saw greatness for the springs, including a "water works and falling gardens watered by irrigation like in Italy."[19] Another exclaimed, "It should be taken into account that the Hot Springs is destined by Nature to be the most celebrated and the most frequented

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[16] Dona L. Brown, *The Tourist's New England: Creating an Industry, 1820-1900*, Ph.D. diss., University of Massachusetts, 1989 (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1992), vi, 2-3.

[17] Henry W. Lawrence, "Southern Spas: Source of the American Resort Tradition," in Richard Guy Wilson, editor, *Victorian Resorts and Hotels: Essays from a Victorian Society Autumn Symposium* (Victorian Society of America: 1982), 1-2.

[18] Richard Guy Wilson, "Nineteenth-Century American Resorts and Hotels," 11, and Marie L. Ahearn, "Health Restoring Resorts on the New England Coast," 41, both in Wilson, ed., *Victorian Resorts and Hotels*; and Larry Freeman, Spa Fever (Watkins Glen, New York: Century House Publishers, 1981), 11. According to Freeman, the term "spa" derives from Belgium and applied to a mineral-spring health resort. It spread across Europe, then to the United States. "Spa" first appeared in an 1829 encyclopedia as follows: "health resort especially therapeutic and restorative purposes in conjunction with other medically supervised health procedures."

[19] Quotation from *Arkansas Gazette* (10 October 1832) A. N. Sabin letter; E. Merton Coulter, *A History of The South, Volume VIII: The South During Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (Louisiana State University Press, 1947), 308; and Valentine Seaman, *A Dissertation on the Mineral Waters of Saratoga* (New York: Readex Microprint, 1985), 2-30.

watering place in North America!"[20] Ethnologist Henry Schoolcraft agreed, stating, "They are destined to become a place of great resort,--*the Ballston of the south*."[21]

To create a tourist's mecca, capital investment needed to address transportation woes. Traveling to the Hot Springs of Arkansas remained extremely difficult throughout the first half of the century. The territorial assembly continuously pressed Congress for roads and navigation projects based on facilitating invalid travel to Hot Springs. In 1829, it boldly asked the federal government to erect buildings to shelter sick visitors. Hardy souls who made it as far as Little Rock could, beginning in 1831, rent a hack or horses for the remaining fifty-five-mile trip. Regular hack service began four years later, and in 1838, a stage coach began tri-weekly service. Unreliability in supply deliveries impeded sustained growth. Because Arkansas's transportation infrastructure remained primitive and it experienced chronic budgetary deficits, railroads did not become a reality in the antebellum period. When the water-level permitted, the specially-built steamboat *Waverly* plied the upper Arkansas River, dropping passengers off for a thirty-mile trek across rugged terrain to Hot Springs. Rivers tended to be shallow and swampy, prone to rapids, and dangerous snags. Drought in the early 1850s caused a halt to traffic on the Arkansas and Ouachita rivers for five years. In 1859, the Memphis-Little Rock Railroad crossed the mighty Mississippi River, and graded a forty-five-mile rail bed eastward from Little Rock before exhausting its financing.[22]

Figure 5. Ambrose H. Sevier

Recognizing the value of Hot Springs to Arkansas, territorial delegate Ambrose H. Sevier strategized how to acquire the disputed place and exploit it for public benefit. Sevier represented a man of considerable influence. Founder of Arkansas's Jacksonian Democratic Party, Sevier's nine-year tenure in Congress reaped admirable returns for Arkansas Territory. In 1830, he introduced a bill in Congress permitting Arkansas to lease its salt springs and use the funds to build roads. He toyed with the prospect of amending the measure to include leasing Hot Springs with those proceeds targeted for

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[20] J. C. H. Jones to Col. A. H. Sevier, letter, 14 December 1832, *Territorial Papers, Arkansas Territory*, 580.

[21] Henry R. Schoolcraft, *A view of the Lead Mines of Missouri; Including Some Observations on the Mineralogy, Geology, Geography, Antiquities, Soil, Climate, Population, and Productions of Missouri and Arkansaw, and Other Sections of the Western Country* (New York: Charles Wiley & Company, 1819), 262. Ballston was another New York mineral-spring spa near Saratoga Springs.

[22] Mattie Brown, "River Transportation in Arkansas, 1819-1890," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 1 (December 1942), 347; *Territorial Papers, Arkansas Territory*, 819-20, 828, 833; Lonnie J. White, *Politics on the Southwestern Frontier, Arkansas Territory, 1819-1836* (Memphis: Memphis State University Press, 1964), 96; Walter Moffatt, "Transportation in Arkansas, 1819-1840," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 15 (Autumn 1956), 191-92; James M. Woods, *Rebellion and Realignment: Arkansas's Road to Secession* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1987), 9-10; Lee A. Dew and Louis Koeppe, "Narrow-Gauge Railroads in Arkansas," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 31 (Autumn 1972), 277; Timothy Flint, *The History and Geography of the Mississippi Valley to Which is Appended a Condensed Physical Geography of the Atlantic United States and the Whole American Continent*, 2nd edition, volume 1 (Cincinnati: E. H. Flint and L. R. Lincoln, 1832), 283; and Woods, *Rebellion and Realignment*, 92.

care of the needy. While his precise motivations went unrecorded, Sevier knew about the acrimonious land disputes and probably devised a scheme to reassert what in the government's view remained public land. Most importantly, Section 3 of "An Act Authorizing the Governor of the Territory of Arkansas to Lease the Salt Springs in Said Territory, and For Other Purposes," stated, "the Hot springs..., together with four sections of land, including said springs, as near the centre thereof as may be, shall be reserved for the future disposal of the United States, and shall not be entered, located, or appropriated for any other purpose whatever." In 1832, Sevier heralded through Congress his pet bill authorizing Hot Springs Reserve. It became law on April 20.[23]

Arkansas statehood involved the issue of acquiring Hot Springs. Ever the consummate dealmaker, Sevier single-handedly smoothed the way when Florida began its own statehood drive. Sevier mobilized his political machine for a convention to produce a speedy constitution designed to permit admittance with Michigan, thereby satisfying the North-South formula of the Missouri Compromise. In the ordinance passed on January 29, 1836, Sevier submitted Arkansas's hasty bid to Congress. Contained within section four, Arkansas asked for title to Hot Springs and all the land of the federal reserve. While Congress approved the Arkansas constitution and most provisions of the ordinance, it denied transference of Hot Springs, already the most publicly recognized spot in the nascent state. It remained federal territory. President Andrew Jackson signed the measure into law on June 15, 1836, making Arkansas the twenty-fifth state in the Union.[24]

With no onsite presence to assert a federal mandate, locals ignored the 1832 reserve designation and continued to press their individual claims. Many were irked that the state's attempt to wrest Hot Springs out of the public domain had failed and the uncertain status quo prevailed. Capital development made incremental gains, producing a western frontier town. Below the springs along Hot Springs Creek stood a grist and saw mill. Hiram A. Whittington, appointed postmaster and magistrate at Hot Springs, became one of its leading boosters. He opened the town's second store in 1833, operating it for a decade in "the most romantic spot on the face of the earth... containing more natural curiosities than any other in the whole world." When surveyors

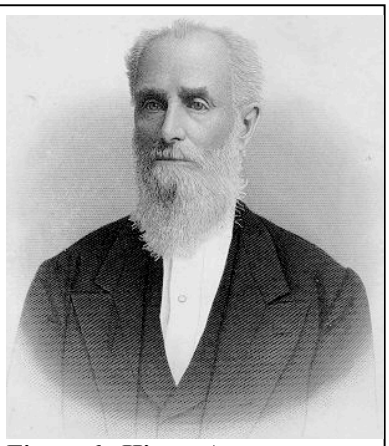

Figure 6. Hiram A. Whittington, 1889 (HSNP 138, National Park Service)

[23] Quotation found in Interior Secretary T. Ewing to President of the Senate Millard Fillmore, letter, 24 June 1850, *Report of the Secretary of the Interior in Answer to A Resolution of the Senate Relative to the Hot Springs of Arkansas, Referred to the Committee on Public Lands, September 9, 1850*, 31st Cong., 1st Sess., Senate, Ex. Doc. 70. As a Jacksonian stalwart, Sevier became the state's first United States senator. Through inter-marriage and violence, the Conway-Sevier-Johnson gang, known as "The Family" or "The Dynasty," controlled Arkansas politics from 1833 to 1860. *Territorial Papers, Arkansas Territory*, 631. Sevier's musings on Hot Springs were posed in a letter to the editor in *Arkansas Gazette* (23 March 1830). See also, Bolton, *Territorial Ambition*, 37-38, 105,107. In publishing the act, an editorial expressed high praise for Sevier's actions. See "The Salt Springs and the Hot Springs," *Arkansas Gazette* (23 May 1832).

[24] White, *Politics on the Southwestern Frontier*, 192; *Territorial Papers, Arkansas Territory*, 1189; and Woods, *Rebellion and Realignment*, 38.

finally reached the area in early 1838, a township plat demarcating the Hot Springs Reserve came to GLO, which issued a patent certificate for the New Madrid claim of Francois Langlois owned by Henry M. Rector. Pre-emption claims by the Perciful-Hale families and Belding-Gaines families caused GLO to back-pedal on its action, thereby setting up the future framework for a blizzard of litigation.[25]

Figure 7. George W. Featherstonaugh (University of Wisconsin Library)

Tourism promotion brought not only Americans, but many foreign visitors were drawn to Hot Springs as well. An English geologist, George W. Featherstonaugh, and his son noted in 1834 primitive, but bearable conditions. While unimpressed with accommodations, they were smitten by the area's natural wonders. Featherstonaugh wrote that "all roads of every kind terminate at the Hot Springs; beyond them there is nothing but the unbroken wilderness, the trails and fords of which are only known to a few hunters." They occupied one of four cabins rented by the Percifuls and slept in a cramped room that in the peak summer season could accommodate as many as a dozen people. Dinner at the Perciful's table consisted of inedible "little pieces of pork swimming in hog's grease, some very badly made bread, and much worse coffee." As a result of a violent night-time storm, the Englishmen were subjected not only to wind and rain whipping through their rough enclosure, but the sounds, smells, and sights of distressed hogs taking refuge beneath the irregularly-spaced cabin floorboards.[26]

While Featherstonaugh's journal reached Congress in 1835 and the British public nine years later, George Engelmann, a German botanist and physician, visited Hot Springs around the time of statehood. Engelmann targeted his remarks to a German audience, extolling the water's medicinal values. Declaring the "spa on the border of civilized settlement" to be "the most remarkable feature of the 'far west,'" George Engelmann fell victim to nativist mythology by penning "this valley of peace, as the red people call it [--] even the raw natural man feels himself close to god, and lays his tomahawk down in awe before he enters this place." Engelmann compared the springs to those at Wiesbaden, Gastein, Leuk, and Pfeffers, in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, reporting "The water is pleasant-tasting, almost like a thin broth... one does not experience any unpleasantness which is usual with warmer waters, and can drink large quantities without feeling bloated." He found that invalids tended to be from the South, especially settlers from the Red River and Louisiana, suffering from rheumatism,

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[25] Quotation from Hiram A. Whittington to Granville Whittington, letter, 3 March 1833; see also letters 10 April 1833 and 21 November 1933, and 2 March 1934; and *Biographical and Historical Memoirs*, 530; *Wyatt's Travel Diary, 1836, with Comment by Mrs. Addie Evans Wynn and W. A. Evans (Grandchildren of W. N. Wyatt)* (Chicago: privately published, 1930), 11; and Herndon, *Centennial History of Arkansas*, 866-67. Hard lobbying since 1821 for an Arkansas pre-emption law came in 1830. See Bolton, *Territorial Ambition*, 72 and 115.

[26] George W. Featherstonaugh, *Featherstonaugh's Excursion Through the Slave States*, Volume II (London: John Murray, 1844) respective quotations from 121 and 109; see also 106-07, 110.

mercury poisoning, skin conditions, gall fevers, yellow fever, dyspepsia, constipation, and edemas.[27]

Figure 8. Hot Springs, Arkansas, 1844 lithograph bookplate from Featherstonaugh (HSNP 1240, National Park Service)

In addition to Americans literally taking personal advantage of Hot Springs's natural values, they were also using the federal reserve as if it was a national park. Of primary significance, Engelmann described health-seeking tourists engaged in diverse recreational pursuits, incorporating daily physical exercise into their "taking the cure" routines. Favorite pursuits included hiking along a wide network of trails, horseback-riding, hunting, fishing, gaming, and simply relaxing with a book, courting at a dance, or enjoying the fresh mountain air. Despite the odds, Hot Springs as a tourist mecca became even more popular among the American public.

Engelmann chronicled the spa resort's crowded conditions with as many as 150 patients occupying the buildings or in their own tents or wagons. While the bathhouses were most popular, the majority bathed in the heated creek and without a physician's oversight. Indeed, several of the patients were themselves physicians seeking cures, and all with currency could find a wide variety of medicines stocked in the mercantiles. To board in one of the cabins, a guest paid six dollars a week with care for a horse set at four dollars. Sharing a bed with a stranger proved common, and meat could be had at all three meals. To relieve boredom and restore their vigor, many patients resorted to physical exercise in their daily regimens. Walks through the valley, climbing to the summit overlook on Hot Springs Mountain, evening dances, and excursions to Little Rock were popular. Men enjoyed hunting forays for bear, buffalo, and other wild game. Gambling served as the premier vice with violence erupting on occasion when rigged card and dice games were uncovered. Engelmann's portrayal of future conditions demonstrates his conversion to boosterism by writing, "Before this half of the century is past, I have been promised that the hot springs will offer more comfortable accommodations for its guests, competent doctors and better bathing facilities for its patients, and entertainments for those who seek diversion.... Hot springs will be just as fashionable a spa for the west and south as Saratoga now is for the north and east."[28]

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[27]George Engelmann, *The Hot Springs in Arkansas*, translation found in Jerome and Harriet H. Jansma, "George Engelmann in Arkansas Territory," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, vol. 50 (Autumn 1991), quotations respectively from 245, 230, 233, 241; see also 242.

[28] Ibid., quotation from 245-46; see also 243-44.

To alleviate crowded conditions, entrepreneurs built more facilities to meet public demand. In 1835, James Conway, soon to serve as Arkansas's first governor, joined with Lawson Runyon to open another hotel consisting of a group of cabins and a well-stocked bar. One visitor praised the improvements, considering the dollar-and-a-quarter daily fare quite reasonable.[29] Another spa resort hotel opened at Chalybeate Spring two miles east of Hot Springs in 1836. Operated by Hiram A. Whittington until 1849, the boarding house accommodated overflow patients and offered morning and evening carriage rides to Hot Springs. This same establishment, called Randolph's Chalybeate and Sulphur Springs in 1852, featured renovated cabins, bar, bowling alley, and billiards. Fairchild's Sulphur Springs, which opened in 1856 eight miles from Hot Springs, advertised comfortable facilities. An 1857 visitor admitted, "If it were not for the Chalybeate Spring and Sulphur Spring, and the good cheer given by their respective proprietors, we hot water visitors of the valley would have a rather dull time of it."[30]

Demographically, increased numbers of slave-owning settlers arrived in Arkansas each year, many of whom undertook intrastate travel for the Hot Springs cure. Throughout the 1830s, Arkansas's population grew at a twelve percent annual rate so that by decade's end the populace neared 100,000 souls from border and Southern states of Missouri, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama. By 1840, with less than two people per square mile, African Americans made up one-fifth of the state's demographic profile. Slaves were concentrated in the east and south where the flat lowland plantation culture took firm root and prospered. In the interior highlands of the Ouachitas and Ozarks, few slaves could be found toiling on the less profitable small farms. Arkansas conformed to the pattern of her sister states of the Upper South. Polarized by geography and economics, a wealthy planter society contrasted sharply with the older, entrenched poor-white culture of Arkansas. The Hot Springs region attracted settlers who migrated from the uplands of Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Tennessee, exhibiting an Appalachian tradition where slave-holding proved the exception to the rule.

Overall, the state's development suffered not simply from internal transportation woes, but its onerous topography caused westward emigrants to either pass north through Missouri or south through Louisiana. Many who did come made a special point to stop at Hot Springs before continuing on to Texas. Unlike other states, Arkansas had no west to exploit because designation of the Indian Territory in the 1820s effectively blocked expansion with a federal presence at Fort Smith garrisoned to enforce the separation of cultures. Finally, the Indian Removal Act of 1832 unfairly penalized Arkansas when, as result of federal law, the state experienced a series of mass relocations, internal Indian migrations, and then removals of native peoples. The social turmoil became economic when whites, wary of having any limits placed on their capitalist ambitions, simply elected to bypass or leave the state, which became stigmatized by backwardness, violence, ignorance, and poverty.[31]

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[29] Fay Hempstead, *Historical Review of Arkansas: Its Commerce, Industry and Modern Affairs*, volume 1 (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1911), 550; Dee Brown, *The American Spa: Hot Springs, Arkansas* (Little Rock: Rose Publishing Company, 1982), 63; and *Wyatt's Travel Diary, 1836*, 12.

[30] Ruth Irene Jones, "Ante-Bellum Watering Places of Arkansas," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 18 (Autumn 1959), quotation on 216; see also 213-15.

[31] Woods, *Rebellion and Realignment*, 1, 6-7, 11, 13; and Bolton, *Territorial Ambition*, 28-29.

The allure of Hot Springs stood in stark contrast to the overall poor statewide economic outlook, and local boosters, even without clear title to their land, remained optimistic as steadily increasing numbers of published testimonials made the spa resort a destination point for health-seekers. Some of the afflicted, enamored by the springs, climate, and capitalist profit motive chose to become residents. In fact, historians have overlooked the health-seeking intentions of Americans in studying the frontier and westward expansion. Those suffering debilitating diseases for which medical authorities were helpless in finding cures tried their own radical balm by uprooting themselves and moving to a new promised land of health in the West. As much as one-quarter of the Southwest's nineteenth-century emigrants journeyed there to escape tubercular slums and wretched sweatshops of the industrial East. According to Historian Billy M. Jones, "The failure of formal medicine to provide adequate relief even for simple diseases forced laymen and doctors alike to place great reliance upon changes of residence or therapeutic travel as the surest means of dissipating a persistent illness or of avoiding the contaminations of an infectious location."[32]

The United States was a health-conscious nation. Euro-Americans feared lowlands near swamps and rivers emitting unhealthy vapors and miasma. Pools of stagnant water in recurrently inundated bottomlands where rotting vegetation and other effluvium persisted were thought to contribute to illness, and for that reason many eschewed living near water. They ideally preferred a more healthful environment to be found in forested areas of higher elevations where the air and water were known to be pure. For the eastern half of the United States, these areas "above the fever line" were the mountainous regions of Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Arkansas. Such attitudes also induced Euro-Americans to visit mineral and thermal springs for their reputed medicinal virtues.[33]

Distrustful of unschooled and oftentimes incompetent medical practitioners, Americans preferred homeopathy and an assortment of apothecary, quackery, and patent medicines to heal their ailments. In many instances, it proved cheaper to consult an apothecary for a special elixir or to buy patent medicine than to visit a doctor. The public's propensity to seek out tonics and nostrums, often high in alcohol and containing dangerous drugs, fueled the rise of diverse medical pseudo-sciences. This quackery first gained momentum in the antebellum era, producing traveling medicine shows, mail order catalogs, and peddlers hawking patent medicines. Advertisements of these seductive products ensured the survival of many western frontier newspapers and perpetuated an escalating cycle in which a gullible public dispensed its hard-earned cash to charlatans.[34]

The Jacksonian era spawned a national health reform movement in which seeking good health became allied with religious and moral obligations. Key concepts of

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[32] Billy M. Jones, *Health-Seekers in the Southwest, 1817-1900* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), quotation on viii; see also vii.
[33] Ibid., 5, 10, 18-19.
[34] Stewart H. Holbrook, *The Golden Age of Quackery* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1959), 6, 33; and Bobbie Kalman, *Early Health and Medicine* (New York: Crabtree Publishing Company, 1983), 37-38, 41.

American Protestantism and initiative inspired reformers to preach the welcome gospel to a receptive public that physical salvation remained within everyone's grasp as long as basic concepts of good hygiene, exercise, and diet were observed. Giving the "body as temple" doctrine a special twist, reformers asserted that illness stood in opposition to natural laws established by God, and by seeking bodily health one could also achieve the Kingdom of God. Hence, the adage "cleanliness is next to godliness" took on new meaning. Christians perceived that indulgences of the flesh hindered spirituality. Temperance and other forms of controlling physical proclivities were seen as virtue. Proponents borrowed from medicine things that supported their health doctrines and rejected those that did not. This hygienic religion produced such popular literature as the *Journal of Health*, founded in 1829, which focused on what people could do for themselves to avoid the dreaded visit to a doctor. In the absence of professional or academic forces to rule on what did or did not constitute quackery, an avalanche of health instruction spewed forth. Striving for physical excellence through good health to facilitate spiritual salvation became paramount to the Jacksonian health reform movement and its message attracted hordes of true believers.[35]

Sylvester Graham emerged as the premier spokesman of early nineteenth-century health reform. His lectures on diet and hygiene were well received. Because Americans were raised avoiding it, Graham emphasized the benefits of regular bathing and good ventilation. Women, care-givers prone to grasping the newest homeopathic methods to benefit their families, were especially receptive to his message. Grahamized diets, including those bland yet healthful Graham crackers, entered the American lexicon. Well-versed in Grahamite principles, women took the lead in advocating hydropathy, which after 1840, moved to the forefront of the health reform movement. In its Americanized incarnation, hydropathy, a European innovation involving purification of the body to affect cures through a strict regimen of bathing and ingesting water, combined with temperance, exercise, nutrition, and general healthy living through moderation to capture the public's fancy. The hydropathy cure appeared to be so simple and logical that it clashed with the ingrained propensity for potion-taking.[36]

Figure 9. Sylvester Graham

In 1845, the movement generated *The Water Cure Journal* with a circulation of ten thousand within four years. It and other publications elaborated the discipline's

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[35] Ronald G. Walters, *American Reformers, 1815-1860* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1997), 147-48; and James C. Whorton, *Crusaders for Fitness: The History of American Health Reformers* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 5-7, 14. The American Medical Association (AMA) did not organize until 1847. Decades passed before the AMA could refute some of the more bizarre and deleterious forms of quackery.

[36] Alice Felt Tyler, *Freedom's Ferment: Phases of American Social History from the Colonial Period to the Outbreak of Civil War* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962), 440-1; Walters, *American Reformers, 1815-1860*, 155-56; and Whorton, *Crusaders for Fitness*, 24-25.

methodology for various baths. Enhancing the water-cure craze, the American Hydropathic Society produced Mary Gove Nichols, a former Grahamite, as the hydropath evangelist. Nichols and her peers happily discovered that their new fad became a perfect money-making scheme and hydropathic retreats geared to families and women appeared, inaugurated by an 1844 institution in Vermont and rapidly spreading throughout the East. Charging high rates, these resorts promised health restoration, if not outright cures for patients, and served as academies for new practitioners. By 1855, the United States featured sixty-two such facilities. Professionalization came four years previously when Mary Gove Nichols and husband Thomas founded the American Hydropathic Institute. Hydropathic bathing rituals were spelled out in the following categories: towel bath, sponge bath, shower bath, plunge bath, douche bath, wave bath, half bath, head bath, nasal bath, oral bath, sitz bath, leg bath, arm bath, finger bath, and foot bath.[37]

There can be little doubt that by the end of the 1840s most Hot Springs visitors knew about hydropathy and its promised benefits, and arrived expecting to secure hydropathic cures. In fact, *The Water-Cure Manual* in 1847 singled out Hot Springs, citing its popularity for thermal plunges and sweat baths. The mountains of Arkansas fit the American ideal for good living. By bathing, sweating, and drinking the magical waters, a wide array of miraculous cures was claimed for chronic pains, paralysis, and a host of diseases.[38]

Local rhetoric played on hydropathy and the water cure craze, and facility development began differentiating between socio-economic tourist classes. While more capital improvements translated into more visitors, upscale spa resorts could attract not only more wealthy planters, but affluent urban health-seekers as well. Lease of many of the cabins in 1841 fell to John C. Hale and M. H. Woods, who began substantive renovations along with new construction. The Hale Hotel with manager Sarah Hale provided full-course meals and other modern amenities at eight-dollars per day. In response, Arkansas's urban elite, principally lawyers and politicians from Little Rock, Batesville, Washington, Pine Bluff, Helena, Searcy, and Camden, began their own fashionable pilgrimages to Hot Springs. The contrast between rich and poor health-seekers became especially pronounced during the 1840s. During this same period, Lawson Runyon and A. N. Sabin operated more modest boarding houses charging five dollars per week.[39]

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[37] Joel Shew, *The Water-Cure Manual: A Popular Work Embracing Descriptions of the Various Modes of Bathing, the Hygienic and Curative Effects of Air, Exercise, Clothing, Occupation, Diet, Water-Drinking, &C., Together with Descriptions of Diseases, and the Hydropathic Means to be Employed Therein* (New York: Cady and Burgess, 1847), 58-77; Shew, editor, *Hand-Book of Hydropathy: A Popular Account of the Treatment and Prevention of Diseases by Means of Water* (New York: Wiley & Putnam, 1844), 16-35; William H. Dieffenbach, *Hydrotherapy: A Brief Summary of the Practical Value of Water in Disease for Students and Practitioners of Medicine* (New York: Rebman Company, 1909), 3-8; Herman L. Kamentez, "History of American Spas and Hydrotherapy," in Sidney Light, editor *Medical Hydrology* (Baltimore: Waverly Press, 1963), 175-78; Walters, *American Reformers, 1815-1860*, 156-57; and Whorton, *Crusade for Fitness*, 136-38.

[38] Shew, *The Water-Cure Manual*, 106-07.

[39] *Arkansas Gazette* (14 July, 28 July, and 18 August, 1841); and Harry S. Ashmore, *Arkansas: A Bicentennial History* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1978), 56.

More and more patients afflicted with venereal diseases arrived to purge their systems of mercury poisoning. Nineteenth-century physicians treated venereal diseases with mercury via vapor baths, topically, or orally. Rooted in the age-old belief in humors and health, mercury caused salivation that released bad humors from the body. Similarly, hot vapor baths brought on excessive perspiration providing another avenue to release adverse humors. While application of mercury to venereal chancres and lesions frequently caused them to disappear, high dosages could result in tooth loss, fissures of the tongue, bowel hemorrhages, and even death. Syphilitics at Hot Springs experienced the ultimate in sweating and salivation, many of whom eliminated mercury from their bodies and claimed a complete cure. A Hot Springs observer in 1846 wrote,

> *"Some forty or fifty invalids are now here, most of them affected with rheumatism and mercurial complaints, in which diseases the astonishing efficacy of the baths is discernible. I see several who arrived, a few weeks ago, so helpless, crooked, and deformed, that they had to be lifted as inanimate beings, now walking with agility. There are others who had taken a good deal of mercury, and whose systems were not cleansed of it, until they bathed here some weeks, when a profuse salivation occurring, and continuing from two to four weeks, every vestige of disease was removed."*[40]

Novice health-seekers relied on advice from residents or long-term patients to plan their own bathing regimens. While Hot Springs still lacked a resident physician, in 1849 local businessman Jacob Mitchell began offering his services to bathers. As a three-year resident Mitchell, the owner of a hotel, livery stable, saloon and billiard parlor, and stage line, earned the title "doctor" as he dispensed medicines and herbal remedies, dabbling in allopathy, homeopathy, and hydropathy. A year later, Dr. William H. Hammond took up residence and began directing cures. Hammond quickly earned community respect and, much in demand, offered his services to everyone, including the indigent. The revered practitioner, elected to the state senate for two terms, prospered. Upon his death from typhoid in July 1859, Hammond's slaves, used to assist impaired bathers, had grown from one to five.[41]

With the park-like spa resort town prospering from a vigorous tourist trade, local entrepreneurs attempted to solve their title dilemmas. Years spent lobbying for a political solution to area land claim disputes finally bore fruit in 1843 when Congress passed an act designed to perfect titles to land south of the Arkansas River, including New Madrid

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[40] Quotation from "Hot Springs in Arkansas," letter, 1 August 1846, by Kentucky Volunteer "A. M. B.," in *New England Medical Eclectic and Guide to Health*, volume 1 (16 November 1846); and Allan M. Brandt, *No Magic Bullet: A Social History of Venereal Disease in the United States Since 1880* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 11-12.

[41] Carolyn Gray LeMaster, *A Corner of the Tapestry: A History of the Jewish Experience in Arkansas, 1820s-1890s* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1994), 11-12; "Scenes in Arkansas," *The Spirit of the Times*, letter from Hot Springs, 20 October 1849, clipping from the Arkansas Historical Commission, Little Rock; and Francis J. Scully, "Dr. William H. Hammond: Hot Springs' First Resident Physician," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 15 (1956), 293-99. Allopathy treated disease using agents that produced effects different from those of the disease being treated.

locations and pre-emption rights. Governor J. S. Conway immediately approached GLO requesting a patent for the Langlois location owned by his relatives, the Rectors. Unfortunately, the 1832 federal reserve act plus imprecise language in the 1843 act failed to bring about anticipated results. To the glee of other claimants, GLO commissioners ruled against issuing a Langlois/Rector title, maintaining their obstinacy even in the face of an 1850 adverse attorney general's opinion. Determined heirs of Jean Filhiol pressed on with his discredited Spanish land grant until their efforts evoked some interest in the U.S. Senate. To remove the 1832 federal reserve obstacle, Arkansas Senator Solon Borland, a medical doctor from Little Rock, introduced a bill on January 5, 1849, to repeal the ambiguous designation and dispose of the land to a governmental health-care institution. Borland informed GLO Commissioner R. M. Young eight days later,

> *"My opinion is that the act of 1832 was humanely intended to prevent the monopoly of a great and valuable remedial agent. I feel bound to aid, to the extent of my power, the beneficent intention of that act. You will see by my bill that my purpose is to extend the valuable influences of this great natural remedy for disease, by facilitating the establishment of accommodations for the sick and suffering; and still further, by making it tributary to the great and good purpose of educating the poor, at the same time and in the same spirit that I would forever prevent its being monopolized by the selfish hand of individual speculation."*[42]

Because of its unorthodox nature, Borland's bill died in committee.

Local squatters, fearful for their investments, continued to petition Congress for relief. In 1850, a U.S. Senate resolution asked Thomas Ewing, first secretary of the Department of the Interior, to investigate. Ewing's report dutifully recapped the controversy and included an impassioned 1846 plea from thirteen-year resident businessman Lawson Runyon. Runyon expressed great impatience at waiting for a title settlement while guarding his property at great personal risk from scoundrels who "arm themselves against me with long knives and shot-guns." Presenting a classic capitalist plea, Runyon asserted, "Even in its present unfavorable condition it is the only source from which we obtain any means of sustaining ourselves in a country otherwise too poor for the habitation or support of many. These springs are the means of bringing thousands of dollars into the State, which would be doubled and trebled by the settlement of the title or disposition of the land." Congressional intent in 1832 failed, Runyon argued, because,

> *"If by the reserve it was intended to make these springs more available to the public, that object must remain entirely defeated while things remain*

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[42] Borland to Young, letter, 13 January 1849, in *Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 1850; and letters of Secretary Ewing to Senate President Fillmore, 24 June 1850; GLO Commissioner Young's decision, 8 May 1848; W. K. Sebastian to H. M. Rector, 14 February 1849; Borland to GLO Commissioner Butterfield, 26 April 1850; and Secretary Ewing to Butterfield, 16 April and 3 May 1850; and *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress, 1774-1989; Bicentennial Edition, The Continental Congress, September 5, 1774 to October 21, 1788, and The Congress of the United States from the First Through the One Hundredth Congresses, March 4, 1789 to January 3, 1989, Inclusive* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), 644..

> *in their present condition; for the premises are occupied by individuals who claim by pre-emption, and they exercise as full and complete control over them as they could with full title, to the exclusion of others who would be willing to add greater accommodations, at their own risk, even as the title now stands."*[43]

Runyon argued against the federal reserve, declaring,

> *"I cannot imagine any way in which this reserve can be made more useful to the public than by perfecting titles to individuals, so that extensive improvements and accommodations may be made here, and, through competition and otherwise, be made cheap and reasonable to all who visit these springs for their health. It is a matter of great importance to a large tract of country here that something be done in that matter."*[44]

Congress, preoccupied by growing sectionalism, failed to act on the festering Hot Springs dilemma as the Committee on Public Lands promptly buried Ewing's report.

Hopes for a congressional settlement evaporated. In 1851, the town of Hot Springs incorporated. Featuring a central avenue and double row of hotels, bathhouses, stores, saloons, a doctor's office, and outlying private homes, the settlement blissfully ignored being perched atop public land. In the two decades since Congress set aside the Hot Springs Reserve, it had shown little interest other than conducting a half-hearted investigation and rebuffing state efforts to affect a transfer. Most importantly, Congress failed to authorize any onsite protection lest it be required to revisit its 1832 act and define the federal government's interests therein. Faced with the seemingly endless status quo without legislative relief, the principal claimants during the 1850s embarked upon a favorite American solution: they went to court. The ensuing decade saw more than 140 land claims lawsuits clog county, state, and federal courts. While litigants filed suit and countersuits without genuine vindication, the judicial process did result in recognition of informal boundaries, with Rector, Hale, and Gaines holding possession of the upper, center, and lower areas of Hot Springs Valley. Upon reaching this tacit understanding, the commercial practice of sub-leasing land and improvements accelerated.[45]

By decade's end, the spa resort town, by far the most popular destination point in antebellum Arkansas, transformed itself. Henry Rector opened "Tavern House" in 1850, and fierce competition among hotels for guests sparked overall enhancement of amenities like cuisine and a spate of new construction. As crowds grew, space came at a premium. One 1860 observer reported "every nook and corner is so filled with visitors that they will occupy the parlor *floor* until some one [sic] leaves the Springs, when they hurry into the vacant room." One polite party, a physician accompanied by ladies from Vicksburg,

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[43] Ibid., Runyon to GLO Commission Thomas Blake, letter, 26 September 1846.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Walter L. Brown, "The Henry M. Rector Claim to the Hot Springs of Arkansas," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 15 (Autumn 1956), 281-84; Writers' Program, *Arkansas*, 157; and Margaret Ross, "Chronicles of Arkansas: Conflicting Ownership Claims Impeded the Progress of Hot Springs in 1800s," *Arkansas Gazette* (30 October 1960).

watched patiently as workers "planked up" two rooms on the Hale House's upper piazza. In 1852, Stidham's Hotel opened featuring the spa's first ice house, amassing up to fifty tons of ice to boast a premier ice cream saloon and soda fountain by 1855.[46]

Two studies cast a national spotlight on Arkansas's premier resort spa. Glowing praise came in an 1855 congressionally-authorized study of the benefits of mineral and thermal springs. From 1858 to 1860, state geologist David Dale Owen provided one of the first scientific analyses of the water yielding organic matters, silica with sulphate of lime, bicarbonate of soda, and other trace elements. He rejected previous suppositions concerning the origin of the hot water, attributing it to earth's internal heat.[47]

Methods for providing more comfortable baths changed, too. Hot Springs Mountain featured an elaborate series of V-shaped wooden troughs on elevated frames to bring thermal water down the hillside to cooling tanks, and then on to large wooden hot- and cold-water tanks built into bathhouse rafters. Inside, spigots above wooden tubs could be activated with ropes. Performed twice a day, bathers could stand under the downpour for an invigorating douche while their tubs filled with spring water. They drank copious amounts of water and lost much of it through profuse perspiration in vapor baths and later while encased in warm towels. Several springs were already known for special outdoors bathing. These included Corn Hole Spring for soaking feet, Mud Hole Spring for the poor, and Ral Hole Spring for indigent syphilitics. People also repaired to cold water Kidney Spring and Liver Spring for these particular ailments and Alum Spring for treating sore eyes. By 1860, with the town's population at 201, its two largest hotel/bathhouses could easily accommodate 500 people, and peak seasonal visitation consistently surpassed one thousand people in a single day.[48]

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[46] Quotation from Thomas F. Jeffries, *The Book of Sunshine: The Bright Side of Everything* (Baltimore: James Young, 1861) 133; Jones, "Ante-Bellum Watering Places of Arkansas," 213 (Besides those previously mentioned in the vicinity, other springs featuring some antebellum resort development included Dardanelle Spring, Yell County; Gray's White Sulphur Springs, White County; Heber Springs, Cleburne County; Cantrell's Sulphur Springs, Jefferson County; Pennywit Springs, Crawford County; and Eureka Springs, Carroll County. See also, Brown, *The American Spa*, 63.

[47] John Bell, *The Mineral and Thermal Springs of the United States and Canada*, ordered printed by act of Congress (Philadelphia: Parry and McMillan, 1855), ii, 302-17; David Dale Owen, *Second Report of A Geological Reconnaissance of the Middle and Southern Counties of Arkansas Made During the Years 1859 and 1860* (Philadelphia: C. Sherman & Son, 1860), 20-21, 23, 102-03; Walter B. Hendrickson, "David Dale Owen Visits the Hot Springs," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 1 (Spring 1942), 141, 144-45; R. M. Lackey, "The Hot Springs of Arkansas: Location, Character, and Products of the Surrounding Country, Medical Qualities of the Waters, Etc.," *The Chicago Medical Journal* 23 (1866), 4-10. E. H. Larkin of St. Louis conducted another laboratory analysis in 1856. See J. M. Keller, "The Hot Springs of Arkansas as a Health Resort: Their Waters as Remedial Agents," *St. Louis Medical and Surgical Journal* 37 (1879), 83-84.

[48] John Fordyce, "Improvements in Bathing and Bathhouses in Hot Springs National Park," typewritten manuscript, circa 1935, folder C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse, 1935-1942; "Some Account of the Hot Springs of Arkansas; Communicated in a Letter from A. J. Wright to Dr. Samuel A. Cartwright, Asking for Information," *The New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal* 17 (1860-61), 796-808; Mary Marshall to "Sonny," letter, 1 October 1853, folder: Marshall Correspondence 1850s; and M. S. Bedinger, *Valley of the Vapors: Hot Springs National Park* (Philadelphia: Eastern National Park and Monument Association, 1974), 14-15.

Arkansas's economy caught up with Hot Springs's healthy outlook only by the late 1850s. On the South's western periphery, Arkansas did not fit the mold of the Old South, but her social, cultural, and economic ties to it ultimately proved insurmountable. Subsistence farming had already given way to market agriculture for the small-farming highlands, but the boom in the state's lowland cotton kingdom helped raise land values and yielded a pre-war immigration inrush. Slaves made up one-quarter of the population, but white slave-owners constituted less than twenty percent, the lowest among Confederate states. The new prosperity helped tilt political influence in favor of the slave-based planting culture and further widened intrastate divisions on the eve of the secession crisis. Nonetheless, Governor Henry Rector, a Hot Springs hotel/bathhouse owner, led Arkansas's effort to leave the Union in May 1861. This momentous act sealed the state's socio-economic backwardness for almost a century.[49]

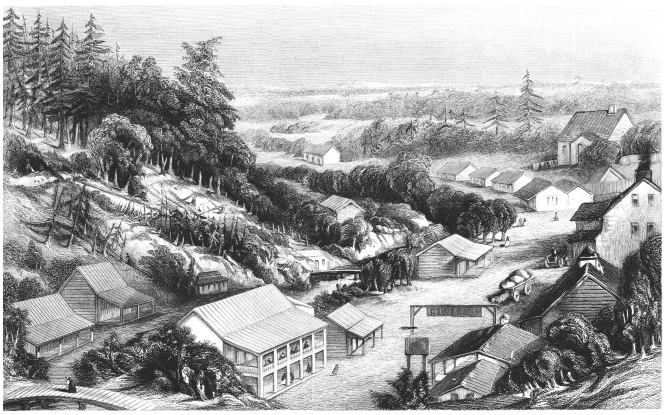

Figure 10. Hot Springs, Arkansas, on the eve of the American Civil War, Owen's geological report (HSNP 1242, National Park Service)

In Hot Springs, disunion meant at last abrogating federal claims to the spa resort. Economic survival depended on health-seeking tourism, but following Abraham Lincoln's election as president in late 1860, many stayed home in 1861. While Hot Springs did feature a modicum of economic diversification, including the Whittington whetstone factory, which opened in 1853 to exploit the nearby Ouachita oil stone quarry, its impact proved minimal. Disunion for a strategic state bordering federally-seized Missouri and the nation's key Mississippi trade route also meant economic and social hardship.

Prosperity came at a high price. It brought attendant vice such as gambling, thievery, murder, alcoholism, and prostitution. More importantly, the scourge of slavery multiplied. To help operate the burgeoning hotels and bathhouses, wage-earning slaves working to benefit their owners swelled with 146 slaves enumerated in Hot Springs Township in 1860. African American women served as cooks, laundresses, and maids while black men were concentrated in the bathhouses and hotels as attendants and porters. One wheelchair-bound invalid hired a male slave named "King" for eight dollars a month to care for him. Hotels advertised that slaves were welcome to take the cure and, once restored to health, be sent back to their masters. Pivotal to the local economy, blacks were regarded as nothing more than income-generating property.[50]

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[49] Bolton, *Territorial Ambition*, 2; Woods, *Rebellion and Realignment*, 2, 25, 166; and Timothy P. Donovan, et al., editors, *The Governors of Arkansas: Essays in Political Biography* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1995), 33-35.

[50] Major James Burgess, *Butcher Knife* (Danville, Indiana) letter, 11 July 1857, reprinted in "An Indiana Visitor Describes Hot Springs of 1857," *Sentinel-Record* (5 July 1959); Anthony P. Rodney to E. E. Rodney, letter, 15 July 1852, in Mrs. Gerald B. McLane, editor, "Hot Springs Arkansas of 1852," *The*

As civil war loomed, travel from the North and East ceased and the first wave of prosperity evaporated. Able-bodied men marched off for military training. With pro-Union sentiment strong in the Ozarks, a pervasive fear of violence gripped Hot Springs and the Ouachitas as sectional terrorism increased throughout Arkansas's highlands. Townspeople began making preparations to flee.[51]

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Hot Springs went from a frontier wilderness to a tourist's mecca, a spa resort operating much like a national park where natural values provided the principal attraction and tourism development and recreational outlets followed to satisfy public demand. Its unique concentration of thermal springs, believed to possess mysterious natural qualities, merited preservation for public benefit and enjoyment. To this end, Congress authorized Hot Springs Reserve in 1832, but did nothing to establish a federal mandate or presence there. It did not have to because Hot Springs entrepreneurs were already fully engaged in transforming it. Federal authorities looked on in bewilderment, uncertain what the 1832 Federal Reserve Act meant. In antebellum America, the national park idea also remained undefined and amorphous. By examining what occurred in the pre-1861 Hot Springs Reserve, we can see Americans providing form and substance to that lofty concept first articulated by George Catlin. By a fluke of history, the national park idea and Hot Springs national park were both conceived in the same year. Elevated to its "official" bureaucratic status by Congress in 1921, with the hearty approval of National Park Service Director Stephen T. Mather, Hot Springs National Park materialized in its "unofficial" form decades prior to the so-called "crown jewel" parks like Yosemite or Yellowstone. Without bothering to evaluate Hot Springs's compelling history, historians have erroneously dismissed it.[52]

In 1861, the future of this special place, much like those George Catlin might draw or describe, where industrious Americans created comfort out of chaos, all of it appeared uncertain. As shots rang out at Fort Sumter, Hot Springs's destiny forever changed. One aspect remained steadfast: for political, social, and economic reasons, Americans remained convinced of its real value and thousands had already made the arduous journey to partake of the thermal water and vapor baths. At the spa resort town, Americans of all colors and income levels enjoyed the fresh mountain air and scenery, obtained relief from afflictions, and resorted to diverse recreational activities, thereby making Hot Springs a national park all but in name only.

Record: Hot Springs-Garland County Historical Society Year Book 1965, 56-57; Bobbie Jones McLane, "1850 and 1860 Hot Spring County Arkansas Slave Schedule Summary," *The Record, 1991*, 49-51; Jeffries, *The Book of Sunshine*, 136; and Herndon, *Centennial History of Arkansas*, 863.

[51] Wendy Richter, "The Impact of the Civil War on Hot Springs, Arkansas," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 43 (Summer 1984), 125-26.

[52] Perhaps the most annoying dismissal can be found in John Ise, *Our National Park Policy: A Critical History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1961), 13, 244-45, and 268.

CHAPTER TWO

Civil War, Reconstruction and Re-discovering Hot Springs Reservation

Arkansas seceded from the Union on May 6, 1861. It served as a vital geographic link west of the Mississippi River anchoring Louisiana and Texas to the rebellious Confederate States of America. Men of all ages scurried to military recruitment offices and eventually most Arkansan regiments were ushered to the east to fight in and protect other Confederate states. Commercial activities at home were immediately disrupted from this manpower drain as the state's economy re-geared itself to support the war effort. Civil unrest and violence became the norm as pro-Union factions centered principally in the Boston Mountains and Ozarks (north of the Arkansas River) and pro-Confederate groups battled in and among the cities and towns of Arkansas. Bushwhackers both blue and gray roamed throughout the state spreading chaos and misery.

Figure 11. Hot Springs Valley (note chimneys of burned buildings), c. 1865 (HSNP 3149, National Park Service)

Arkansas troops played a major role in the Battle of Wilson's Creek (August 1861), a Confederate victory that was not capitalized on as forces retreated from southwest Missouri into Arkansas and disbanded. In 1862, clashes took place throughout the state as Union and Confederate forces fought to secure their positions. The Battle of Pea Ridge (February 1862) saw a Union victory and the loss of northwest Arkansas to the Confederacy. In the summer of 1862, when Union forces began threatening Little Rock, Governor Henry Rector moved the state capital to his native Hot Springs where the town's economy had all but collapsed with few coming to take the baths.[53] When Union troops failed to advance, Rector moved state records back to Little Rock. Nonetheless,

[53] It is believed the location of the temporary new state capitol was in the Rector's home and bathhouse on what is now Arlington Park Lawn where today the site is marked by a plaque. Dallas T. Herndon, editor, *Centennial History of Arkansas, Vol. 1* (Chicago-Little Rock: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1922): 412-13; and Larry D. Rhoades, "Arkansas' Provisional Confederate Capital: Hot Springs in the Summer of 1862" *The Record*, vol. 39 (Garland County Historical Society, 1998): 47-51.

with Arkansas in perpetual turmoil and no economic reason to stay, most residents of Hot Springs fled to safe haven in Louisiana or Texas to await the war's end.

Little Rock fell to Union forces in September 1863. As chaos spread through the countryside, Hot Springs suffered from repeated looting from guerilla bands loosely affiliated with either side.[54] A skirmish at Hot Springs occurred on February 4, 1864.[55] Much of the deserted town had burned by war's end leaving few buildings unscathed.[56] Letters from the period detail the misery. Lydia Belding, writing to son Henry in Texas, on July 10, 1864, chronicled:

Figure 12. Bathhouses on Hot Springs Creek, c. 1867 (HSNP 3152, National Park Service)

> *Feds shot poor Sabin down in the street. Feds burned Mrs. Sumter out and we are expecting them back every moment. They say they will burn the whole Valley.*
>
> *Mr. Gaines nearly blind, Feds took off about 60 Negroes, all his horses and mules, wagons. April 1, army from Ft Smith. passed through. Went by the farm and destroyed all they could.*
>
> *You would hardly know this place nearly all the Houses have gone to ruin. The widow Davis is living in the Clayton House and Mrs. Chase in the Akin House. Nearly all the people have left the Valley. There is scare a man to be seen…. Almost all the country People have joined the Feds and it is them that come back and do so much harm.*[57]

Another letter to her son written December 17, 1864, declared:

> *About a month since the Houses in the Valley were set on fire and the Rector, Hale, and Clayton Houses were burned. It is supposed to be done by the Mountain Feds. Dick Warren's House did not burn. All the rest on that side of the street are burned as far down as the Old Kuykendall Houses. You might know that it is a desolate looking place now. You can have no idea of the condition of things in the country at this*

[54] Fay Hemstead, "The Founding of Hot Springs, Arkansas," *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Central* Arkansas, 1889, reprinted in Hot Springs *Sentinel Record (1951); and* Robert P. Mackey, "The Uncivil War: Irregular Warfare in the Upper South, 1861-1865 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004): 24-36.

[55] Allen W. Jones and Virginia Ann Buttry, "Military Events in Arkansas During the Civil War, 1861-1865," Summer 1963, No. 2 *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*: 148.

[56] Wendy Richter, "The Impact of the Civil War on Hot Springs, Arkansas," Summer 1984, No. 2 *Arkansas Historical Quarterly:* 133-34.

[57] Belding correspondence, Lydia to Henry Belding, letter, 10 July 1864, in HSNP files.

time they are bad indeed. We have no security for anything. We have managed to get along so far but we have been plundered and robbed all the time. We would have left before now but could not get away. I wish we were safe in Texas or Mexico….[58]

Following collapse and surrender of the ill-fated Confederacy in spring 1865, the allure of the health-reviving thermal waters and their economic promise brought a slow resurgence to Hot Springs. As the nation entered a period of political reconstruction so, too, did rapid rebuilding of bathhouses and hotels dot the landscape in a revived Hot Springs. The national park essence at Hot Springs also saw a swift resurgence as northern and eastern capital and visitors, augmented by southern aristocrats, quickly brought back the robust antebellum economy.

Figure 13. Hot Springs Mountain wooden sluices delivering thermal water from Egg Spring, c. 1867 (HSNP 3156, National Park Service)

A visitor in 1867 noted that the magical allure of the waters brought thousands seeking cures. "The bath houses are very primitive and inexpensive, bearing rude impress of semi-civilized or pioneer architecture, although these springs have been resorted to by invalids for thirty or forty years." He noted that the "water is conveyed in wooden troughs from the springs to the bath houses at the base of the mountain," where people gathered "at almost every hour of the day… [bathing and] drinking copious draughts of water, almost hot enough to cook an egg." He described in detail the process of taking the baths and exclaimed "It is found that one such ordeal every twenty-four hours is quite sufficient for most constitutions, however robust, much less those wasted and worn down by long and debilitation diseases. I have been undergoing this process for a month, and I assure you there is something more like hard work about it than anything I have done for many years…."[59]

Figure 14. Ladies hour at Corn Hole Spring, 1870. (HSNP 2642, National Park Service).

Testimonials increasingly enticed Americans, North and South, to make the journey. Former Army surgeon P. N.

[58] Ibid., letter, 17 December 1864.
[59] E. S. Frazer, "A Month at the Hot Springs in Arkansas" Vol. 4 *St. Louis Medical & Surgical Journal* (letter to editor dated 9 January 1867): 153-66.

Ellsworth wrote a letter published in the *Chicago Medical Journal* that his medical practice in Hot Springs yielded "truly astonishing" results. Ellsworth reported treating many forms of chronic disease including, "rheumatism, gout, stiff-joints, contraction of the muscles, and skin-diseases as a class; scrofula, enlargement of the glands, general debility, spinal diseases, neuralgia, nervous affections, dyspepsia, nervous and mucous paralysis in its varied forms, uterine diseases as a class, mercurial, mercurio-syphlitic, and all forms of syphilitic diseases." He observed, "many diseases, which are too numerous to mention, are likewise benefitted by the judicious use of the waters; but the most marked improvement is shown in rheumatism, gout, skin-diseases, neuralgias, uterine affections, mercurial and syphilitic."[60]

Figure 15. Ral City on Hot Springs Mountain in 1870, later called "Kelley Town" after first Superintendent Benjamin F. Kelley. (Historic Photograph Collection, Harpers Center, National Park Service)

Other more enthusiastic local boosters claimed paralysis, asthma, diseases of the kidneys and bladder, ulcers, ring worm, headaches, menstruation troubles, sterility, alcohol and opium addiction—even baldness—could be cured. One estimate had visitation since 1865 at 10,700 a year "and of these about seventy-five percent have been radically cured of the diseases with which they were afflicted." Quoting one local observer, a promotional pamphlet proclaimed: "I have seen persons—rheumatics—who had not walked a hundred yards for years, restored to health and vigor by a few weeks' use of them. I have seen those who had been tortured for years by neuralgia and spinal disease relieved in a few days, and ultimately made happy by a perfect cure, by the use of this wonderful curative agent." Continuing the testimony, the promoter gushed: "I have seen the victims of scrofulous diseases—with shattered constitutions, and the evidence of their terrible affliction exhibited upon every square inch of the surface of their bodies, and to who existence was a condition of hopeless, humiliating misery—restored to perfect health by bathing the ulcers and drinking freely of these waters for a few months."[61]

Figure 16: View of Central Avenue, 1875 (Historic Photograph Collection, Harpers Ferry Center, National Park Service)

[60] E. Hillis Larkin and P. N. Ellsworth, "Analysis of Hot Springs, Arkansas" Vol. 26:161-63 *Chicago Medical Journal* March 15, 1869 (based on letter from Ellsworth dated February 17, 1867).

With the popularity of the thermal springs increasing, costs associated with travel to Arkansas and availability of housing and medical attention escalated. The same 1867 visitor recommended bringing "sufficient supply of medicine because of exorbitant prices here" and a "supply of flannel shirts and drawers, a cap, good blanket, easy headlong into dissipation. Gambling halls, drinking saloons, and whore houses in any quantity."

Admiring the area's beauty, he acknowledged "efforts to induce Congress to take hold of the matter and quiet the title." Intervention of Congress was necessary in order that "an entirely different breed of people must take the place of the shiftless, non-enterprising pioneer settlers who now hold possession here." Alluding to his allegiance in the late war, he added: "The live, energetic, go-a-headative, educated North men must take their places; then, and not until then, will the real value of the Springs and surroundings be developed." [62]

Figure 17: Big Iron Spring at Hot Springs Creek, c. 1870s (NSNP 1226, National Park Service)

Congress listened to the discontent emanating from Arkansas and acted. Legislation passed on May 31, 1870, encouraged anyone claiming title within the four sections of Hot Springs Reservation to bring suit before the U.S. Court of Claims within ninety days following passage of the act. By 1870, Hot Springs' population reached 1,200 permanent residents and within three years, there were 24 hotels and boarding houses servicing six bathhouses. During this period, Hot Springs established its reputation as a premier health resort. The numbers of doctors prescribing the baths and medicines multiplied every year. Wrote one physician: "It is not uncommon to see men, women, and children so rapidly restored to health as to make them believe in the almost magical potency of the water. The fame of Hot Springs was heralded abroad; the sick came to us from every State in the Union, and increased numbers of visitors followed a demand for better accommodations."[63]

Completion in 1875 of a narrow gauge railroad line called the "Diamond Joe" from Malvern, a spur of the Iron Mountain and Southern Railway, allowed health-seekers to inundate Hot Springs in steadily increasing numbers. Literature produced by the railroads, hotels, and other interests helped promote Hot Springs, given out as souvenirs which permeated the nation and beyond.[64] The same year, Samuel W. Fordyce and other

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[61] *The Hot Springs of Arkansas: America's Baden-Baden; Illustrated, Where It Is, What It Is, and How to Get There* (St. Louis, Mo.: The St. Louis Iron Mountain and Southern Railways Company, 1877): 13, 17.
[62] Frazer. "A Month at the Hot Springs," 1867.
[63] H. M. Rector, Jr., M.D., "Then and Now," August 1895 *Hot Springs Medical Journal*: 225. He reported most patients stayed two to four months, usually in summer months.
[64] One of the most prolific promoters was Charles Cutter, a New York City businessman whose health was restored following a trip to Hot Springs in 1873. Henceforth, he made a living at publishing his *Cutter's Guide to Hot Springs* from 1874 to his death in 1912. He also published *Hot Springs Illustrated Monthly,*

investors financed the construction of the town's first luxury hotel, The Arlington, at the end of bathhouse row on Valley Street. [65]

UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT DECISION, 1876

While civil unrest and widespread violence ended in 1865, spirited litigation resumed in state and federal courts with businessmen seeking to prove their claims as well as reaching a final settlement on control and ownership of the springs. The fight received national attention in newspapers and magazines as the allure of the famous thermal springs grew in the public imagination.[66] Four heated legal battles reached the United States Court of Claims in the mid-1870s. These "shot gun titles" were consolidated and argued as the "Hot Springs Cases."

The four principal litigants were Henry M. Rector, John C. Hale, William Gaines et al, and John H. Russell and the U.S. Court of Claims ruled against all four in favor of the government. The disappointed claimants appealed to the United States Supreme Court which heard oral arguments January 19-21, and 24-25, 1876. The highest court rendered its ruling on April 24, 1876, when Associate Justice Joseph P. Bradley announced the unanimous ruling. The high court affirmed the lower court ruling that title remained vested wholly and absolutely in the United States because of the Act of 1832. The Supreme Court concluded:

> *"we feel bound to decide that none of the claimants are entitled to the lands in question. The claims advanced all depend on one or another of the titles which we have considered; and all are equally untenable. Whatever hardship, if any, may ensue from this declaration of the law in the case, we have no doubt will be duly taken into the consideration by the Legislative Department of the Government in dealing with the subject of the future disposition of those lands."*[67]

U.S. RECEIVERSHIP AND ACT OF 1877

The Supreme Court ruling, while it resolved the crescendo of litigation, created a cacophony of new complaints as Hot Springs residents sought to understand their new circumstances. Complaints poured into the Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C. Claimants were ordered to surrender all buildings and improvements on the Hot

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professionally-drawn line drawings and photographs gave life to articles about cures and area attractions. See Dee Brown, *The American Spa: Hot Springs, Arkansas* (Little Rock: Rose Publishing Co., 1982): 75.

[65] "Hot Springs, Arkansas," 1 April 1876, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, HSNP Archives.

[66] A good overview of the various claims can be found in Frederick T. Cron, "The Hot Springs of Ouachita," unpublished manuscript, Gatlinburg, Tenn., chapters 13-17, HSNP Archives.

[67] William T. Otto, *Cases Argued and Adjudged by Supreme Court of the United States, October Term 1875, Vol 2* (Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1876): 698-716; "Rector v. United States" 92 U.S. 698 (1875) (Rector v. United States; Hale v. United States; Gaines et al v. United States; and Russell v. United States, October Term 1875) *Loislaw.com* Inc., via Worldwide Web 47947 7145, March 11, 2005; and Jerrel H. Shofner and William Warren Rogers, editors, "Hot Springs in the 'Seventies," 1963 22(1) *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, 40.

Springs Reservation to a federal government receiver empowered to, among other things, collect rent and charge for the use of thermal water. Appointed on June 1, 1876, the "U.S. Receiver," Arthur O. Morgan, who worked as a Senate clerk, was bonded for $200,000 with a salary of $250 a month and $200 a month for a local office, clerk, and book of accounts.[68]

An estimated 3,000 people occupied the Hot Springs Permanent Reservation in 1876, and very few of them welcomed Arthur O. Morgan and his attempts to carry out instructions to secure one-year renewable leases. Local citizens and affected former claimants turned their attention to Congress and furiously lobbied for relief from the federal receivership. At a public meeting in January 1877, prominent Hot Springs citizen Col. Samuel W. Fordyce was chosen to chair a committee along with J. D. Kimball and William Nelson, and sent to Washington, D.C. Charged to seek relief from Congress to quiet titles and abolish the unpopular federal receivership, they worked with the Arkansas Congressional Delegation and succeeded in getting legislation favorable to the local community to settle long-standing disputes passed in the final hours of President Ulysses S. Grant's administration.

Figure 18. Samuel Wesley Fordyce, no date (HSNP 10390, National Park Service)

The bill that passed Congress provided for the appointment of three U.S. commissioners who would lay out the city, divide it into lots, streets, and alleys, and award occupants the right to purchase their improvements. It excluded claims originating after the Supreme Court decision and did not make any distinction between "occupants" and "claimants"—all were to be treated equally. Fordyce was among the group who took the freshly printed bill to the White House, arriving at 3 a.m. on March 4, 1877.

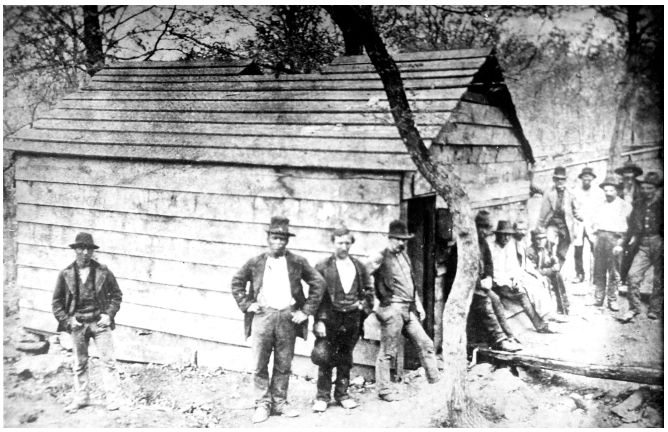

Figure 19. Primitive Government Free Bathhouse, c. 1877 (HSNP 1638, National Park Service)

In the last hours of his presidency, President Grant read the bill and remarked that it was "'dangerous' and gave too much power to the three commissioners to be appointed by the president." Fordyce spoke up and said that Hot Springs people were very poor and not able to pay the rents asked by the receiver. He related that nearly every day someone was killed quarreling over

[68] Chief Justice of Court of Claims to Chairman of Senate Committee on Public Lands, letter, 11 December 1876; and Order of Court of Claims, June 1, 1876, 44th Congress, 2nd Session, *Senate Miscellaneous Documents 13*, 5.

ownership rights or other matters, and it was urgent the government end the atmosphere of uncertainty. Grant signed the bill, stating that it might work out if President-elect Rutherford B. Hayes appointed men of honesty and integrity to the Hot Springs Commission.[69]

U.S. HOT SPRINGS COMMISSION, 1877-1879

The Act of March 3, 1877 abolished the receivership and provided for the U.S. Hot Springs Commission with quasi-judicial powers to delineate boundaries of the federal reservation from that of the burgeoning town. It granted the commission broad power to define the Hot Springs Reservation, plat the town, adjudicate related land claims, condemn structures illegally situated on federal land, and establish a process for claimants to purchase land legally. It also provided for appointment of a superintendent by the secretary of the Interior as well as a tax on use of the thermal water. All costs incurred by the Hot Springs Commission were to be repaid to the U.S. Treasury following sale of excess lands.[70]

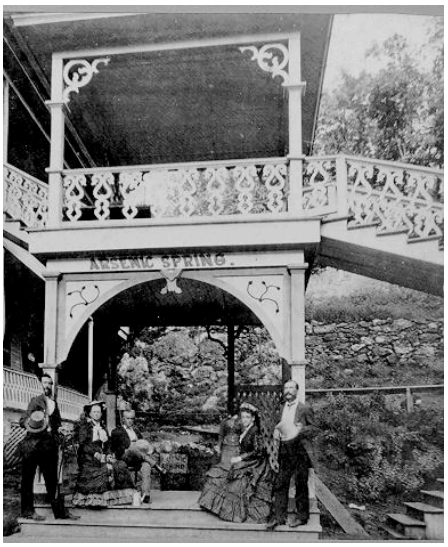

Figure 20. Arsenic Spring pavilion on south end of Arlington Hotel with link to Rector's Bathhouse, c. 1877 (HSNP 386, National Park Service)

President Hayes did indeed select men of integrity who had no previous experience with the place and its contentious issues. On March 30, 1877, Hayes appointed Aaron H. Cragin, former senator from New Hampshire; former Congressman John Coburn of Indiana; and former Governor Marcellus S. Stearns of Florida. Their term of office was one year with compensation at ten dollars a day.[71] The men arrived on April 28, and elected Cragin as chairman, rented an office, and hired an engineer (A. P. Robinson) and A. O. Morgan, former receiver, as their chief clerk. On May 1, they took possession of the receiver's records and assumed control over the thermal water and the town, issuing a moratorium on building houses and other improvements, and calling on citizens to submit their claims and proofs in writing. The commission then began the arduous task of hearing from claimants, examining their proof, and then determining the right of each to buy his land and improvements from the government at a value the commission determined. Finally, successful claimants would receive a certificate to their land and improvements.

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[69] *Congressional Record*, 44th Congress, 2nd Session, 393, 471, 2899, 1848, 1869; and Fordyce, "The Autobiography of Samuel Wesley Fordyce: Captain, First Ohio Cavalry, Army of the Cumberland; Railroad Builder, Southwestern United States," unpublished manuscript, printed by Hot Springs National Park, 1992, 91-93.

[70] "An Act in Relation to the Hot Springs Reservation in the State of Arkansas," 3 March 1877, 19 Stat. 377.

[71] "Notes from the Capital," Washington, D.C., 1 April 1877, printed in *New York Times* (1 April 1877).

In late 1877, President Rutherford B. Hayes appointed Benjamin F. Kelley the first superintendent of Hot Springs Reservation. Kelley, a former Union Army officer, had commanded a brigade in which Hayes served as a colonel of Ohio volunteers.[72] General Kelley assumed his duties with vigor and began transmitting regular reports to Interior concerning local events. In a January 1878 letter to Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz, Kelley reported he had cleared Hot Springs Mountain of its former population and declared "I am very anxious to lay it off in walks and drives, plant shrubbery, sow grass seed etc. I can now get labor cheap, and the weather is getting pleasant, and the days longer." He reported mundane details of water rents collected and deposited in a Little Rock bank (D. B. Elliot & Co. $500, H. M. Rector & Co. $125; J. C. Maurice $80; D. Balentine $60; Huffman & Hamilton $65; Wier & George $40 for a total $870). Receipts were down due to bad weather and bathhouses turning water off to some of their tubs, but the city "is now filling up with invalids and I presume all the tubs will be brought into requisition during the coming months." Finally, he recommended legislation pending in the U.S. Senate be amended to empower the commission to "designate and donate a suitable site for a Hospital for the indigent invalids" to be built by the private sector with approval from the Interior department.[73]

Figure 21. Big Iron Bathhouse, late 1870s (HSNP 1096, National Park Service)

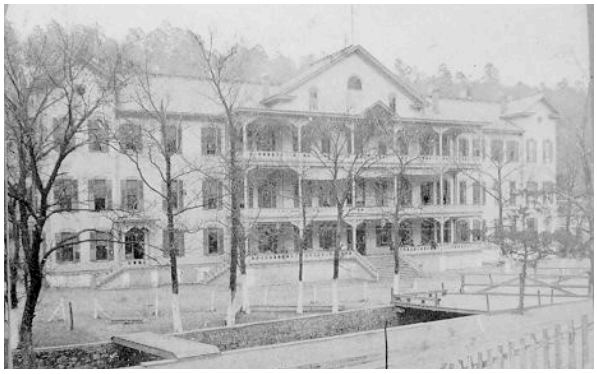

Figure 22. First Arlington Hotel, 1877 (HSNP 1098, National Park Service)

Superintendent Kelley also broached the subject of Interior leasing ground for the erection of new bathhouses on Hot Springs Reservation. When Secretary Schurz responded that he lacked the authority to approve such leases, Kelley wrote:

"I most respectfully represent that it is an absolute necessity, the bill now before the Senate be

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[72] Martin A. Eisele, "History of the Government Supervisors in Hot Springs," *Hot Springs New Era* (April 1930), HOSP 8548-49 Newsclippings Scrapbooks 1924-1945. Actual administrative power remained vested in the presidential-appointed Hot Springs Commission from March 30, 1877 to December 11, 1879, after which full administrative control was vested in General Benjamin F. Kelley. Forrest M. Benson and Donald S. Libbey, "History of Hot Springs National Park," unpublished manuscript ca. 1950s, 40, HSNP Archives.

[73] Report for January 1878, Superintendent Kelley to Secretary Schurz, Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, Letters Received by Secretary Interior Regarding National Parks, 1872-1907, Hot Springs Reservation, Box 3, Entry 1, National Archives, copies in HSNP Archives (hereafter cited as RG 79, Box #, Entry #).

> *amended so as the power should be conferred upon you."* Kelley continued, *"The constantly increasing number of patients visiting here, and bathing in these waters, require enlarged facilities, and the anticipated growth of the City as soon as the titles are settled demands the construction of more convenient, and elegant class of Bath houses. These should be constructed as near the Springs as possible for the purpose of preserving the heat and electricity of the water, which is regarded by all the Physicians here of vital importance to the bathers."*

With the exception of Big Iron Bathhouse, all the others were "inconvenient and very unsightly" and Kelley further posited that

Figure 23. Map of Garland County, Arkansas

> *"when the buildings on the street are condemned and removed [it] will expose these old, unsightly structures to the full view of any one passing along the street. If these old Bath houses are permitted to remain, and no new and more elegant ones permitted to be built, the growth and prosperity of this most important health giving place will be retarded beyond any reasonable estimate."*[74]

Kelley worked in close cooperation with the U.S. Hot Springs Commission and often sought advice and counsel from the commissioners. Both provided regular reports to Interior. The commission's first official report in November 1877 spelled out its progress, the complexity of its assignment, and need for more time and staff. An early recommendation to Congress involved preserving the surrounding viewshed of Hot Springs, reserving the entire mountain range from sale:

> *"If the mountain-lands pass into the hands of private parties, it is more than probable that they would be stripped of their timber for fuel purposes and rendered unsightly. Moreover, they would then be exposed to the full force of the sun's rays, absorbing the heat during the day, to be poured into the valley at night, instead of the cool refreshing breezes which now regularly descend from their shady heights to displace the impure air below. Thus it is plain that their foliage is of incalculable value to this place designed as a national sanitarium."*[75]

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[74] Superintendent Kelley to Secretary Schurz, letter, 1 February 1878, HSNP Archives. Kelley also reported that Senator John Ingalls of Kansas visited taking the waters for a few weeks and suggested Schurz talk to him about the issue.

[75] *Report of the Commission Appointed Under the Provisions of Act of Congress of March 3, 1877, regarding the Hot Springs Reservation in the State of Arkansas"* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1877): 5. In addition to John A. Anderson, stenographer and clerk, and Fred A. Clark, surveyor and engineer, the commission soon hired a recording and disbursing clerk and a transcribing clerk. They asked for yet another transcriber and stenographer in order to keep up with the testimonies being given.

In addition to a number of other recommendations, the commission emphasized the national and international significance of Hot Springs Reservation: "Careful study and observation of the effects of the springs, the source and quantity of the flow, the properties and curative qualities of the hot waters, demonstrate that they possess wonderful remedial virtues, and are capable of being made the most important water cure in the world."[76]

The commission's late 1877 status report also included observations from engineer Fred A. Clark who identified drainage and sanitation of primary importance to be addressed prior to finalizing the street system. Clark observed that "Hot Springs Creek is the natural drain of nine-tenths of this reservation, and 800 feet of its course is through the permanent reservation." He advised a uniform solution to the refuse and sewerage deposited into it. He believed covering the creek would be "very costly as well as least healthy;" rather, Clark recommended "to sink a sewer-pipe in bed of the creek and make an open water-way with sodded slopes high enough to carry any probable freshet, having on either bank a shady promenade." Solving the creek issue was paramount to the sanitary and recreation challenges facing Hot Springs Reservation and was beyond the means of the community. Clark concluded by stating, "it would seem appropriate that for this matter, as well as for other of the more expensive work which must be done here, the general government should grant a portion of the sum derived from sale of these lands."[77]

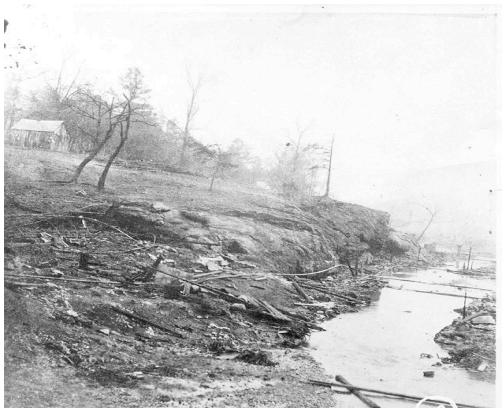

Figure 24. Hot Springs Creek area after the Great Fire of 1878 (HSNP 6120, National Park Service)

Further complicating local conditions, a devastating fire in early March claimed much of the business district of Hot Springs. For a time, fire threatened the Arlington Hotel and 300 guests evacuated, hauling their trunks to the commission's office where they watched the flames continue to spread until stopped by a change of the wind. Kelley chronicled: "We had a terrible conflagration…. The buildings on the east side of Valley street from the southwest corner of the reservation proper, including three bath-houses, up to near the Big Iron Bath House, were entirely consumed. I have had great trouble in preventing parties from rebuilding on this portion of the reservation, but have thus far succeeded." Hot Springs, since April 5, 1873, found itself the new county seat of Garland County, carved out of land taken from Saline, Hot Spring, and Montgomery counties. As the county seat, it had an important role to play in terms of governance and judicial activities. Kelley felt compelled to permit erection of a temporary city hall and

[76] Ibid., 8-9.
[77] Ibid., attachment to report, 24 November 1877, Fred A. Clark, Engineer's Office of the U.S. Hot Springs Commission, 12.

fire-engine house, used as the mayor's office and city, county, and superior courts on the mayor's pledge to remove it if requested by Interior.[78]

The fire of 1878 burned everything from up to the Arlington Hotel to Malvern crossing. Because the structures were all wood-frame, they burned easily. Taking advantage of the disaster, B. F. Kelley forbade any construction on the east reservation side of Valley Street, but did not stop rebuilding on the west side across Hot Springs Creek, leaving a broad streetscape clearly demarcating the permanent reservation. Kelley acted on advice of the commissioners who recommended against issuing any long-term leases as it could be the commission's decision that existing bathhouses might have to be condemned and removed.[79]

The national press prominently featured the disaster. The *New York Times* reported 150 businesses and houses burned, with one thousand people homeless and authorities appealing for relief aid for the poor. Total estimated loss—principally all wooden structures—stood at $300,000, with insurance covering only $25,000. With much of the business district gone, surprisingly only one first-class hotel, the Hot Springs House, burned along with a few smaller ones.[80] Within a week, $2,000 in charitable donations poured in, including $500 from the Chicago Board of Trade. Visiting invalids, who lost all their possessions, were living off of charity. So, too, were local affluent families, now destitute and unable to mortgage land to which they did not hold title.[81] Condemned buildings on the permanent reservation and on the east side of Valley Street that were consumed by fire left their owners with naught as the Hot Springs Commission had yet to issue certificates to claimants. With their real property improvements destroyed by fire, real estate values on what remained were considerably less. It would take more than two decades for these unfortunate claimants to sue for relief and receive it from Congress.[82]

With time growing short to finish commission business within the one-year authorized time limit, it became increasingly apparent in early spring 1878 of the urgent need for Congress to extend the commission's term. It would take a year or more to sell excess property. Sale of properties would assist the rebuilding effort underway and spur much needed sanitary improvements. A national reporter concluded:

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[78] *Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation in the State of Arkansas for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1878* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1878).
[79] Fay Hempstead, *A Pictorial History of Arkansas from Earliest Times to the Year 1890* (St. Louis: N.D. Thompson Publishing Co., 1890) 1146, 1154; Superintendent Kelley to Secretary Schurz, letter, 28 February 1878; and Mary D. Hudgins, "The Fire of 1878," *The Record* Vol 19 (Hot Springs: Garland County Historical Society, 1978): 7-8.
[80] "Losses by Fire: 150 Buildings Destroyed at Hot Springs," *New York Times* (7 March 1878): 5.
[81] "Much Suffering in Arkansas: The Late Fire at Hot Springs—Great Distress Among All Classes, "*New York Times* (13 March 1878): 1. Unfortunately, hotels and bathhouses untouched by the physical fire itself experienced a precipitous economic downturn as health-seeking tourists delayed visiting Hot Springs.
[82] Sections 4, 5, and 6 of the Sundry Civil Act of March 3, 1901 (31 Stat. 1188) provided that these claimants be compensated at a commensurate rate as if their real property had not burned. Ironically, the legislation provided the wrong year of the fire. It specified 1877, not 1878.

> *"If Congress will but settle the land titles, the revenue from water rents will fully refund the Federal expenditure here, and local taxation and private enterprise will do the rest. There are thousands of health-seekers here now, and the number nearly doubles annually. The expiration of the Commission's term before its work is completed would be a public calamity."*[83]

The issue of continuing the Hot Springs Commission's work was discussed in a Cabinet meeting at the White House on June 25, 1878. President Hayes directed his secretary of Interior that the commissioners continue their important work of adjudicating claims until Congress passed additional legislation.[84]

Mysteriously, an appropriation to continue the commission's work was omitted by the Clerk of the House of Representatives from the sundry civil appropriations bill.[85] Scandal soon filled the press after an investigation by the U.S. Treasury revealed the omission was not accidental and that possible bribes had been paid. The *New York Times* reported:

> *"It is now rumored that this [Treasury] detective has made startling discoveries involving two members of Congress and two clerks who assisted in the enrollment of the bill. The clause for the government of the Hot Springs Reservation gave to certain parties certain rights and privileges which were estimated to be worth a good deal of money. These privileges interfered with the interests of certain other parties, and it is said that these latter persons combined and made up a sum to defeat the bill, and that this money finally found its way to persons who were able to have the material portion of the act omitted in the final enrollment."*[86]

Samuel W. Fordyce returned to Washington to lobby for follow up legislation. He recalled: "I went to Washington, had another bill passed reserving the tops and sides of all the mountains from sale and reappointing this commission. Under this bill it was provided that the government should make leases to parties who desired to build a bath house, charging the owners of these bath houses a certain rent for the use of the water." Looking back at his efforts, Fordyce declared: "I have always considered that if I had done nothing else in life except having had this Hot Springs bill passed reserving the hot water mountain and all the other mountains forever for the use of the public that this act of mine alone was a great benefaction, because it forever prevented any monopoly from controlling these Hot Springs."[87]

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[83] "The Hot Springs Commission," reported from Hot Springs, Ark., March 15, printed in *New York Times* (16 March 1878).
[84] "General Telegraph News: Meeting of the Cabinet; Action on the Hot Springs Reservation Commission—Lapsed Nominations," *New York Times* (26 June 1878), 5.
[85] Editorial, 26 June 1878, *New York Times*, 4.
[86] "The Sundry Civil Appropriations: Who Omitted the Hot Springs Clause?—A Conspiracy Alleged—Congressmen and Clerks Involved, "16 August 1878, *New York Times*, 1.
[87] Fordyce, "The Autobiography of Samuel Wesley Fordyce," 1992, 92-93.

Intense lobbying efforts to Interior, Congress, and the White House gained public notice. Fears of a monopoly forming to control the thermal waters charged the debate. Many pointed to the Big Iron Bathhouse, operating under a lease granted by the late U.S. Receiver Morgan, monopolizing both the Big Iron and one other thermal spring, receiving four times as much water as it could use while denying others use of the excess. This argument was directed against any special interests leasing water or erecting bathhouses on the reservation—"erection of an intolerable monopoly for the realization of gains, at the expense of suffering humanity"—but favored protecting the Hot Springs for a "great national sanitarium, to be owned and controlled by the agents of the whole country, and not by any State, section, ring or corporation."[88]

Congress passed the follow up legislation on December 16, 1878. Within the bill's provisions, owners of the Arlington Hotel were granted a lease on one acre; other leases were set at five years with fees of $15 per tub per annum; bathhouses could not have more than 40 tubs each; indigents could have free baths; and no boring or drilling for thermal water covenants were to be placed on land titles sold for disposition. Most importantly, the bill reaffirmed the Act of 1832 setting Hot Springs aside from the public domain and declared Hot Springs Reservation was owned by the United States "to remain forever free from sale or alienation" (U.S.C., Title 16, section 361).[89]

A month prior to Congress acting, the U.S. Hot Springs Commission issued its first official report to Interior Secretary Carl Schurz.[90] The commissioners declared: "The purpose of creating the commission was to dispose of 2,560 acres of land owned by the government, being a tract of land two miles square, comprising the city of Hot Springs, or what is commonly called the Hot Springs Reservation, upon which about four thousand people have their homes and places of business." They acknowledged the law's provision that "certain of these people shall have the first privilege (for the period of one year after the final settlement) of purchasing the land occupied and improved by them, at an appraisal to be fixed by the commission, and gave the claimants six months from the day of the organization of the commission in which to file their claims."[91] Although efforts were made for claimants to file claims early, unfortunately "more than half the claims, including all the more important cases, were filed during the last two weeks of the term fixed by law." The filing deadline, midnight on October 27, 1878, yielded 950 claims. Individual petitions included a plat and description of the tract, detail of adjoining claimants, the time and manner of occupation by each claimant, type and value of their improvements, and the reasoning for why the claimant should be entitled to make fee ownership. In addition to the individual claims, the Hot Springs Commission "designated in one boundary a tract of land containing all the hot and warm springs, and

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[88] This argument was made in a petition to President Rutherford B. Hayes. M. J. Patton, *Relating to the Hot Springs of Arkansas, Some Reasons why the Water of Hot Spring of Arkansas should not be Leased, and why neither Bath Houses or other Buildings should be Erected on the Hot Springs Mountain Reservation,"* Washington, D.C., 23 March 1878. Patton served as attorney for T. M. Walker, W. W. Joyce, E. A. Douglas, "and many other citizens of Hot Springs, Arkansas."

[89] *Act of Congress, 16 December 1878* (20 Stat. 258).

[90] *Report of the Commission Regarding the Hot Springs Reservation in the State of Arkansas* (Washington: D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, November 1878).

[91] Ibid., 3.

the Hot Spring Mountain, so called (being in all about 265 acres), to be reserved from sale forever." With the individual claims and Hot Springs Reservation combined, "about 2,300 acres remain to be disposed of under provisions of the act of March 3, 1877."[92]

Processing claims over a six-month period, commissioners heard 2,750 witnesses for testimony taken in 897 cases. No testimony was offered in 22 cases and 31 cases were either dismissed or withdrawn by the petitioners. Oral testimony and documentation came to around 25,000 pages.

Surveys were made of all four sections of land comprising Hot Springs Reservation with permanent monuments installed on exterior, section lines, and corners. "Suitable monuments" totaling 36 in number were erected at each exterior angle of the reservation. Claims were documented on 16 separate maps, with a "topographical survey… made of the entire reservation, and three maps prepared and photolithographed—one topographical map, one claim map, and the third combining the two.[93]

Despite expiration of their congressional mandate, the commissioners followed instructions from the secretary and president in late June 1878 to proceed with their work. Turmoil in Hot Springs caused a change of venue for commission work. "Perfecting arrangements as far as possible for preserving the peace and protecting the interests of all parties, it was thought best to remove the records of our proceedings, testimony, books, and other papers to Washington: this was done for greater safety and for the purpose of facilitating the work intrusted [sic] to us."[94] The U.S. Hot Springs Commission took up offices in the Department of the Interior building in the nation's capital and continued examining testimony and compiling an "abstract of facts proven in each case, so that the final adjudication will be greatly facilitated." Estimated time of completion was forecast at December 1, 1879. Another on-going duty involved "laying out, widening, and straightening streets, a matter of very great importance." While the commission labored in Washington, their Hot Springs office remained "open continuously and every interest of the United States carefully guarded."[95]

The November 1878 report listed the following as work remaining to be done:

> ***"First.*** *Straightening and widening old streets; laying our new streets, avenues, alleys, &c., in the entire town of Hot Springs. This work requires careful study and a high order of engineering, as the ground is of peculiar nature.*
>
> ***"Second.*** *The hearing of arguments in contested claims, and the final adjudication in 897 cases, and the preparation of findings in each case. About one-half the cases are simple and undisputed, the main question being on the facts whether the claimant is entitled to the whole or*

[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid., 4.
[94] Ibid., 5.
[95] Ibid.

a part of the land he claimed. The other cases are more or less complicated and conflicting, two or more persons claiming the same lot, involving disputed questions of fact and law.

"Third. *The appraisal of each lot awarded.*

"Fourth. *The resurvey of each lot, after adjudication of the claims, in order to define the lines and ascertain the exact amount of ground to be certified to each claimant as required by the law.*

"Fifth. *The appraisal of improvements upon each lot awarded. The claimant does not pay of the improvements but the law requires their appraisal.*

"Sixth. *The division of the land not claimed or awarded, into lots, squares, or blocks, and appraisal of the same, preparatory to the sale to the highest bidder, but not less than the appraisal.*

"Seventh. *Preparing and issuing certificates to each claimant, who is adjudged the right to purchase, setting forth the amount of land claimant is entitled to purchase, the value thereof, character and value of improvements; these certificates being the only evidence of claimant for foundation of patent.*

"Eighth. *Condemning all buildings upon the permanent reservation and in the line of streets, appraisal of the same, and preparing and issuing certificates thereof.*

"Ninth. *Preparation of map embodying the results of the whole work to be filed with the Secretary of the Interior, accompanied by the schedule provided for by the law."*[96]

Finally, commissioners noted an undefined amount of time would be required in order for contested claims to re-argue in formal hearings. They estimated 300 to 400 contested claims and that a large percentage of them would undoubtedly present oral or written arguments. "These cases involve very important interests, and are entitled to a full hearing upon all questions." In closing, the commissioners stated:

"The prosperity and well-being of a numerous population and the very great pecuniary interests of the United States demand that action should at once be taken looking to an immediate settlement of all questions involved. At least ten thousand visitors from nearly every State in the Union and from foreign countries are annually attracted to the city of Hot Springs in search of health, and this number will be largely increased in the future, when the titles to the land are settled and needed improvements are made."[97]

[96] Ibid., 5-6.
[97] Ibid., 6.

U.S. Hot Springs Commission delivered its final report on December 11, 1879. Over the course of thirty months, it adjudicated 897 claims, approved the right to purchase for 647 claimants, laid out a city with a system of streets, and defined boundaries for world-famous Hot Springs on a 265-acre permanent U.S. reservation. Expenditures totaled $82,000, an amount soon dwarfed by income from water rents and sales of land. The reservation measured two miles square, and covered the south half of Sections 28 and 29, and the whole of Sections 32 and 33, in Township 2, south, Range 19 west; and the north half of Sections 4 and 5, in Township 3, south, and the same range west; corresponding with the corporate limits of the City of Hot Springs. The extensive area contained 186 blocks of various sizes, subdivided into lots, averaging from small business lots to tracts embracing several acres. Avenues and streets were laid out with natural curves following the topography. U.S. Hot Springs Reservation contained part of North Mountain, nearly all of Hot Springs Mountain, Sugarloaf Mountain, and some of West Mountain.

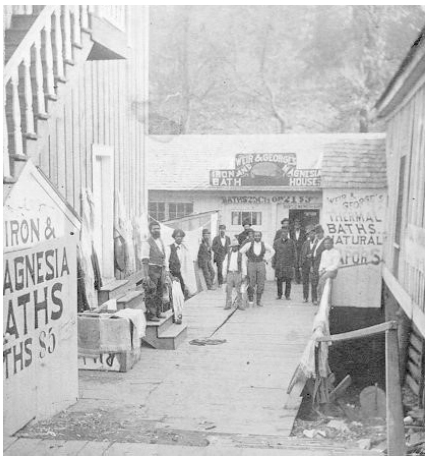

Figure 25. Weir & George's Bathhouse on bridge over Hot Springs Creek, 1870s (HSNP 15050, National Park Service)

Acreage of the immediate federal reservation came to 264.93 acres (mostly Hot Springs Mountain), 1,200 acres comprised the town site, and 700 acres were awarded to claimants. Acting on the commission's recommendation, the remaining mountainous acreage in the 1832 four-section block was unclaimed and Congress added those tracts in June 1880.[98] Codifying the Commission's work, in addition to adjudicating titles, Congress reserved from sale and dedicated to public use as parks North, West, and Sugar Loaf mountains within the boundaries of Hot Springs Reservation. Thus, Congress clearly re-stated its Act of 1832 when it set aside Hot Springs of Arkansas as the nation's first national park. Section 3 of the act included four mountains in the "permanent reservation" and are "forever reserved from sale and dedicated to public use as parks." The bill authorized relocation of a cemetery and donated the land for use as a municipal park. Six lots were designated for school purposes and an eighth of an acre granted to a local Baptist Church whose building was consumed in the 1878 fire. Streets, courts, and alleys were transferred to city ownership. Finally, the 1880 act authorized remaining town lots and blocks to be sold at auction, proceeds from which were to be used for the permanent reservation's improvement and care, upkeep of Hot Springs Creek, and continuance of free baths for the invalid poor.[99]

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[98] Cron, "The Hot Springs of Ouachita," unpublished manuscript, Gatlinburg, Tenn., chapter 18, HSNP Archives; Hot Springs Commission, 11 December 1879, *Report of the Commission Appointed under the Provisions of the Act of Congress of March 3, 1877 regarding the Hot Springs Reservation in the State of Arkansas* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1879), 46th Congress, 2nd Session, Senate Executive Document No. 21; and "Hot Springs Dispute Settled," *New York Times* 4 January 1880, 6.

[99] Act of Congress, 16 June 1880, (21 Stat. 288); "Notes from Washington," *New York Times* 20 March 1880, 1; and "Hot Springs Titles: A Bill Providing for the Settlement of the Disputed Cases," *New York Times* 10 June 1880, 5.

U. S. HOT SPRINGS RESERVATION'S FIRST SUPERINTENDENT ARRIVES

The Act of 1877 authorized the secretary of Interior to appoint a superintendent to oversee the daily management of U.S. Hot Springs Reservation. Secretary Schurz solicited the opinion of the Hot Springs Commission about what official instructions to prepare for his new appointee. On July 16, 1877, it responded in great detail:

> *"The object of the law and the whole policy of the Government relative to this Reservation seems to have been to prevent a monopoly of the water and its use in the hands of a few men. For this reason the land was not sold, but reserved for general use and for the public good.*
>
> *"Section four of the present law contemplates the leasing of the water for a sum sufficient to protect and improve the Reservation. The place needs protection and improvement. This can be made expensive or otherwise.*
>
> *"We believe that extensive improvements ought not to be entered upon. The unsettled condition of affairs here at present forbids it; but a small amount might be judiciously applied in preparing public bathing places for the poor who now bathe in some of the Springs on the Reservation, and by this means, and their residence on the surrounding grounds, render their neighborhood filthy and noisome.*
>
> *"This object may be obtained by the expenditure of a few hundred dollars in the laying of pipes to conduct the water to a point beyond the immediate vicinity of the Springs, at which a cheap bath house should be erected.*
>
> *"We believe that this may be done with great advantage to the poor during the warm season, and the public generally. They dwell in shanties which can now be taken without discomfort to them, and removed to a more suitable place.*
>
> *"The Superintendent should be required to keep the Reservation clear of all squatters, and clean from all filth and nuisances. A positive order against the creation of nuisances should be adopted. He should be required to lease the waters at a low rate by the year. The rates of rent should be fixed at a certain sum for a bath. The object is to give the bather a cheap and healthy bath of Hot water fresh from the Springs. To lease the water at a low rate to the owner of a bathing Establishment is going but halfway to no purpose if he is allowed to put a high price upon the bath itself. The whole effort of the Government in making the Reservation is to furnish cheap baths to the people, and not to enrich the owners or lessees of bathhouses.*
>
> *"The charges at the best bathhouses here are fifty cents per bath. This rate is too high. The best baths should not cost over twenty to twenty-five cents each, and a condition should be put into the leases that they should not cost more than this sum."*[100]

[100] Hot Springs Commissioners John Coburn and M. S. Stearns to Secretary Schurz, letter, 16 July 1877, RG 79, Box 3, Entry 1.

The commissioners warned about excavations around certain thermal springs to accommodate bathers or building structures. Typically the excavations came as result of blasting which diminished the flow of thermal water in that area. Commissioners advised that excavation be forbidden or, if permitted, conducted by a "prudent and scientific person." They continued:

> *"The springs should be placed entirely within possession of the Superintendent, as well as under his control, so that the exact amount of water used by each lessee can be constantly ascertained. In this end it may be necessary to require the reconstruction in part of certain bathhouses made over the Springs, from which they draw a supply, in order to put them completely under control of the Superintendent, and to prevent improper interference with them. The springs should be as much under the control of the Superintendent as the ware rooms and receiving cisterns of a distillery are under the control of the gauger and storekeeper of the Internal Revenue Department.*
>
> *"A system of regular inspection should be adopted by which the Superintendent may learn and report at short intervals the condition of the Springs, of the pipes, and of the bathhouses. He should have authority to compel cleanliness in bathhouses upon penalty of closing them."*[101]

The appearance and sanitation of the Reservation required immediate attention:

Figure 26. African American man riding atop water barrel on Central Avenue at Magnesia Springs, early 1880s (HSNP 15078, National Park Service)

"The springs themselves are upon the open surface in the main street, and have from time to time been covered with boards on cemented bricks and stones. These covers are getting out of repair and the Superintendent should, among his first duties, have these covers removed, and made more complete. The mountain side should be cleansed thoroughly, since trash and filth are constantly carried down by rains, and otherwise, upon the very sources of these healing waters. We suggest that the first work he does be that of cleaning and purifying the side of the mountain where the springs issue. A small sum judiciously applied will effect [sic]this.

"The mountain is almost entirely covered with trees and shrubs of many kinds. We suggest that the Superintendent be directed to forbid the cutting or removal of any of these. Their beauty is very striking, their value is incalculable.

[101] Ibid.

"The Reservation of the Hot Springs Mountain includes the creek on the entire west side, a distance of nearly half a mile. This runs along the principal street of the town, at the base of the mountains, and at this place, and for a long distance above and below furnishes the only means of drainage practicable; and is now, and must continue to be, the only route for the sewerage of the town. This in hot weather becomes offensive and unhealthy, and must, as population increases, become more so. Nothing but an arch will protect the place from the dangers to comfort and health which may occur. Such an improvement must be expensive, but in time will be imperatively demanded. We suggest for the present that the Superintendent be instructed to keep this stream free of nuisances, and as clean as can be done under the circumstances."[102]

The commissioners concluded their recommendations to the Interior secretary: "We have made these suggestions in view of a constantly increasing concourse of visitors and patients. The place is a vast hospital, in which from one to two thousand daily seek health from the waters, by bathing and drinking, and whatever may tend to give this relief in a clear and pure form, at reasonable rates, should be at once adopted and rigidly adhered to."[103] Interior officials used the commission's recommendations as a blueprint and developed written instructions for its new superintendent to follow:

Figure 27. Hale Bathhouse, early 1880s (HSNP 15081, National Park Service)

"It is the desire of the Department that the water of the Hot Springs, Arkansas, should be so utilized and protected as to secure the greatest benefit to the largest number.

"The curative springs should be regarded as the gift of nature to the whole people and whatever restrictions are placed upon them for their better care and preservation should be equitable and just, as to prevent the possibility of a monopoly, and affect equally all those who seek the use of these healing waters.

"The Reservation in which the Springs are located will be under your immediate charge and especial care should be taken by you to guard

"1st. Against all encumbrances upon said reservation and residence thereon by visitors.

"2nd. Against the presence of anything that may tend to create a nuisance, or affect the purity of the waters.

[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid.

"3rd. Against the cutting or removal of trees, shrubbery, sod, earth, or rocks or anything belonging to the Reservation, unless such removal is for the purpose of beautifying the Reservation or necessary to increase the usefulness of the same, and that only under specific directions for it, by the Superintendent.

"4th. Against all excavations unless authorized by the Superintendent of the Reservation, or the springs thereon.

"5th. Against the waste of water or an excessive charge for the use of the same by those having public or private baths.

"6th. Against the accumulation of sewage matter in the creek which runs along the western base of the Hot Springs Mountain and included in the Reservation.

"7th. Against the acts of vandalism on the part of curiosity hunters, malicious individuals, and other persons who from thoughtlessness of design seek to deface the natural formations found upon the Reservation.

"8th. Against the use of water taken from hot springs for private bathing houses without proper authority from the Superintendent, and in disregard of such rules and regulations as may be approved by the Department for the distribution of the water and the payment of water used.

"Water rents will be charged upon each bathing house, according to the number of bathers and the average daily consumption of water.

"All money received from water rents and other purposes shall be deposited as soon as possible after the receipt thereof, in such public depository as the Secretary of the Interior may designate, and a report of all receipts and disbursements shall be transmitted to the Department by the Superintendent at least once a month.

"No expense shall be incurred by the Superintendent for the improvement of the Reservation unless the same should be authorized by the Department, either by specific instructions governing necessary improvements, or by the approval of estimates submitted by the Superintendent of the costs of specific works.

"The Superintendent will make an annual report to the Secretary of the Interior, and from time to time will make such recommendations as experience may suggest for the better protection of government interests and the welfare and comfort of those who seek the waters of the Hot Springs."[104]

[104] *Instructions to the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation of Arkansas,* Department of the Interior, Washington D.C., 21 September 1877 (Copy to B. F. Kelley), RG 79, Box 3, Entry 1.

Figure 28. Bathhouse Row with telegraph poles, Ozark, Independent, Hale bathhouses, early 1880s (HSNP 15079, National Park Service)

Figure 29. Bathhouse Row with Independent and Palace bathhouses, early 1880s (HSNP 15080, National Park Service)

CHAPTER THREE

Government Supervision Begins

BENJAMIN F. KELLEY TAKES CHARGE

Armed with Interior's detailed instructions, Hot Springs Reservation's first superintendent Gen. Benjamin F. Kelley entered on duty in early October 1877. Kelley fought for the Union during the Civil War and presented a striking appearance once in Hot Springs: long white hair and beard and always riding a white horse. Kelley's inaugural task was to order removal of three to four hundred people encamped on the Hot Springs Mountain's western slope, all grouped around the various thermal springs. Kelley noted:

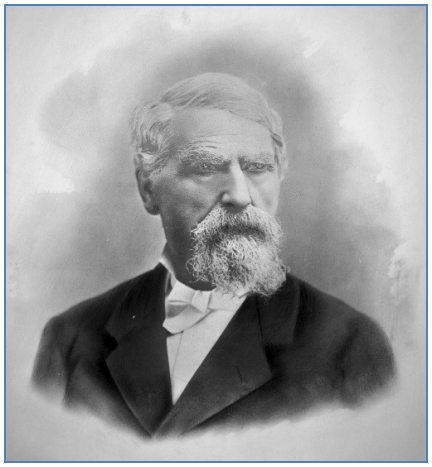

Figure 30. Benjamin F. Kelley (National Park Service)

> *"These people embraced almost every nationality; both sexes; white and colored. They were most of them living in shanties or tents, but some of them were encamped under the trees with no other shelter. Most of them were afflicted with decease [sic] and many of them worthless and desperate characters; they were destroying the timber and shrubbery and polluting the springs. On the 20th day of October, I gave them notice to move off the reservation within thirty days; many of them removed at once, but quite a number were great invalids, having no means, were unable to move being supported by charity. I had no funds in my hands for the purpose of moving and providing for them. I was therefore compeled [sic] to appeal to the guests and citizens for means; to this appeal, they responded most literally and supplyed [sic] me with money sufficient to erect comfortable barracks on the south side of the mountain; make two commodious and comfortable bathing pools; one for men and one for women, and convey the Hot water in iron pipes to them. The barracks or hospital accommodates about sixty invalids on the average. This destitute class are better provided for then ever before."*[105]

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[105] *Annual Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation to the Secretary of the Interior for the Year 1878,* Superintendent Kelley to Secretary Schurz, letter, 14 November 1878. Hereafter cited as "*Annual Report for 1879*, etc."

The newly authorized settlement came to be known as "Kelleytown," in honor of the Hot Springs Reservation's new superintendent.

In consultation with Secretary Schurz, Kelley affixed water rents per tub at the rate of five dollars per month. The rate met with no opposition from existing bathhouse proprietors and Kelley advised that it should remain in effect. In June 1878, Kelley turned his attention to Hot Springs Creek: "In consequence of the spread of yellow fever throughout the Southern States, I deamed [sic] it important towards preventing sickness here, that that portion of Hot Springs Creek running through the reservation should be thoroughly cleared out so as to give the water a clear and swift passage. This I did with your approbation at a cost of seventy-five dollars."[106]

Figure 31. Gen. Benjamin F. Kelley atop a horse named "Philippi," no date, courtesy U.S. Military History Center.

While the devastating fire in March 1878 caused displacement and turmoil so, too, did the actions of Superintendent B. F. Kelley in late September 1878 bring consternation and threatened mob violence. Lobbied for months by bathhouse proprietors, physicians, and leading citizens to eliminate public nuisances collectively called the "Ral Hole" ("ral" was a popularized local abbreviation for "neuralgia') or "Ral City," Kelley, backed by Interior, ordered the removal of the crude wooden structure covering the Ral Hole Spring on September 25. A physician observer wrote to Secretary Schurz supporting Kelley's action and condemned the "mob aristocracy" threatening to burn the homes of any citizen supporting abolition of the Ral Hole. Explaining the Ral Hole "is a bathing place for a few needy and syphilitic people" he added that "principally it is the headquarters of a great number of thieves, tramps, jail-birds, ruffians, deadbeats and roughs. It is a nuisance for which there is no name and the sooner it is abolished, the better." Calling the Ral Hole and Mud Hole a "disgrace to humanity," the doctor added: "The language used in those places, and the

[106] Ibid. The report ends with a recitation of expenditures during the first year.

scenes seen there, are such as to make it impossible for any person, who has any self-respect or decency, to go there…."[107]

Kelley justified his actions by claiming the "filthy water from it polluted the water used by the Bath houses, and that it caused serious loss to them in their business as guests were afraid to bathe in or drink the water from springs below [it]." His action sparked a mass public meeting the following afternoon composed of "Gamblers, Roughs, Tramps led by two or three political demagogues" making inflammatory speeches and "tending to inflame the mob" to threaten public property and endanger the citizenry. Kelley called on the Interior secretary to secure federal military troops stationed at Little Rock to deploy at Hot Springs "at once." Kelley advised: "I think the moral effect of a detachment of Blue coats will quiet all further riotous proceedings, give peace and quiet to the town, and enable the civil authority to enforce the laws, and enable me to discharge my duties and protect the public property. I [have] just learn[ed] that the mob have rebuilt the Shanty over the "Rhal Hole" after being ordered to desist by the U.S. Marshal who is powerless."[108]

Figure 32. Ral City shanty reconstructed by mob prompting U.S. Army troops to occupy Hot Springs, 1878 (HSNP 6119, National Park Service)

The public meeting resulted in former Mayor T. F. Linde traveling to Washington to hand-deliver to Secretary Schurz a petition condemning Kelley's action. Hundreds of signatures on the petition dated September 30, 1878, blamed moneyed interests—physicians and bathhouse owners—for having unduly influenced Kelley. Charles Matthews, editor of the Hot Springs *Sentinel*, warned the secretary that Linde and those who supported him were not to be trusted. Matthews observed that Linde "was once the mayor of this city, we regret to say. He was elected by the rabble and ruin in between the regular nominees. He has now three indictments standing against him for malfeasance in office, and three indictments for attempted murder. If the laws were strictly enforced here," the editor wrote, "he would long since have been put in the penitentiary."[109]

News of the strife in Hot Springs appeared in the national press. One example from the *Chicago Times* included a letter penned by Thomas J. Fegan who condemned

[107] Petition by Bathhouse Owners to remove Ral Hole, Corn Hole, and Mud Hole to Superintendent Kelley, 6 August 1878 (and Kelley endorsement to Interior, 9 August 1878); Dr. F. Hartmann to Secretary Earl Schurz, letter, 1 October 1878, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 3, National Archives.
[108] Ibid., Superintendent Kelley to Secretary Schurz, letter, 28 September 1878.
[109] Ibid., Charles Matthews to Secretary Schurz, letter, 2 October 1878.

the "tyranny… on poor suffering people." Fegan blamed bathhouse owners who wanted to monopolize the thermal water. He invoked sympathy for the "poor unfortunate cripples who perhaps have trudged hundreds of miles with a last hope in their hearts of being restored to vigor, left without a place to bathe, and ninety out of hundred could not raise ten cents a week to bathe."[110]

Figure 33. Ral City/Kelley Town soup kitchen, c. 1880s (HSNP 6118, National Park Service)

To counteract the adverse publicity and bolster his own position at Interior, Kelley orchestrated a letter of support from ten prominent Hot Springs physicians. They explained that the Ral Hole

"is composed of porous tufa through which its waters percolate and impregnate the water of nearly all of the Springs flowing from Hot Springs Mountain" and that "in this hole, diseased paupers have been bathing to the detriment of the prosperity of Hot Springs, and to the disgust of all persons of refinement and intelligence who have visited this watering place. General Kelley, while providing ample bathing facilities for the poor, has wisely abolished this nuisance, and we cordially sustain his action, as must every one who has given the subject of hygiene the slightest consideration."[111]

To preserve public order and property, Secretary Schurz requested the secretary of War to grant the request for federal troops. On the evening of October 4, a detachment of troops moved toward Hot Springs. Led by Captain H. C. Pratt, Thirteenth Infantry from Little Rock Garrison on tour at Dardanelle, Arkansas, the soldiers approached from the northwest and set up camp inside Hot Springs.[112] Pratt submitted his report on October 9 as follows:

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[110] Letter to the editor, "The Hot Springs Monopoly," *Chicago Times* letter dated 26 September 1878, forwarded by Theo Noel to Secretary Schurz, 3 October 1878.

[111] Forwarded 2 October 1878 letter by Superintendent Kelley to Secretary Schurz. Signed by the following physicians: Garnett, Bassett, Greenway, Hobson, Ellsworth, Lawrence, Horn, Buchanan, Hamblen, and Fox.

[112] Copy of telegraph instructions of Adj. Gen. to Comdg. Gen. military Division of the Atlantic, and reply of Maj. Gen. W. S. Hancock, 4 October 1878, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 3.

"I telegraphed yesterday the situation and condition of affairs here as near as I could learn from conversations with General Kelly [sic] *and others. I have met none of the opposite side, and do not expect to as they belong mostly to the order of tramps and low people. I think the majority of the citizens and of the better class are against the action of the party of Mr. Linde, only a few anticipate any more riotous proceedings, but still would not be surprised if there should be. The trouble arose in this manner. There is a Hot Spring about 100 yards above the main Street which has been used by those who could not afford to and would not be allowed to bathe in the bath-houses; some persons of the better class have also used it, thinking it possessed better properties.*

"The bath-house owners maintained that the water from this spring, known as the 'ral-hole' supped through into the water used by them, thereby polluting it. They got up a petition to the Secretary of Interior signed by numerous people among whom was some few physicians declaring it a nuisance and requesting that it be abated.

"General Kelly, the Superintendent in charge of the Reservation, received instructions from the Secretary to tear down the building over the hole and to fill it up. Upon doing the first, a mob congregated, held an indignation meeting and then proceeded to the Hotel where General Kelly was staying and called for him, using all kinds of abusive language, and threatening to hang him.

"The General was not at the Hotel, but at his Office. A committee called on him there denouncing his action, and wanting to see his instructions. One of the committee was Mr. Linde, ex-mayor, and who I am told seems to be the leader, and is acting with the opposition expecting to make capital for his re-election, all the floating population being allowed to vote for Municipal Officers.

"The same day, lumber (bought by subscription and disbursed by Mr. Linde) was handed to the spring and a new building put up which still stands. While in progress, General Kelly sent the U.S. marshal to prevent it but he was not recognized, but abused.

"I do not know if he called out a posse, but think the citizens would not have responded, fearing retaliation by the mob on their property.

"The mob did a good deal of threatening especially towards the bath-house men, but attempted nothing. Everything has been quiet since.

"I am told Mr. Linde presided at a Mass-meeting soon after, and was authorized to proceed to Washington with a petition to General Schurz requesting removal of General Kelly and revocation of his order in regard to the filling up of the hole. The meeting adjourned until his return, which he had not done yet. General Kelly has said to me that in the course of a few days he would remove the building now over the hole. I told him that my understanding of my duty would be not to have my force there to protect him in his action, but if he received any forcible opposition, while attempting to remove the building, and he called for protection, I would respond.

> *"I think there will be no opposition. The application for troops was made by General Kelly. All I have written is of course, hearsay.*
>
> *"I am camped about half a mile from this Ral-hole, in a not very good place, but as good as this hilly place affords.*
>
> *"My command consists of 3 Sergeants, three Corporals, and 15 privates, all of my Company—in fact it is my company, being all the men I could bring of it."*[113]

Superintendent Kelley confirmed Captain Pratt's report that peace and order once again prevailed. U.S. Infantry troops were encamped on the reservation and the psychological impact had the desired effect of preventing disturbances.[114] Three weeks later, Captain Pratt reported that Linde returned, informed an assembled crowd that the secretary refused to grant the petitioners' wishes, verbally harangued Kelley, and called for a mass meeting at Ral Hole the next afternoon. Only a hundred people attended and but half of those were supporters. Linde himself failed to show up. Kelley ordered the rebuilt Ral Hole structure demolished on October 22. Once public order was restored and conditions became stable, Captain Pratt requested permission to decamp and return to Little Rock.[115]

Kelley preferred that the troops remain until the Hot Springs Commission's work was completed, but acknowledged there had been no further trouble since the Ral Hole incident. He wrote to Schurz:

> *"There are so many conflicting claims to property, many of which have been enforced by <u>shot-gun law</u> for years, that trouble may reasonably be anticipated. There is here a very large and valuable property belonging to the Government for the protection of which I can conceive no better employment for a small detachment of U.S. troops, especially when they are not required at Little Rock."*

Kelley continued, stating:

> *"You are aware, doubtless, that we have congregated in this place at all times, a floating population of five hundred or one thousand of the most depraved characters from all parts of the world, gamblers, robbers, thieves, fakirs, bummers, loafers, beggars, and etc., most of them suffering from a loathsome disease contracted in the dens of vice. These creatures, most of them, are without any means and many of them are ready for any desperate enterprise, having no regard for the rights of property or human life.*

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[113] Captain H. C. Pratt, 13th Infantry, Headquarters Department of the South, Newport Barracks, Kentucky, to Assistant Adjutant General, 12 October 1878,.

[114] Superintendent Kelley to Secretary Schurz, letter, 9 October 1878.

[115] Copy of Captain Pratt's report dated 24 October 1878, forwarded to Commanding General, Military Division of the Atlantic, 7661 Adjutant General's Office 1878, 30 October 1878, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 3.

> *"I therefore must express the opinion that a small detachment of U.S. troops ought to be kept here for the protection of this valuable property.*
>
> *"The city is very poor, the property all belonging to the Government; the corporation have no power to levy a tax upon the realty, and consequently are unable to maintain an adequate police force. Besides, the city officials doubt if they have any authority to exercise their official functions on the Hot Springs Reservation, for the protection of the property, or the persons of the guests, who may visit the mountain for exercise or pleasure."*[116]

As the work of the Hot Springs Commission continued and the new superintendent imposed federal dominion, the city began to exercise its own authority. In May 1879, it imposed a $50 annual tax on medical doctors practicing their profession and prescribing the waters. An appeal from a noted local physician on the legality of the tax brought no assistance from Interior. Secretary Schurz telegraphed a curt response: "The Department declines to interfere with any ordinance, adopted by the municipal authorities of Hot Springs, which does not touch upon the rights of the United States."[117] The year also saw Congress taking acute interest in the healing thermal waters and their use for enrolled troops and veterans. In the House, a bill to construct a National Hospital on the Hot Springs Reservation "for the use of such officers and soldiers of the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps of the United States" as prescribed by military doctors was introduced for debate.[118]

Secretary Schurz wanted to ensure that government affairs on the Hot Springs Reservation were conducted in a straightforward manner and without scandal. On March 25, 1879, Schurz directed his personal emissary, J. B. Clark, to investigate and report his findings. Clark arrived on March 30 and enlisted the cooperation and assistance of the new superintendent. Clark observed that the thermal water was being used by several hotels, restaurants, stores, as well as private families residing near the springs and those at public fountains at the bathhouses. He reported that no expenditures had yet been made to effect any improvements, however, Gen. Kelley had used charitable contributions to excavate two bathing pools on the south side of Hot Springs Mountain for use by indigent invalids. Kelley also built a shelter over "Mud Hole Spring" at a cost of $400 deducted from revenue received from "parties bathing therein who are able and willing to pay for their baths, believing the water of this spring more efficacious than that conveyed long-distances in pipes to the regular bath houses. In these three pools, it is claimed by the Superintendent, from two to three thousand free baths are taken monthly."[119]

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[116] Superintendent Kelley to Secretary Schurz, letter 10 November 1878.
[117] Secretary Schurz to George M. Lawrence, M.D., telegram, 24 May 1879.
[118] H.R. 1477, "A Bill for the erection of a National Hospital at Hot Springs, Arkansas, and for other purposes," 5 May 1879, referred to the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, 46th Congress, 1st Session. The bill was introduced by Representative Milton Urner of Maryland.
[119] J. B. Clark to Secretary Schurz, letter, 12 June 1879, National Archives R679 ST2. He noted these free baths were provided prior to passage of the 1878 bill authorizing the Superintendent "provide a sufficient number of free baths for the use of the indigent."

Clark endorsed Kelley's vision of building a new carriage road on the south side of Hot Springs Mountain beginning near Kelleytown. He recommended "a rough picket or other cheap but strong fence" be erected around Hot Springs Reservation. "That part of the Mountain," Clark wrote, "especially where the Springs are, should, at the earliest practicable moment, be enclosed by a fence in order to keep out loafers and filth-making intruders." Clark then turned his focus on new leases for bathhouses:

> *"Before leasing any more sites for the erection of bath-houses, in my judgment, a careful examination of the position of the Springs, and a survey of the grounds around them, should be made and the proper situation for the bath houses accurately determined. This can be easily done. There are certain points along Hot Springs Creek where the Springs issue at the foot of the Mountain and in the bed of the creek. These places generally are marked by the deposit of tufa and cannot be mistaken; Here the water issues, and if the bath houses are located here the water cannot be utilized.*
>
> *"There are other places where the Hot-Water does not issue, and bath houses, in the future, should be located at such places. The Springs should be carefully protected and those in the bed of the Creek should be walled in order to utilize all the hot-water which will before the lapse of many years be in demand. At some future time the Creek should and no doubt will be walled and arched and the street in front of the Reservation graded."*[120]

Noting that Valley Street fronted the Reservation's west side, paralleled by Hot Springs Creek for three-quarters of a mile, Clark observed:

> *"A good road or street should be made around the entire Reservation inside of the Reservation line. It should be not less than fifteen feet wide and shade trees, at proper distances, should be planted and rests or seats at convenient distances should be provided. As soon as the necessary means can be provided for the general improvement of the entire permanent Reservation, it should be surveyed by a scientific landscape gardener and laid out in promenades and drives which should be beautified by choice shade trees and shrubs."*[121]

Next, Clark addressed the issue of water rents and retention of federal troops. He estimated more than half the hot water consumed by bathhouses went to waste and recommended a new distribution system: "There should be a water meter attached to the premises of each consumer, who should be required to pay a reasonable price, to be fixed by the Secretary of the Interior Department, for every thousand gallons of water consumed and wasted." Clark opined that the current rate of fifteen dollar per annum per tub "is unreasonably low. The proprietors of the bath houses, and not the bathers, are

[120] Ibid.
[121] Ibid.

alone benefited by the reduction. They were willing and could afford to pay the rental ($5.00 per month per tub) which was established by the Department when Congress passed the [1878] Act." Clark reported the town's mayor offered repeated assurances that federal soldiers were no longer needed as civil authorities would cooperate with Gen. Kelley to protect Hot Springs Reservation. Nonetheless, Clark acknowledged, "local police regulations are necessarily imperfect in a community of squatters, and among so large a transient population, I am clearly of [the] opinion that it would be unwise to withdraw the soldiers now stationed there, at least until the controversies as to claims are finally settled."[122] Noting the pending congressional debate regarding a National Hospital at Hot Springs, Clark observed: "Should this bill become a law with an amendment making provisions for the establishment of a Military post at the Springs, I do not doubt that there would at all times be a sufficient number of convalescent soldiers able to do police duty, who, if made subject to the orders of the Superintendent, would be all the military force the interests of the Government would require."[123]

As the spring season approached, B. F. Kelley's attention turned to reservation improvements. A principal need concerned constructing a road from Valley Street up Hot Springs Mountain to the observation tower. Kelley encouraged its construction: "I regard it as highly important for the comfort and pleasure of guests and invalids visiting Hot Springs [that] the improvement be made, there is from the top of the observatory one of the grandest views in the country and all visitors are anxious to avail themselves of it, but a large portion of them are deprived of the pleasure because there is no carriage road to it." By using some of the convalescent patients at the "Charity Hospital" Kelley envisioned the road could be built for $500, far less than he originally estimated.[124] Kelley oversaw the work and used hired laborers, not patients, for building the road at a total cost of $356.59, and reserved the remaining funds to repair washouts and other maintenance needs.[125]

At the end of the fiscal year July 1, 1878 to June 30, 1879, it became apparent that the December 1878 Act of Congress imposed a "great falling off in the water rents… reducing the monthly rent of tubs from $5 to $1.25. This legislation," Kelley warned, "was not only unfortunate for the government, but to the citizens of Hot Springs as it reduces the revenue so much that we have not means to improve and beautify the reservation." The only beneficiaries were bathhouse owners "and they have not reduced the price of baths." This bonus to each bathhouse granted by Congress cost the government five to six thousand dollars per annum per bathhouse. Noting that annual revenue stood at only $3,417.03, the superintendent concluded: "I trust that Congress will repeal this act at the approaching session and give the Secretary the control of this matter as heretofore."[126]

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[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Superintendent Kelley to Secretary Schurz, letter, 25 February 1879. Kelley secured the signatures and endorsements of all three Hot Springs Commission members affixed below his own signature.
[125] Superintendent Kelley to Secretary Schurz, letter, 29 December 1879, RG 79 ST12-E-2, box 5:337. He reported: "Guests and invalids can now visit the observatory with comfort and safety."
[126] Superintendent Kelley to Secretary Schurz, letter, 25 September 1879.

U.S. TROOPS DEPART HOT SPRINGS, 1881

When the Hot Springs Commission ended its business and disbanded in December 1879, Gen. Kelley conducted a survey of commission furnishings and accepted possession of them, separating those items he wished to retain from those he sought authority to sell at auction. While the items remained in storage in the rented space formerly occupied by the commission, Kelley turned his attention to securing his own official headquarters in lieu of conducting business out of the Arlington Hotel. Kelley informed Schurz: "I have a proposition from a club of gentlemen to build me an office on the permanent reservation on Fountain Street in rear of the Arlington Hotel, without charge to the government, provided I permit them to occupy the second story for a reading room." Kelley recommended Interior grant permission and assured the secretary that in addition to government ownership and savings on rent, it would not conflict with future bathhouse locations. Inheriting the commission's plans, maps, and files, it was time to have an office to accommodate the public and conduct government business.[127] Schurz authorized construction of an office, but insisted it be built with government funds with no strings attached.[128]

Along with a superintendent's office, construction of authorized bathhouses commenced in January 1880.[129] Available hot water to supply new and existing establishments toward the end of operating hours, however, continued to dwindle. Kelley reported that Major Nelsen, operating a new bathhouse on the site of the "Old Hale," was demanding more water for his thriving enterprise. Unless something was done, Kelley feared a chronic shortage as new bathhouses were added. In order to capture and store more thermal water, he asked permission to build two brick tanks, "one 10-by-30 feet 3 feet deep to be covered by an arch to preserve the heat; and one immediately below it 10-by-30-6 feet deep not to be covered to contain water of a lower temrature [sic] and then require the different bath houses to attach their pipes to these tanks, with this kind of water and the Springs

Figure 34. Primitive 1880s bathhouse (HSNP 6121, National Park Service)

[127] Superintendent Kelley to Secretary Schurz, letter, 22 December 1879; and "Schedule of Property turned over to B. F. Kelley Supt. By the Hot Springs Commission," 16 December 1879. Items listed for auction were received at Interior on 9 March 1880.

[128] Ibid., Secretary Schurz to Superintendent Kelley, letter, 27 December 1879. On January 6, 1880, Kelley acknowledged the order, provided the cost estimate of $650, and stated it could be built in two weeks.

[129] Superintendent Kelley to Secretary Schurz, letter 27 January 1880. Kelley provided a diagram and plat of bathhouses to Interior.

constantly flowing into them will prevent any difficulty hereafter." Construction of the hot and cold water tanks below the Big Iron Bathhouse would utilize the overflow from the Big Iron Spring. Kelley based his recommendation on discussions with George M. French, a local civil engineer, who as proprietor and builder of the Big Iron Bathhouse and designer for most of the others on the Reservation, wrote that "the only practicable way of making the hot waters of the seventy two springs here most available, is to concentrate them into reservoirs for distribution."[130]

Chasing off trespassers and construction supervision during inclement weather adversely affected Kelley's health to the point of being bed-ridden for several weeks in March 1880. Kelley's wife alerted Interior of her over-worked husband's illness and reported that he would soon return to his duties and resume supplying requested data.[131]

Figure 35. Rector's Bathhouse and Arsenic Spring pavilion, c. 1881 (HSNP 1915, National Park Service)

Federal troops departed Hot Springs by the end of the Hayes presidency in March 1881, much to the dismay of Kelley who wrote in October "Since the withdrawal of the military force from here I have been very much annoyed by parties trespassing upon the reservation by interfering with the springs, disturbing the pipes, breaking the locks and the boxes securing the valves to the government tanks, opening the valves and causing the water to run to waste, to the great injury of the bath houses supplied therefrom." To resolve these issues, Kelley recommended action by Congress:

> *"I... suggest that Congress be asked to pass a stringent law providing punishment for all manner of trespasses upon the reservation, such as I have named, also for cutting and stealing timber or stone, building houses or shanties, putting up tents, firing the woods on the mountains of the reservation, thereby destroying the timber and shrubbery, or occupying the reservation or any part thereof for any purpose whatever, other than that provided by law, and I particularly request that the jurisdiction in all cases of trespass on the public property be given to the U.S. district court."*[132]

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[130] Superintendent Kelley to Secretary Schurz, letter, 23 March 1880. An estimate from George M. French to excavate, build (with 34,000 bricks), pipe and plumb stood at $980.00. See French to Kelley, letter, 28 April 1880, RG 79, Box 5, Entry 1.

[131] Mrs. B. F. Kelley to Assistant Secretary A. Bell, Letter, 19 April 1880. She reported he had a "severe cold which has effected [sic] his old wound and caused inflammation of his lung."

[132] *Annual Report for 1881.* Kelley preferred that local magistrates and state courts not have jurisdiction.

Kelley felt he lacked sufficient legal authority to enforce his management decisions. For example, the new Rector Bathhouse constructed its building immediately adjacent to the Arlington Hotel "obscuring the light and preventing a free circulation of air to that part of the hotel to the great injury of the proprietors." Following the 1878 fire, the city built a temporary fire engine hall, city hall, and municipal court building on the southwest corner of Hot Springs Reservation to be removed when given notice to do so. Kelley notified the city in June 1881 to remove the building but the city lacking funds to build elsewhere failed to comply.[133]

CONSTRUCTION OF THE HOT SPRINGS CREEK ARCH, 1882-1884

In 1882, Interior decided the only solution to Hot Springs Creek sanitation and recreation was to wall it and arch it over, thereby providing a wide avenue fronting Hot Springs Reservation. This occurred prior to B.F. Kelley's retirement in December 1882. Interior authorized Captain Thomas H. Handbury, U.S. Engineer Office, Little Rock to develop plans. Handbury envisioned straightening Hot Springs Creek and enclosing it between masonry walls roofed by brick arches supported by steel I-beams. His plans depicted a sanitary sewer along each wall in addition to laying iron pipes to collect thermal water emanating along the creek. The action was heralded by the citizenry and business community in finally resolving the eyesore. However, critics of these plans preferred a masonry arch over I-beams based on cost, and included J. L. Smithmyer, architect of the Army and Navy Hospital, and new Hot Springs Superintendent Samuel Hamblen. The first contract awarded was imprecise as to proportions of masonry and concrete and was terminated. The second contract award at a higher cost to George H. Bardwell resulted in Captain Handbury's appointment as engineer in charge of the work with Hamblen as his second. Hamblen then proposed substituting masonry arches for I-beams and sandstone for granite in the side walls and contractor Bardwell offered a price reduction from $18.45 to $10.50 per cubic yard if this happened. The contentious relationship between Handbury and Hamblen erupted and Captain Handbury was relieved of duty with Hamblen authorizing the substitution. Assistant Secretary Josyln on a visit to Hot Springs subsequently called for eliminating the parallel sewers from contract work.[134]

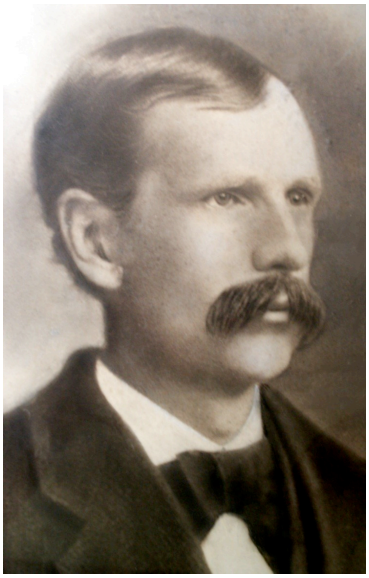

Figure 36. Samuel Hamblen (National Park Service)

[133] Ibid.

[134] *Report of the Secretary of the Interior to Congress, 1883,* 50; Alonzo Bell, *Report on the Hot Springs of Arkansas made to the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1882), 26; and Fred Cron, "Hot Springs Reservation Improvements, 1879-1895," *The Record*, vol. 30(Hot Springs: Garland County Historical Society, 1989), 8-10

The creek arch was completed in 1884, providing a 100-foot-wide street for what became designated "Central Avenue" (not Valley Street). Interior did remove contract stipulations that sewer pipes be installed as part of the construction, leaving the creek to continue carrying away sewage.[135] An ever-vigilant citizenry suspected something amiss. Scandal-obsessed House committee members agitated for an investigation of creek arch construction to look for graft and corruption. Democrats believed that illegal activities in Hot Springs could be used in upcoming elections against their Republican opponents. In January 1884, the Democratic congressman began calling for an official investigation into government improvements at Hot Springs Reservation and the Committee on Expenditures for the Interior Department obliged. A newspaper account revealed that

Figure 37. Hot Springs Creek Arch under construction at Park and Central Avenues, c. 1883 (HSNP 15094, National Park Service)

> *"sales of land have been made and privileges have been granted in such a way that all the valuable property at and around the Springs has been given over to a favored few to the exclusion of all others, and that is directly contrary to the interests of the Government and the public. Alleged construction plans changed to put thousands of dollars in pockets of certain contractors, while injuring the character and stability of the work."*[136]

Hearings were held for four days in March at the Sumpter Hotel in Hot Springs, and again on April 29 in Washington, D.C.

The controversy involved where the hard sandstone originated and how it was procured. The original design submitted by U.S. Army Engineer Thomas H. Handbury envisioned granite side walls with wrought iron beams filled in with bricks. Superintendent Hamblen, preferring a less costly method, changed the specifications to masonry walls and arch of rubble-work laid in cement with single block skewbacks. Hamblen selected a hard sandstone from the surrounding mountainside to be used in place of granite.[137] It came from a lot owned by George L. Smith at the base of West

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[135] *Annual Report for 1884.*
[136] "The Hot Springs Investigation," *New York Times*, 28 January 1884, 1.
[137] Sharon Shugart, *Abstract of Testimony Taken before the Committee on Expenditures in the Interior Department Relative to Certain Things Connected with the Government Property at Hot Springs, Ark, June*

Mountain—perfectly situated at the middle of the proposed creek arch construction site. Smith, a Louisiana congressman, owned a parcel of land of little value because of its craggy bluff but, if leveled off to a depth of 150 feet, its real estate value would skyrocket. Congressman Smith struck a deal, offering his property for free as a stone quarry for the arch, saving contractor Bardwell the expense of hauling granite from Magnet Cove twelve miles east. This arrangement allowed Bardwell to underbid his competitors to secure the contract and he lobbied three U.S. Senators, along with a receptive Hamblen, to gain Interior's approval. Despite Captain Handbury's warning and disapproval, the secretary demurred at the cost savings. Hence, Smith received $25,000 worth of free work on his property and Bardwell got a lucrative federal contract.

The committee determined the contract change was "brought about in an improper manner, and was promoted by interested motives and considerations." It blasted Superintendent Hamblen for being "at least a passive instrument in the hands of those who were interested in having this new material adopted."[138]

Figure 38. Two boys inside the open Hot Spring Arch, 1884 (HSNP 154a. National Park Service)

There were other questionable actions. An inferior quality sand from Hot Springs Creek was used in place of superior sand found in Gulpha Creek five miles distant. In the matter of false measurements, the committee could not find accurate data for the work because Hamblen lost the paperwork and could not produce it for investigators. Two local civil engineers estimated that no more than 4,000 cubic yards of masonry was in place at the end of 1883 but it was impossible to get an exact figure as back-filling had concealed evidence of where Hamblen's estimate began and terminated. In conclusion, the committee declared: "…there was such lax supervision over the work, such negligence and want of professional skill and capacity as an engineer manifested in his (Hamblen's) measurements that if the Government has not been defrauded, it was not for want of opportunity and every needed facility for the accomplishment of that result."[139]

17, 1884 (House Ex. Doc. No. 89, 48th Congress, First Session). The report, totaling 307 pages, looked into all aspects of government operations, including blasting near the Springs, the bathhouse pool, inequality of services offered to African-American patrons, treatment of bathhouse attendants, leases, etc.

[138] House Miscellaneous Document, No. 58, 48th Congress, First Session.

[139] Ibid.

Interior secured the services of an Army engineer to re-measure the work. Bardwell went bankrupt and the arch was completed by W. P. Aldrich. When completed the total cost came to $136,745. Historian Fred Cron observed that Hot Springs sandstone "is equal in all respects to Diamond Joe granite." He posited that the masonry arch represented an enhancement over Handbury's I-beams which certainly would have rusted away over time in the steamy environment of the creek arch tunnel.

Hamblen's successor, Charles W. Field, used earth and rock from building excavations to backfill the Reservation's side of the creek arch and secured the rest from Hot Springs Mountain above the Army and Navy Hospital grounds, leaving the city to fill in its side. Once completed, Central Avenue was an imposing thoroughfare 100 feet wide.[140] Superintendent Charles Field, arriving on duty in late summer 1885, was charged by Interior Secretary Lucius Lamar to inspect the new creek arch because it began showing signs of weakness. Field investigated, presented evidence of the extent of defects and itemization of repairs to which Interior required the contractor to fix—all without further government expense. Over the course of December 1885 through January 1886, Field oversaw the demolition and reconstruction of 60 feet of creek arch. In May, an additional contract was let to extend the arch to the southern boundary of Hot Springs Reservation and across Reserve Street.[141]

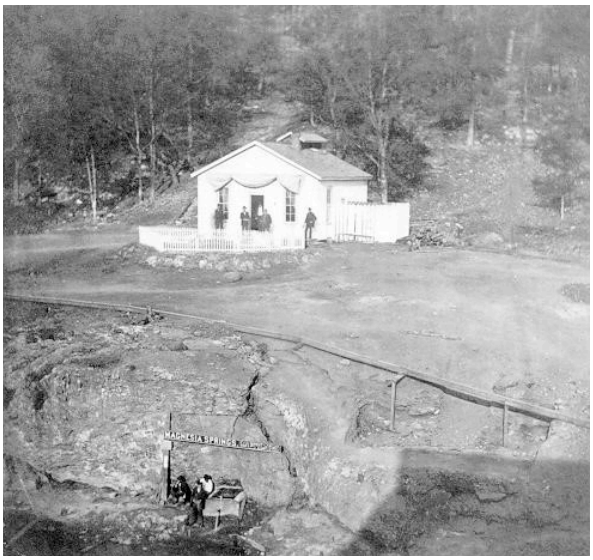

Figure 39. Government Free Bathhouse at the Mud Hole, c. 1884-88 (HSNP 8677, National Park Service)

Although Hamblen continued in his job until July 1885, the creek arch was both the highlight and ruin of his superintendency. Formerly attached to the engineer corps working for the Hot Springs Commission, Hamblen pressed onward and secured four additional springs for future use. One of the springs was a new discovery and the highest in elevation of any of the others with a constant temperature of 160 degrees. Water from this spring "enabled me to bring into use the reservoir constructed by my predecessor… too high for the existing flows, and which had previous to this stood unused." Hamblen urged Interior to secure all the thermal water for use because "the present system of supply is the crudest possible and to the disadvantage of the Government and the consumer." Hamblen added: "The plans heretofore submitted contemplate the collection of all the waters in one reservoir below the level of all the waters, to be

[140] Fred Cron, "Hot Springs Reservation Improvements, 1879-1895," *The Record* vol. 30 (Hot Springs: Garland County Historical Society, 1989), 10-11.

[141] *Annual Report for 1886*. The city also installed a lengthy span of sewer pipe carrying sewage further away from Hot Springs Reservation before depositing it in the creek, keeping the creek arch free of sewage.

pumped thence to a distributing reservoir on the mountain of sufficient altitude to answer all purposes, from thence to be taken to the points where used." He advocated installing meters on piping and instead of charging per annum per tub, that the water be "rented by quantity that can be accurately measured. The supply is ample for present wants if it can all be utilized, and for years to come, if the supply to each house is measured and recorded." [142]

As for the free baths, Hamblen reported the sad state of the single pool covered with a dilapidated building. "I have during the past year," he recounted, "enlarged and improved this pool, constructed another for female bathers, repaired the old, and built a new building joined to the other. This gives the indigent bathers two pools with springs in the bottom of each, an office to the manager, waiting rooms for each sex, with full bath-house accommodations." Free baths stood at 35,058 for the year or an average of 97 per day. He concluded, "The water from the springs serves to keep the pools hot, but where so much bathing is done it is necessary to introduce a large flow of water from outside sources for douches and to renew the waters of the pools. Many prefer these baths to those in tubs, claiming that the waters in large pools and the natural flow from the hot ground are more beneficial."[143]

FORMATION OF THE BATHHOUSE POOL, 1880

Bathhouse investors gathered in Hot Springs on November 30, 1880, and formed the "Hot Springs Bath House Association" for the official purpose of pooling their receipts. Articles of agreement signed by the men stated "that in order that the said parties… may render more profitable the investments they made in Bath Houses… they agree, obligate and bind themselves to demand and receive for a course of twenty one baths the following prices:

H. M. Rector's Bath House	$10.00
Rammelsberg Bath House	$10.00
Big Iron J.R. Wells & Co. Bath House	$8.00
Old Hale Nelson & Brown	$10.00
Ozark G. G. Latta Bath House	$10.00
C. N. Rockafellow Bath House	$7.50
Hot Springs Messrs. Tobin Bath House	$6.00
Grand Central J. Griffith Bath House	$4.00

"New Palace S. W. Fordyce; H. M. Rector's New Bath House; The Independent McKeogh and Holmes—such prices as may be fixed and arranged by the parties hereto at the time of completion of the last three mentioned houses, with the assent of the owners."[144] The group pledged to adopt and follow a ticket system for a course of 21

[142] *Annual Report for 1884*. He also reported laying out drives and bridle paths measuring 3.5 miles on Hot Springs and North Mountains.
[143] Ibid.
[144] "Articles of Agreement of the Bath House Association at Hot Springs, Ark., under which the Receipts are Pooled; Submitted with and referred to in the report of A. Hadley, 27 January 1881, RG 79, Box 6, Entry 1.

baths and to keep their bathhouses in good condition and repair. Repairs and expenses were to be paid out of dividends received from a general fund of ticket sales. Violations of the agreement would be adjudged by an executive committee of the bathhouse interests with fines ranging from $50 to $100 per violation. The "pool" hired an auditor to print, divide, and deliver tickets each week to be purchased by bathhouses, and subsequently collect cash taken in each week and keep an accounting of dividends to be disbursed. All bathhouses were required to keep a daily register listing the names of each bather and course of baths. The agreement also provided the privilege of bathhouse attendants collecting from each bather for rubbing, washing towels, etc. at the rate of one dollar per week. Those bathers not requiring special services were still charged fifty cents a week for attendants to clean up bathrooms and bathing areas. All attendants were required to have "a certificate of good character" from present and past employers.[145]

Interior Chief Clerk Amos Hadley arrived in January 1881 at the request of Secretary Schurz to conduct a thorough investigation of the new Bathhouse Pool and other issues. He observed that the more important springs had been "walled up and covered over" for protection and while there was sufficient flow, unnecessary waste in bathhouses taxed the available quantity of water as did the nighttime flow which went to waste, not captured by the government-built reservoir at Big Iron Spring. That arched-over structure captured 30,000 gallons at a constant temperature of 157 degrees and supplied hot water to six bathhouses. Hadley recommended that other reservoirs be constructed to serve other bathhouses. As for the bathhouses, the older ones "are cheap and plainly built" while the more recent ones "are very neat and ornamental structures, well furnished and supplying very pleasant and convenient accommodations for guests." Eight operating bathhouses were supplemented by tubs in two hotels, the Arlington and French's Hotel. New construction bathhouses included the Rector and New Palace as well as tubs to be placed in the new Avenue Hotel, also under construction. At the time of his report, there were 167 bath tubs and an average of 492 baths taken daily. The open pools for the indigent were insufficient in winter months and required warming houses to be placed over them. Hadley recommended the warming houses be built and piping insulated so that the thermal water remained at a constant temperature. He also advised an attendant be provided "to keep peace and order around them." Hadley and Superintendent Kelley both recommended that a free bathhouse for the invalid poor be built on the site where the temporary city hall/fire house stood.[146]

Prevailing rates for baths ranged from $3 to $10 for 21 baths and from 15 cents to 50 cents for a single bath. Acknowledging the new association, Hadley wrote:

> *"All the bath-house proprietors, excepting the proprietors of the Independent bath house, have combined and formed an association to regulate the prices of baths, etc., and under their agreement the receipts of all are put into one fund, which is then divided in proportion to the number of tubs allotted to each bath house. The object of this combination*

[145] Ibid.
[146] Chief Clerk Amos Hadley to Interior Secretary Schurz, letter 27 January 1881, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 6.

is said to be for the purpose of doing away with 'drummers' or parties who are employed by the bath houses to solicit customers."

Hadley warned that the association could "develop a monopoly which would have absolute control over these springs, and which would establish and demand extortionate prices for bathing." He recommended rates of 25 cents for a single bath and $5 for 21 baths "are sufficient to give the bath houses even very large profits" and that future leases should impose these nominal rates. He advised the superintendent to "discourage and prevent a monopoly" and reported the names of proprietors who engaged in extortionate pricing so that future leases could be denied.[147]

The Bathhouse Pool attempted to strong-arm The Independent Bathhouse into joining their combination. The Independent, the only business that refused to combine its receipts, had prices lower than the rest of the association. Soon, two other member businesses lowered their prices below that of The Independent hoping to force it into compliance. Tanks of The Independent were tampered with at night and its cool water supply emptied causing decreased bathing opportunities during the day.

Finally, Hadley recommended Interior seek a scientific examination of the thermal water to be published by the government and distributed to the public inquiring about its chemical properties. This would provide for a consistent and accurate description and alleviate discrepancies between previous chemical analyses.[148]

Beginning under Kelley's administration in the late 1870s and through the 1880s, the following contracts were negotiated to build bathhouses:

Arlington	December 15, 1878
Rector	December 16, 1878
Old Hale	May 10, 1879
Rammelsberg	May 7, 1880 (present Buckstaff)
Independent	June 15, 1880 (present Maurice)
Big Iron	June 25, 1880
Palace	January 26, 1881 (present Fordyce)
Ozark	April 7, 1881
Magnesia	May 28, 1883 (present Quapaw)
Horse Shoe	June 12, 1883 (present Quapaw)
Lamar	June 24, 1883
Superior	December 7, 1883

The following bathhouses had leases:

Avenue	July 14, 1881
Eastman	January 17, 1889
Alhambra	March 1, 1889

[147] Ibid.
[148] Ibid.

Six bathhouses off the reservation utilized thermal water without any formal agreement: Rockafellow, Grand Central, Hot Springs, French's, Sumpter, and Park.[149]

ARMY AND NAVY HOSPITAL BUILT AT HOT SPRINGS, 1882-1887

Lobbying for construction of a large military hospital intensified once the government had taken charge of Hot Springs Reservation and settled all long-standing claims. Interior officials believed the concept would only enhance its own operations there and lend increased congressional support for improvements. Assistant Interior Secretary Alonzo Bell, scoping the many possibilities in spring of 1882 enthusiastically reported:

> *"The trust reposed by the people in the United States is a sacred one. It cannot be wholly discharged by simply supervising the flow of the waters. The higher obligation rests upon it to fully develop the possibilities of the Springs, by exhaustive scientific investigation and by carefully attending to the sanitary requirements of the reservation and its surroundings.*

Figure 40. New Imperial Bathhouse in foreground with Army-Navy Hospital on Hot Springs Mountain, 1895 (HSNP 10151, National Park Service)

[149] "Origin of Concession Bathing at Hot Springs National Park," draft 1973, Library Vertical File, HSNP Archives.

"The establishment of the hospital for the Army and Navy will give to the government the opportunity to collate facts in the treatment of disease that must prove of incalculable advantage in the future use of these waters. The best methods for bathing, the most efficient system of diet, rest, and exercise; the various phenomena, now noticed but unexplained—all these points will receive light from the records which will necessarily be kept of each case treated under the skillful supervision of the government. As a result, the medical practitioner will receive enlightenment, and suffering humanity the benefit of systemized skill and experience.

"Under the fostering care of the United States, Hot Springs should become the great national sanitarium of the continent, its health-giving waters attracting invalids from all parts of the world, and its natural scenery, beautified by art, inviting thousands to it, as a resort where health and pleasure may be found in a pure atmosphere and agreeable climate."[150]

Figure 41. First Army-Navy Hospital in snow, mid-1880s (HSNP 15084, National Park Service)

Congress concurred and authorized $100,000 for the secretary of War to construct the Army and Navy Hospital on Hot Springs Reservation.[151] Five acres on the permanent reservation's southwest corner were set aside for the complex of military buildings, including a bathhouse.[152] Introduction of another federal entity soon proved problematic for Interior as the War Department sought to build, control, and expand its own empire at Hot Springs. The Army's surgeon general sought permission to expand its tract off Reserve Avenue "down to the creek for sanitary and hygiene purposes… and to have 200 feet of that portion of the

[150] Alonzo Bell, *Report on the Hot Springs of Arkansas made to the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1882), 27.
[151] Act of Congress, 30 June 1882 (22 Stat. 121). Eight days later, Congress authorized the sale of lots to the Woman's Christian National Library Association – Act of Congress, 8 July 1882 (22 Stat. 155).
[152] Mary D. Hudgins, "A Time of Many Changes for Hot Springs—1882," Vol. 23 *The Record* (1982): 36.

reservation in front of the hospital set apart for public use"—including the tract on Hot Springs Creek where the temporary city hall stood. He also eyed removing the Ozark and Rammelsberg Bathhouses, but acknowledged their ongoing public use "so long as they are properly conducted." He continued, "It is understood that these bath houses now yield to the Interior Department an annual income of $5.00 per tub and there are no good reasons why this income should not accrue to the War Department, if the transfer is made."[153]

Interior denied the War Department's expansion plans and insisted that area remain within Interior's designated boundaries on the side of Hot Springs Mountain perched above bathhouse row and Central Avenue. Superintendent Samuel Hamblen kept a wary eye on local developments. Little did he realize that a war over Hot Springs water rights was about to erupt when he innocuously granted the War Department's construction contractor permission to tap one of the thermal waterlines for mixing mortar and other purposes. In early January 1884, the pipe froze and burst causing the free pools to be abandoned for lack of water. Hamblen locked horns with Captain Joshua Jacobs, assistant quartermaster overseeing construction of the Army and Navy Hospital. Tempers flared until the breach could be remedied but threatened to erupt into violence when Jacobs informed Hamblen that the piping located on hospital grounds would have to be removed and the spring's water completely appropriated.[154] Jacobs wrote:

> *"It is imperative that the removal of these pipes be effected at once. The hospital will need all the water that can be supplied by this spring and as work will shortly commence about the spring of a nature to prevent any use of the water for bathing purposes, I respectfully suggest that you make permanent provision elsewhere for supplying the bathhouses at present drawing their water from this spring."*[155]

In addition to depriving the free bathhouse of thermal water, the action would do the same, not coincidentally, for the Ozark and Rammelsberg bathhouses. Interior officials, alarmed by the hostile actions, telegrammed Hamblen: "You must not allow the water to be diverted from the free baths…. The free baths must be kept open if the others close."[156]

Interior protested the actions to the War Department to no avail and advised Hamblen to provide the hot water and be cooperative within the limits of his instructions to keep the free baths operating.[157] Jacobs, however, belligerently began appropriating

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[153] C. H. Crane, Surgeon General, U.S. Army to Secretary of War Robert T. Lincoln, 25 January 1883, RG 79, Box 8, Entry 1. This view was endorsed by Philip S. Wales, Surgeon General, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, U.S. Navy, 27 January 1883.
[154] Superintendent Hamblen to Secretary H. M. Teller, letter, 28 May 1884, RG 79, Box 9, Entry 1.
[155] Ibid., Capt. Joshua Jacobs to Superintendent Hamblen, letter, 10 April 1884.
[156] Secretary Teller to Superintendent Hamblen, telegram, 3 June 1884, recited in *Synopsis of the Correspondence in relation to Action of Capt. Jacobs in Cutting Off the Supply of Water to Free Pools & etc. at Hot Springs, Arkansas*, May 1884, RG 79, Box 9, Entry 1 (hereinafter cited as *Synopsis 1884*.
[157] Secretary Teller to Superintendent Hamblen, telegram, 3 June 1884, and letter, 4 June 1884, cited in *Synopsis 1884*. The War secretary informed Secretary Teller that "water from the springs in question will

more and more water until on August 28, 1884, he announced he would be taking it all and shut off water to the free baths, Ozark, and Rammelsberg bathhouses. Defending his actions to his superiors, Jacobs wrote:

> *"The Superintendent of Hot Springs Reservation has practically cut off all water required for the prosecution of the work in the hospital. I am doing everything possible to comply with the letter and spirit of my instructions for the completion of the project and my success depends entirely upon being left untrammeled by the agents of the Interior Department. I, therefore, respectfully and earnestly request that the jurisdiction over the hospital reservation and the springs thereon be settled at once that no further vexatious interference or correspondence may occur."*[158]

Hamblen, following orders from his superiors, declared "by direction of the Secretary of the Interior – I demand immediate removal of the obstructions to the flow of water to the free baths."[159] Hamblen then took action. Jacobs subsequently reported the water rights war had begun:

> *"…this morning about 10:45 o'clock while walking around the Hospital grounds, I found the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation with a gang of men employed in opening the spring belonging to the hospital and in the act of leading off the water which would have resulted in suspending work on the Hospital construction. I told him he must not cut me off from this water to which he paid no attention, but directed his men to proceed with their work.*
>
> *"I immediately came to my office and directed my clerk to get me a double barreled shotgun.*
>
> *"Returning at once to the spring I repeated my demands not to interfere with the spring. The Superintendent repeated this to his men, when I pushed them away. The Superintendent then planted himself on the spring indicating in manner and speech that he wanted me to forcibly eject him, which I proceeded to do in a most effectual manner. At this time my clerk made his appearance with the gun which I took from him and stationing myself over the spring maintained possession, and shall continue to prevent any interference until otherwise directed by you. The Superintendent and his men left the grounds. I feel by this action that I have simply obeyed your instructions and I ask for a full investigation of all the circumstances. To leave me here any longer to be interfered with*

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be needed for the exclusive use of the Army and Navy Hospital, on completion of that building" (letter, 26 June 1884).

[158] Capt. Jacobs to Secretary of War, no date, cited in "Water Rights Fight," draft report (no author) dated January 1982, HSNP Library vertical file.

[159] Ibid.; and Secretary Teller to Superintendent Hamblen, telegram 30 August 1884, cited in *Synopsis 1884*.

in this manner by the agents of the Interior Department places me in a painfully false position, which I do not think I deserve."[160]

Interior instructed the War Department that it had congressional authority to maintain free baths for the indigent and that its local contractor could obtain sufficient water from Hot Springs Creek. Further, Interior held that congressional appropriation to build the Army and Navy Hospital did not alienate supervision of that portion of the permanent reservation from the superintendent and Interior secretary, "nor that the ground allotted for hospital purposes has thereby become segregated from the reservation, other than for hospital purposes. To deprive the indigent of the use of the free baths, by cutting off water for building purposes, seems unreasonable and would certainly be a plain violation of the law."[161]

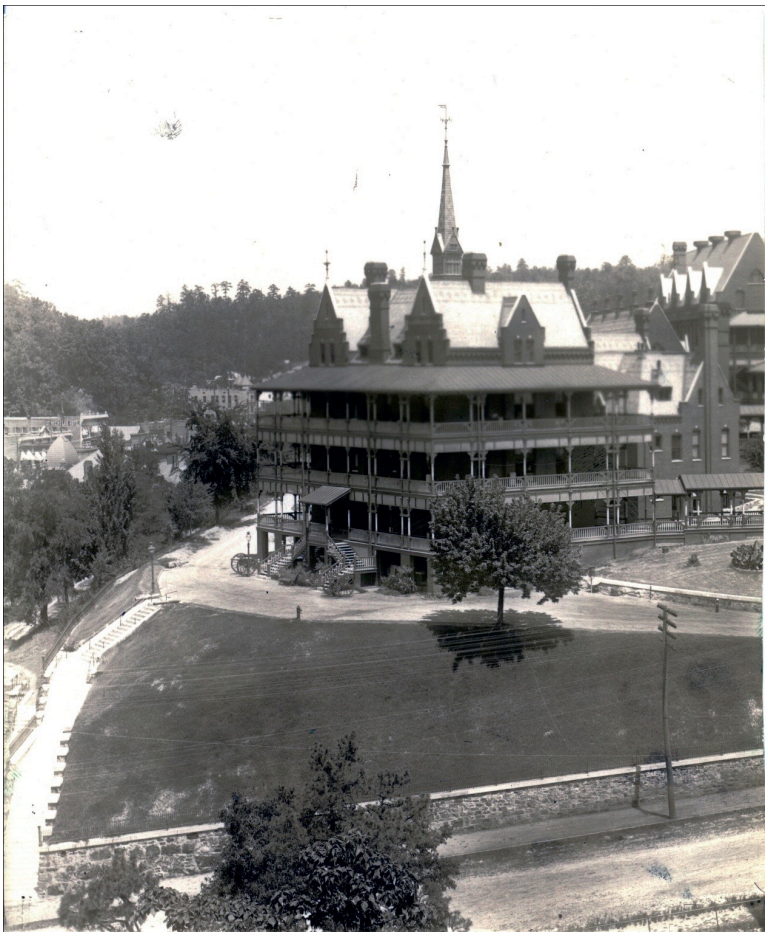

Figure 42. Army-Navy Hospital, late 1890s (HSNP 1990, National Park Service)

Jacobs next ripped away all the piping from the spring leading to the free pool baths. Interior telegraphed a response on September 5, instructing Hamblen: "Act of Dec. 16, 1878, requires maintenance of free public baths for the indigent. The law is mandatory. Enforce it if possible by peaceable means."[162] Hamblen reported being forcibly resisted on September 9. An investigation conducted by the Acting Quartermaster General of the Army predictably supported Jacobs, but called a truce. He reported

[160] Capt. Jacobs to Quartermaster General U.S. Army, letter, 30 August 1884, cited in "Water Rights Fight."
[161] Secretary Teller to Secretary of War, letter, 4 September 1884, cited in *Synopsis 1884*.
[162] Superintendent Hamblen to Secretary Teller, telegram, 5 September 1884; response from Secretary Teller, telegram, 5 September 1884, both cited in *Synopsis 1884*.

> *"the necessities of the case do not warrant the action taken by Captain Jacobs as reported…. Until a final decision in the case at issue is reached by the War Dept., it is recommended that Captain Jacobs be directed to restore the supply of water to pipes furnishing the free and leased baths under control of the Interior Dept., and in case he cannot then procure sufficient water for building purposes that he cause such additional water to be supplied by hire of water wagon and teams, if he cannot store a sufficient supply from night discharges through the pipes, and which would seem feasible."*[163]

Hospital construction activities continued for the next two years without further incident or conflict between Interior and War Department officials. The three-story red-brick, wood, and slate Army and Navy Hospital opened its doors on January 17, 1887. It had multiple levels with ornate verandas and accommodated beds for 18 officers and 64 enlisted men from the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps. Horse-drawn ambulances regularly carried military patients from the train station to the hospital.[164]

The federal hospital building became a shining beacon, a landmark perched on Hot Springs Mountain overlooking Hot Springs, Arkansas. The decade following the 1878 fire, Hot Springs had emerged from the flames more vibrant and bustling than before and the eyes of the nation focused on the spa city. So successful had it become that in 1883, Minnekahta, South Dakota, re-designated itself "Hot Springs" in a move to imitate its Arkansas model.[165] The *New York Times* frequently heralded the virtues of Hot Springs Reservation. In May 1887, the newspaper reported more than 7,000 health and pleasure seekers were registered "at the hotels, which are crowded to over-flowing." Central Avenue teamed with "people representing every shade and color of society throughout the habitable globe" and the town's population, 7,000 permanent residents, accommodated their guests with "palatial hotels, bathhouses, and business blocks replete with all the modern conveniences and appointments." The writer gushed:

> *The better element now rule, and ladies need have no delicacy in visiting these springs. Constitutional walks are common… and the more favorable indulge in drives and horseback rides to Hell's Half Acre, three miles; White Sulphur Springs, four miles; and the celebrated Potash Sulphur Springs seven miles distant, where many go by advice of physicians for a week's respite after a course of three weeks' bathing,*

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[163] Secretary of War to Secretary Teller, letter, 10 September 1884, referring to Acting Quartermaster General of the Army's investigative report, cited in *Synopsis 1884*.

[164] Circular, Adjutant General's Office, War Department, Washington, D.C., 20 December 1886, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 10; "General Hospital at Hot Springs/Prospectus," *New York Times* 7 January 1887, 5; and *Army and Navy General Hospital, Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas* (U.S. Department of Defense, circa 1950), 3-5.

[165] Martha E. Geores, "Surviving on Metaphor: How 'Health = Hot Springs' Created and Sustained a Town," chapter 3 in Robin A. Kearns and Wilbert M. Gesler, eds., *Putting Health into Place: Landscape, Identity, and Well-being*" (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1988), 36-52. The South Dakota town also emulated Hot Sulphur Springs, Virginia, and targeted the same market by extolling the properties of its own thermal water.

> *which is debilitating, in order to drink the waters which in effect are toning, give flesh, and put them in better physical strength to endure the next course.*[166]

Recreation and amusements away from the baths at Hot Springs abounded. Every day crowds gathered to watch a man who had centipedes and tarantulas fight in the street. In Central Park, "Black Dan," a local African American, and his pet bear staged a daily wrestling match. At Happy Hollow, a quarter-mile distance from the Hot Springs, pistol and rifle targets provided entertainment as well as various carnival activities. From September to April hunters ventured into the hinterlands to hunt bears, deer, and wild turkeys in abundance. However, not all was upbeat at Hot Springs. The newspaper reported "great dissatisfaction and complaint upon the part of visitors and citizens" over the government's persistent award of leases to the same individuals operating the bathhouses for nominal annual rents. Public pressure was building on Interior to take complete control and begin using increased revenues for "beautifying and adorning the reservation, thus making this a garden spot of America, the most popular sanitarium of the world." The reporter observed that the bathhouse leases would soon be expiring and "the Government will be called upon to take some definite action, which must for all time to come settle the question, 'Who shall rule these hot waters, the God-given boon to the afflicted?'"[167]

SUPERINTENDENCY OF CHARLES W. FIELD, 1885-1889

Damaged by the creek arch scandal, Superintendent Hamblen served three years, 1882-1885, and was succeeded by Gen. Charles W. Field (1885-1889), a former Confederate officer. Interior charged Superintendent Field, arriving on duty in late summer 1885, with making necessary repairs to the creek arch, extending it across Reserve Avenue, and installing cast-iron pipes to collect and distribute thermal water issuing below the bathhouses. That water, an estimated 300,000 gallons per day, flowed to waste in the creek. Field recommended an appropriation of $30,000 for reservoirs and machinery to collect and use the wasted water, primarily for the benefit of the Army and Navy Hospital. He called for an increase of water-rent to $40 per tub per year:

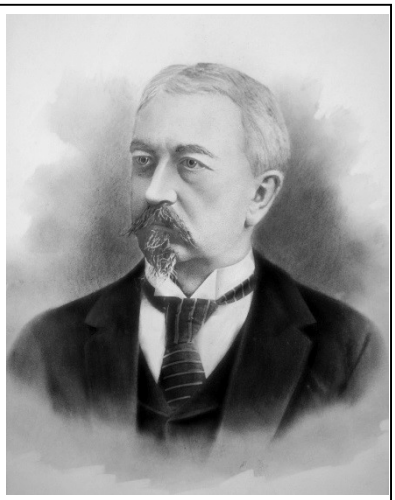

Figure 43. Charles W. Field (National Park Service)

> *"I believe that the lessees of the water privileges can pay that sum and still make a fair profit; and the additional revenue accruing from this*

[166] "Arkansas Hot Springs: One of the World's Unique Sanitariums," *New York Times* 14 May 1887, 2.
[167] Ibid. The writer advocated Interior take full control, pay off the bathhouse owners, and "commence the construction of one grand bathhouse, along the entire reservation front" using a projected $150,000 in annual revenues to make improvements.

source, if used to improve and beautify the grounds, would bring a substantial return to the lessees themselves in the greater number of visitors that would be induced to come and bathe here."[168]

Field was responsible for having the creek arch covered over with dirt and pavement and planting Lombardy trees along the reservation front paralleling Central Avenue. He installed ornamental oak posts along the street linked by heavy chain. Field, deeply imbued with his military training, held that his rule was absolute on Hot Springs Reservation and rebuffed efforts of city and state officials to enforce the rule of law. According to one source, "He bluntly informed them to stay on their own side, that he was the boss over there. However, he received a jolt when the attorney-general of the interior department decided that Arkansas had jurisdiction on the reservation, and the laws of Arkansas applied."[169]

After his first year, Field focused on the Mud Hole—the government free baths. "Its mean appearance contrasts most unfavorably with the private enterprises around it," Field reported and set to work designing a new building.[170] Field's estimate to build a new Government Free Bathhouse came to $6,000 and included larger and better pools and rooms "where that friendless class of unfortunates who are driven to it by disease and poverty may receive humane treatment in their fight for health." In mid-1887, Field inspected all the bathhouses and listed alterations and improvements to be made in the public interest. Most bathhouse owners responded by refitting the structures, upgrading piping to prevent water waste, and agreed that once wooden cooling tanks deteriorated they would be replaced by iron tanks.[171]

Figure 44. Health-seeking travelers crossing Ouachita River on the way to Hot Springs, late 1880s (HSNP 15071, National Park Service)

Congress maintained a keen eye on Hot Springs. In early 1888, the Senate considered a bill to grant a right of way for construction of a railroad through Hot Springs Reservation. It would provide invalid visitors an opportunity to enjoy the scenery and traverse land that otherwise "is entirely without value… and can never be of any value to the United States Government for any other purpose." The bill proposed granting Mountain View Railway Company of Hot Springs a right of way "beginning at such point east of the line of the bath-houses, between the Army and Navy Hospital and the Arlington Hotel as the Secretary of the Interior may approve, thence by the most eligible

[168] *Annual Report for 1886.*
[169] Martin A. Eisele, "History of the Government Supervisors in Hot Springs," *Hot Springs New Era* (April 1930), HOSP 8548-49 Newsclippings Scrapbooks 1924-1945.
[170] *Annual Report for 1886.*
[171] *Annual Report for 1887.*

route to the east line of Hot Springs Mountain, thence westerly down North Mountain and West Mountain to the west line of the reservation." The Superintendent would oversee construction and ensure it did not obstruct or interfere with thermal water, pipes, roads, or paths or go beyond its thirty-foot right of way. The railway was also authorized to construct observatory towers along its route for visitor's pleasure.[172] Congress passed the bill on October 19, 1888, but added two provisions. First, it had to be constructed within three years or authorization would expire. Second, it had to pay the government three percent of gross earnings per annum to be used for park improvements.[173]

Four new bathhouses were built in 1887-88 with Interior-prescribed standards for substantial dimensions and modern conveniences, including being fitted with porcelain tubs. All opened later than promised but paid all monthly water rents as follows:

Bathhouse	**# tubs**	**monthly rent**
Rector	26	$65.00
Little Rector	5	$12.50
Big Iron	40	$100.00
Superior	16	$40.00
Old Hale	21	$52.50
Unnamed	20	$50.00
Independent	21	$52.50
Palace	23	$57.50
Horse Shoe	30	$75.00
Magnesia	30	$75.00
Ozark	22	$55.00
Rammelsberg	18	$45.00
Lamar	40	$100.00
Total[174]	**312**	**$780.00**

Those bathhouses outside reservation boundaries included:

Bathhouse	**# tubs**	**monthly rent**
Avenue	20	$50.00
Rockafellow	20	$50.00
Grand Central	11	$27.50
Hot Springs	12	$30.00
French's	4	$10.00
Sumpter	4	$10.00
Total[175]	**71**	**$177.50**

[172] Senate Bill 2110, "Granting the right of way for the construction of a railroad through the Hot Springs Reservation, State of Arkansas," 23 February 1888, referred to the Committee on Public Lands, 50th Congress, 1st Session, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 10.
[173] Act of Congress, 19 October 1888 (25 Stat. 609).
[174] *Annual Report 1888.* The summary counts "Little Rector" and "unnamed"—both of which were un-built but continued to pay the required rents so as to maintain their leases.
[175] Ibid. The French burned and had not been rebuilt and Sumpter was a "hotel without tubs"—but both continued paying the water-rent to maintain their leases.

Congress increased water rents by joint resolution approved March 26, 1888 from $15 to $30 per tub per annum. Including the congressional-set Arlington Hotel water rent of $1,000, the fiscal year July 1, 1887-June 30, 1888, covered all administrative costs of Hot Springs Reservation from this single funding source.[176]

Figure 45. First Arlington Hotel with creek bridges and mule-drawn trolleys on Central Avenue, mid-1880s (HSNP 15086, National Park Service)

The joint resolution which doubled water rents also authorized the secretary of the Interior to authorize use of thermal water excess to the needs of the hospital and on-reservation bathhouses not to exceed that of three additional off-reservation businesses. Reflecting an era increasingly opposed to corporate monopolies, Congress stipulated

> *"the new bath-houses which may be so erected shall not be owned or controlled by any person, company or corporation, which may be the owner or interested in any other bath-house on or near the Hot Springs Reservation; and if the ownership or control of any such bath-house be transferred to any person or corporation owning or interested in any other bath-house on or near said reservation, the Secretary of the Interior shall, for that cause, deprive said bath-house of the hot-water, and also any other bath-house of the hot-water, and also any other bath-house in which any such person or corporation shall be interested and shall cancel any lease from the United States which any such person or corporation may hold or be interested in."*[177]

Public attention began to be focused on the Hot Springs monopoly when the *Chicago Tribune* printed an expose on the "hot-water trust" blaming the pool of bathhouse owners for stunting the town's progress. The newspaper declared:

> *"Visitors agree that the hot water is a wonderful product of nature and that the town is a miserable product of man. A little Northern enterprise would be a bonanza for the place, which is covered with a hot-water ring, a real-estate ring, inferior hotels, and a horde of drummers for quack doctors. Ridden of its rings and drummers and supplied with good hotels*

[176] Ibid., The rents came to $7,241.40; administrative costs were $7,188.73; leaving a balance of $52.62.
[177] Ibid., Appendix, Joint Public Resolution No. 7, approved March 26, 1888, Washington, D.C., 10.

> *Hot Springs would be the greatest resort in the country, if not the world. Thousands come here now because a desire to be relieved from suffering or to prolong life compels them to, and although they have money and are willing to pay first-class prices for corresponding accommodations, they cannot get them. Thousands of others would like to come remain away because the accommodations are not suitable."*[178]

The reporter asserted that the trust had powerful political allies and continuously lobbied Congress to protect its interests but that the local citizenry was growing weary of its influence and wished to have it abolished. As a result of the charges, the Senate ordered Interior to investigate and recommend means to break-up the hot-water trust.[179]

Figure 46. Mid-1880s, three men holding Ral cups, soaking their feet at Corn Hole Spring (HSNP 15093, National Park Service)

Interior Secretary William F. Vilas ordered Thomas Musick, chief of the patents and miscellaneous division, to report on the ring. Musick found that indeed the "bath house privileges at Hot Springs are in the hands of monopoly" and elaborated on its extent: "A.B. Gaines being interested in seven, E. Hogaboom in six, George H. Buckstaff in six, S.W. Fordyce in three, and George E. Lemon in two. My information is that A. B. Gaines is also interest (one-third) in the Arlington Hotel which will make eight privileges he is interested in out of thirteen."[180]

In March 1888, a petition presented to Secretary Vilas was followed up by a draft Senate bill to cede a strip of land 1650 feet long and from 10 to 121 feet wide in order for Hot Springs to widen Central Avenue. It would, if implemented, take away front lawns, sidewalks, and other landscaping in front of Bathhouse Row. Superintendent Field strongly urged Interior to oppose the effort, stating Central Avenue "is broad enough for many times the population of this place. Its proposed enlargement is of doubtful utility under any conditions" and detract from the "park" environment desired for the Row. Field criticized the map as flawed: "it will be seen that space for a side walk even, will scarcely be left between the bath houses and street; and that in one instance, one corner of the largest bath house will be actually thrown out in the street." Further it would

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[178] "A Hot-Water Combine: The Trust that is Growing Fat at Hot Springs, Ark; A Few Individuals Making Fortunes by the Use of Government Property at the Expense of the People –An Interesting Story of the Powerful Ring that Controls the Baths at the Great Healing Resort—Two United States Senators Involved—Alleged Official Corruption," *Chicago Tribune* 25 March 1888.

[179] Ibid. The newspaper claimed Superintendent Hamblen received his appointment after ring member Congressman George L. Smith paid $800 to the Republican State Central Committee.

[180] Musick to Secretary Vilas, 27 May 1889 and 1888 Memorandum: Ownership of Reservation Bathhouse, Hot Springs, Ark.," RG 79, Box 11, Entry 1. Musick included a copy of the *Chicago Tribune* article as "Exhibit E").

eradicate Alum Spring, "the only and last one accessible to the public, which has great reputation for throat and eye troubles, and is daily resorted to by hundreds of persons." Field continued:

> *"This famous spring is enclosed by dressed granite walls, 15 feet high, built by my predecessor at heavy cost of course, and has been recently further protected and improved by a handsome wooden pavilion built over it. It would be an act of vandalism to destroy or impair the privilege of the almost continuous stream of persons resorting to it for treatment.*
>
> *Again, the line asked for runs through the designated and only possible site, for the Impounding Reservoir for hot water, estimated at 300,000 gallons daily flow. The transfer of this strip to the city, means the abandonment of that site, and the consequent loss to the Government and public, of that amount of hot water.*
>
> *At much labor and expense, the Department has already taken all preliminary measures for utilizing that site, indeed the waste water from the low level springs, is now piped to it, and there empties into the creek, only because there is no storage provided. To complete and perfect the water system, only an appropriation – which has been asked of Congress by the Secretary – is needed to construct the Reservoir and distribute this now useless water to points where it can be utilized."*[181]

The local petition also criticized the post and chain boundary demarcation as "suggestive of a military post in siege" and called it "utterly uncongenial to the soft allurements found usually at a watering place." Field huffed that it was "indispensable to prevent some of these very petitioners from using that area for a wood and wagon yard, and dumping grounds for city garbage." He closed his argument by saying the post and chain fence was but "a cheap imitation… of the enclosures around the little squares at the National Capital."[182] Vilas denied the petition and staunchly opposed the draft legislation.

Catastrophe struck again in Hot Springs—this time a devastating late summer flood. On the night of September 1, 1888, heavy rain fell for three hours and Central Avenue became an "angry river" fifty yards wide, damaging everything in its path. Hotels were inundated with four feet of water and many buildings were detached from their foundations. Five people drowned and damage came to more than $100,000.[183]

Secretary Vilas received another petition in early 1889, this one from newly formed Hot Springs Water Company which had erected the first municipal water works plant with machinery and mains to supply water for fire-fighting, drinking and sanitary purposes. The company and its stockholders objected to thermal water being used for purposes other than "drinking, bathing or medicinal purposes" and asked Secretary Vilas

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[181] Superintendent Field to Secretary Vilas, letter, 30 March 1888, RG 79, Box 10, Entry 1. The draft Senate Bill was No. 2235.
[182] Ibid.
[183] "Death in a Flood: Life and Property Destroyed by Water in Hot Springs," *New York Times* 2 September 1888, 1.

to end such practices. These were identified as "water closet purposes" in six bathhouses, one hotel, and Army and Navy Hospital including residence of the surgeon in charge. The petition charged:

> *"Whereby the United States becomes a competitor with your petitioner, and at the same time the Interior Department collects no revenue further than the regular amount charged per tub for medicinal purposes, Your petitioner respectfully submits that the use of hot water ... for cooking or sanitary purposes is in direct violation of the privileges granted to them by the United States under existing laws, and places such use, whether surreptitious or open, beyond regulation of your Department when permitted for other than medicinal purposes."*[184]

Figure 47. Bathhouse Row, Arsenic Spring pavilion to south end of Arlington Hotel, 1889 (HSNP 6725, Courtesy of the Kenna Collection, West Virginia State Archives)

"Petition fever" seemed to grip Hot Springs in the late 1880s, particularly whenever Hot Springs Reservation superintendents opposed local initiatives. A citizens and visitors petition, sent to newly-appointed Secretary of Interior Henry M. Teller in 1889, complained that "Without warning, and in total disregard of right, justice and an implied contract, your predecessor in office issued an order declaring that no bath house should charge more than thirty cents per bath, when it is a well known fact that no such accommodations can be secured anywhere in the world for less than twice the sum, if at all." The petitioners further complained that there seemed to be no distinction between accommodations for rich and poor: "your petitioners earnestly ask that you remove objectionable restriction, which we deem prejudicial to the success of this resort, or at best to grade the houses so that rich and poor can obtain such accommodations as their means will permit. They offered a suggested socio-economic "grading" system as follows:

New Rector bath house	75 cents per bath
Palace bath house	75 cents per bath
Rammelsberg bath house	50 cents per bath
Old Hale bath house	50 cents per bath
Big Iron bath house	50 cents per bath

[184] A. B. Gaines, President, Hot Springs Water Company, petition letter to Secretary Vilas, 23 January 1889, RG 79, Box 11, Entry 1.

Ozark bath house	40 cents per bath
Independent bath house	40 cents per bath
Arlington bath house	40 cents per bath
Avenue bath house	40 cents per bath
Rockafellow bath house	25 cents per bath
French's bath house	25 cents per bath
Hot Springs bath house	15 cents per bath
Grand Central bath house	15 cents per bath[185]

Lobbying continued by a local population weary of the pool system of the bathhouse trust. The *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* reported that "Although the Government limits the price of baths, it is claimed that the bath houses, by pooling, keep prices higher than if there was unrestricted competition. The war of prices between the pool houses and the few anti-pool establishments continues. Some of the best houses have reduced the price of baths to 15 cents each."[186]

Figure 48. Big Iron Bathhouse, 1889 (HSNP 6726, Courtesy of the Kenna Collection, West Virginia State Archives)

[185] "*Petition to Hon. Henry M. Teller, Secretary of the Interior, Washington, D.C.* no date (1889), RG 79, Box 7, Entry 1.
[186] "The Bath Pool at Hot Springs," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* 23 July 1889, clipping forwarded by Superintendent Frank W. Thompson to Secretary Teller, 24 July 1889, RG 79, Box 11, Entry 1.

CHAPTER FOUR

Hot Springs Monopoly, Drumming, and Park Improvements

SUPERINTENDENT THOMPSON CONFRONTS THE BATHHOUSE POOL

Charles W. Field departed in mid-June 1889, and was replaced by Frank M. Thompson. Thompson, charged by Interior to confront the growing strength of the Bathhouse Pool, reached out to Hot Springs business interests. He circulated a letter asking specific questions about the pool. Thompson recognized that A.B. Gaines sought to preserve the pooling association. In an August 1889 letter to Superintendent Thompson, Gaines stated that there were nine members of the Bath House Association (Lamar, Rammelsberg, Ozark, Magnesia, Horse Shoe, Palace, The Independent, Old Hale, and Big Iron) out of 19 receiving water privileges—hardly a monopoly. It provided a great benefit to the government and public because it formed principally to combat "drumming, which was carried on by men without decency or conscience, and who practiced every character of deception, misrepresentation and fraud to secure their victims, who, when thus secured were then taken to a doctor, bath house and drug store, and sold at each place like cattle for so much per head."

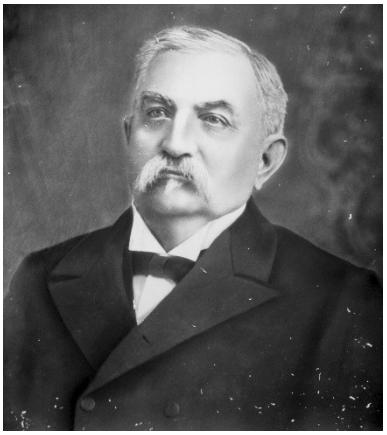

Figure 49. Frank W. Thompson (National Park Service)

Gaines further argued: "We think the Association has protected and benefited the public by opposing 'drumming,' by employing only persons of good character as managers of their houses, who will not impose nor deceive their patrons, and by grading prices to meet the need of all, without going in any case, to the maximum rate allowed by the Department." Lowering prices to combat drumming-supported businesses benefited the public and served to punish those "pestiferous, business destroying parasites who would fasten themselves upon every interest of the town."[187]

In response to the same inquiry, James L. Barns provided an opposite point of view: "The pool originated among the owners of the several bath houses…, the object of which was to control the Hot Water and Privileges on the Reservation." Barns stated the

[187] A. B. Gaines to Superintendent Thompson, letter, 24 August 1889, RG 79, Box 11, Entry 1.

pool controlled all but two bathhouses within Hot Springs Reservation and that "the public are not in the least protected or benefited by the pool; under their system the houses are not kept in compliance with sanitary laws and are managed by people without experience, from the fact that their labor is cheap." The current cut in bath prices was initiated by the pool in order to force outside bathhouses.[188]

Robert Proctor, owner of The Superior, a bathhouse that never joined the Bathhouse Association, informed Thompson that it was "not in any way… oppressed by it while reasonable rates were adhered to." It could not join because it always closed on Sundays and could not agree upon any equitable division of profits. Proctor believed that if all bathhouses followed association rules, the "useless expense of employing drummers" would be obviated. Because drumming continued to proliferate, the association launched a price reduction to break-up drumming. For instance, he claimed that Central Bath House paid one dollar per customer brought in by drummers: "This bath house is old, worn out, and not fit to be run as a bath house; but by the means employed, was drawing largely from the bath houses on the Reservation, where large amounts of money had been spent to erect suitable buildings and make them adapted to the purposes of bathing." He added, "It is unjust to these interests to allow such competition, and rates should not be furnished to bath houses off the Reservation to needlessly destroy those that have been built under the restrictions and rules of the Interior Department on the Reservation." He concluded, "If the Government would strictly adhere to its original purpose in controlling the hot water, and not allow any bath house off the Reservation, and fix the rates for those on, and allow only a sufficient number to be erected to accommodate the demands of the public, all interests would be greatly subserved [sic] thereby." The Superior cut rates in order to protect itself and prevent its patrons from leaving to pursue lower rates elsewhere. Those rates, he wrote, "are below a profitable business."[189]

The pool, fearing government sanctions, capitalized its interests and incorporated under the name "Arkansas Improvement Company." Valuations were set as follows:

Lamar	$40,000
Rammelsberg	$30,000
Ozark	$32,000
Palace	$35,000
Magnesia	$32,000
Horse Shoe	$32,000
The Independent	$26,000
Old Hale	$27,500
Rector	$50,000
Total:	**$304,500**

[188] Ibid., James L. Barns to Superintendent Thompson, letter, 18 August 1889.
[189] Ibid., Robert Proctor to Superintendent Thompson, letter, 26 August 1889. May 1, 1889 rates at The Superior were $7.00/21 bath tickets; $3.50/10 bath tickets; $1.75/5 bath tickets; and 40 cents/1 bath ticket. On August 23, 1889, the rates dropped to: $4.00/21 bath tickets; $2.00/10 bath tickets; $1.00/5 bath tickets; and 25 cents/1 bath ticket.

Excluding the Rector, gross earnings for 1889 came to $45,395, and considering thirty percent for expenses, the net profit came to $31,777. When Thomas Musick's report to Interior became public, the pool dropped the scheme but concocted a new one as reported in a confidential memorandum:

> *"The Pool has now concluded… it will allow the Department to dispose of one of the sites to new parties on condition that the Pool shall select the new Parties. They will all be here in force on the 10th with all their influence—they will have made a new shuffle which they will ask to have approved, if the Department shall be anywise stubborn, they will demand delay in the hopes that the Secretary will resign or die, or at least that they can get help from Congress."*[190]

As Interior continued to watch the Pool, Congress appropriated $31,000 in October 1888 to construct a 100 by 102-foot pump station at the corner of Central and Reserve avenues. A Navy engineer assessed the local need as follows: "A line of pipes emptying into the 12 in. main just below The Independent Bath House will take in nearly all the high springs. The excess from the Mud Hole will flow in the main and excess from the Army and Navy Spring into the Reservoir…. The daily bathing lasts about nine hours," he wrote. "The reservoir is designed to hold 15 hours flow and the pumps to handle the whole 24 hours flow in nine hours work. A space pump will be ready for contingencies." Once again, the call went out for metering water usage. The engineer recommended:

> *"There ought to be some legislation looking to a more equable assessment of water rates. A great deal of water is wasted in ordinary baths for which the Government gets so much per tub annually as well as in vapor baths for which it gets nothing. There should be meters placed in all the circuits and charges made for the actual volume of water used."*[191]

In the fall of 1888, the front lawns of Bathhouse Row between the Arlington Hotel and Reserve Avenue, an area roughly two acres in size, was seeded with grass and planted with shade trees. The area soon became known as Bath House Park. Superintendent Thompson reported, "It is admirably located for a small park, in fact, it is the only piece of ground in 'the valley' owned by the Government that is at all suited for such a purpose." He continued:

> *"The young trees—about 300 in number—transplanted and the grass seeded last fall and winter, are doing fairly well, owing to seasonable rains to this date. But as considerable of the area is*

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[190] No author, "Memorandum: Hot Springs Affairs," no date (circa 1890), RG 79, Box 12, Entry 1. See also Superintendent Thompson to Secretary, letter, 19 March 1890: He reported "the Arkansas Improvement Company is, in fact and reality, a 'Bath House Trust,' organized to supersede and surpass the old 'Bath House Pool' or 'Association.'"

[191] Passed Asst. Engineer, U.S. Navy, G. W. Baird, report, 3 August 1889, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 14. He also recommended repairs and improvements to the roadway in back of Bathhouse Row.

immediately over the arched creek, the arch being covered with earth to the depth of 2 or 3 feet, and all of the filling being principally of clay and gravel from excavations near by, there is, in my opinion, great danger of losing the lawn and very many if not all of the young shade trees when the dry, hot weather of the summer and fall comes on, unless some provision is made for water and for liberal sprinkling during the hot, dry season. I am impressed with the importance of preserving and maintaining this small park. But without a supply of water for the purposes indicated, the work and money already expended on the grounds mentioned will be almost if not entirely lost, and the Government will own a barren, dusty plot of ground along the principal street of this city where there ought to be a green, shady, and attractive park, a convenient place for out-of-door rest for the invalids who come here for treatment. I trust that this subject will receive early and favorable consideration."[192]

The superintendent also pointed out that revenues were exceeding expenses to the annual amount of $6,121.10, funds which could be designated for such a purpose. Thompson reiterated the recommendations of his predecessors that the reservation park be beautified by clearing underbrush, and lying out and constructing walks and drives. He implored:

"Many thousands of people visit this marvelous valley each year, and the number is constantly increasing as the years come and go. Each of the numerous wonderful cures adds additional fame to the mystic powers given to those waters by agencies unknown to man…. These springs are no longer of local concern and reputation. Their name and fame have become national and world-wide. The afflicted from the lakes and the seas and from sunny climes and distant shores come here to be made whole, and are not disappointed. Capital and skill from many States have been attracted here to provide for the comfort and necessities of the thousands of visitors. Private capital and enterprise have done and are doing much in that direction. Spacious and well-appointed hotels and bath-houses are being erected. Indeed, this city seems to have been born again.

"It would then, appear proper and reasonable for the Government to keep pace with this grand onward march. Congress has reserved the four mountains overlooking this 'valley of vapors' from sale, and dedicated them to public use as parks, where the visitor may have quiet and rest and invigorating atmosphere and enjoy scenery that is charming, sublime, and beautiful. Private capital is doing much more in this direction than the Government. But it is hoped that the Government will at least keep pace with private enterprise.

"I therefore respectfully and earnestly recommend that an appropriation of not less than $10,000 be made by Congress, to be expended in clearing the underbrush and otherwise beautifying Hot

[192] *Annual Report 1889*.

> *Springs Mountain and in laying out and building walks and drives around and over the mountains constituting the permanent reservation."*[193]

Thompson reiterated his request for appropriations the following year. Lacking money and manpower, he observed that he was largely powerless to protect and preserve the springs: "Under the present system of control… the superintendent does not and can not preserve and control all of the springs. Nor can he regulate and control the use and distribution of the hot water." He reported some of the springs were controlled by a few individuals due to a poor system of plumbing and distribution, and the fact that New Rector, Big Iron, Old Hale, The Independent, Horse Shoe, Magnesia and Arlington Hotel were literally built atop springs. He recommended that springs be reserved from lease and occupancy henceforth and pointed out that blasting and excavations had already caused some springs to cease flowing in their original alignment or with lowered output. In the short-term, leases should be denied to Big Iron, Hale and The Independent and those bathhouses be condemned and demolished: "The Government is not under any obligation to lease these particular sites for any purpose. The leasing of them for bath-house purposes is not a public necessity. The Government owns other ground suitable for bath-house sites. But even if it did not, the first and most important duty is to preserve the springs."[194]

Thompson firmly asserted that regulations were needed to give teeth to the orders and prohibitions of Interior, writing "the superintendent is powerless and without remedy when a compliance therewith does not suit the pleasure and convenience of the transgressor. The statutes provide no penalty for this class of violations." He advocated strongly worded leases which bound the lessees to strict government adherence.[195] As for multiple ownerships, Thompson pointed to the Act of 1878 and its provision to prevent monopoly by preventing a bathhouse or hotel from having more than 40 tubs. Nearly all lease agreements had the provision that interests could not be assigned or transferred without approval in writing of the secretary yet this was "deliberately and repeatedly" violated, particularly by the Pool. Thompson declared, "I believe that this combination is in conflict with the letter and spirit of the law, and that it should not be tolerated."[196]

Secretary Vilas sent Thomas Musick, chief of patents and miscellaneous division, back to Hot Springs in late 1889 for a complete accounting which was published in January 1890. Musick determined that Big Iron should be condemned and removed and repairs were required at Old Hale, The Independent, Palace, Rammelsberg, Rockafellow, while Grand Central and the deteriorated superintendent's office should be rebuilt. He advocated that all provisions of leases be strictly enforced and terms extended to 10 or 20 years and future bathhouses should be built from brick with either concrete or marble flooring—with the notable exception of a potential African-American bathhouse

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[193] Ibid.

[194] *Annual Report 1890.* The superintendent also advocated condemning and removing all wooden cooling tanks because they were unsightly and wasted too much water. In *Annual Report 1891*, Thompson reported "there are one or more hot-water springs under the Palace and Ozark bath houses" and "early maps show two hot-water springs on and near the Superior bath-house site."

[195] Ibid.

[196] Ibid.

identified to be built separate from bathhouse row on Fountain Street. To eradicate the Pool, Musick recommended legislation specifically prohibiting it and, until multiple ownerships dissolved, none of the present leases be renewed.[197]

Musick observed that ground rents were woefully low compared to businesses across Central Avenue. He estimated leases were worth $30,000 to $40,000 and should yield $1,500 to $3,000 a year, not the measly $600 water rent on 40 tubs. He believed the remedy rested with Congress and recommended legislation be drafted. To disabuse lessees that their leases were in perpetuity, Musick believed Interior should demand surrender upon lease expiration and assume possession of bathhouses. If the properties were out-dated or deteriorated, Interior should provide specifications and plans for new construction, offer the ground lease with water privileges, and up to a 20-year lease to whoever was the highest bidder. Leases should be specific in regard to rules and regulations and prohibit monopoly and multiple ownerships. Had all of Musick's recommendations been enacted, there would have been increased revenue, improved public facilities, and competition beyond the small group of existing bathhouse interests.

Musick condemned the Pool's treatment of attendants, called "rubbers," who were largely African American. In September 1889, the association announced bathhouse managers would collect attendants' fees and pay them wages at the rate of $10 per week. In disgust, Musick reported: "In accordance with this they dismissed about half the attendants, put double work on the others, collected their regular fees, paid them a stated stipend, and retained the balance." Over the following two months, the unfair practice resulted in a demoralized workforce and saw upset patrons going elsewhere. Normal practices resumed except drumming became rampant; rubbers were expected to pay the drummer one dollar out of their three dollar weekly fees. "In addition to this," Musick fumed,

> *"these houses require the attendants to furnish all the soap, towels, brooms, mops, buckets, thermometers, sand-glasses, etc., and handle and store all fuel…. Another remarkable fact is that the very reason always assigned by the pool for its existence is its efficacy in breaking up drumming. But in view of the history of the institution it would seem that it regards drumming as an evil only when the pool has to pay for it, but a good when the attendant can be compelled to bear the burden."*

Should a patron decide to change bathhouses after one week, he or she was able to demand a refund of attendant fees and the unfortunate employee got nothing for the week's labor.[198]

Social segregation for African Americans (euphemistically termed "Coloreds" at the time) increased in 1890 when Hot Springs featured its first "Colored Bath House." The Independent Bath House owners re-opened the establishment on March 1 "for the

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[197]Thomas H. Musick, *Investigation of Hot Springs Affairs: Report to the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1890).
[198] Ibid.

use and accommodation exclusively of Colored Persons." The owners reasoned that it would give African Americans "an opportunity to Bathe at any and all hours of the Day."[199]

Congress increased Interior's authority to enter into and enforce thermal water leases by passing legislation on March 3, 1891. The draft bill originated in Interior and followed some of Thomas Musick's recommendations. Section 1 authorized the Secretary to lease bathhouses and bathhouse sites on the permanent reservation for 20-year periods. Sections 2 and 3 set annual tub rentals at $30 (payable in advance on a quarterly basis) and standardized the rate for both on and off the permanent reservation. Section 4 authorized providing surplus hot water to bathhouses, hotels, and families off the permanent reservation—at their expense at a rate fixed by the Secretary with terms and amounts specified in leases re-examined at five-year intervals. Frank Thompson recommended no such permits be granted because the thermal water was public, not private, property and should not be permitted in private residences. Section 5 addressed the Arlington Hotel whose 10-year lease dating to 1878 had long expired. The secretary was authorized to enter into a 20-year lease with annual rent of $2,500 for the first five years and re-examined thereafter for the same or higher rate.

Section 6 of the act provided Interior with vastly increased power at Hot Springs Reservation authorizing the secretary to regulate leases of bathhouses, bathhouse privileges, and hotel rights on the permanent reservation as well as supplying hot water to external sources. Congress then focused on the issue of waste with the secretary given full power to make rules and regulations for the use of hot water and prevent its waste, including promulgating regulations in the public interest and imposing penalties for violations. The superintendent had authority to examine and inspect at any time the manner of water use for proper quantity and avoiding waste. In addition, he could fix reasonable maximum charges for all baths or bathing privileges, services rendered to bathers by providers, and to fix maximum reasonable charges for Arlington Hotel guests. Hotels were granted explicit authority to operate bathhouses as part of their operations. Lessees of bathhouses were prohibited from ownership or control of other bathhouses and hot-water privileges and operations could not be re-assigned or transferred without the secretary's approval. It also gave him authority to investigate if persons had invested in more than one bathhouse. All buildings erected on the permanent reservation were required to be submitted on plans requiring the secretary's approval prior to construction (U.S.C. Title 16, Sec. 363). Congress consented to the State of Arkansas' ability to tax personal property of all structures and other property in private ownership on the permanent reservation. The secretary was authorized to collect hot water but collection where it was necessary for its proper distribution—not merely by gravity alone (U.S.C. Title 16, Sec. 366). Finally, Interior could sell all unsold government lots not part of the permanent reservation.[200]

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[199] G. L. Latta and A. B. Gaines to Secretary Vilas, letter, 17 March 1890, RG 79, Box 12, Entry 1.

[200] Act of Congress, 3 March 1891 (26 Stat. 842). The provision authorizing collection of thermal water, Superintendent Thompson observed, would be problematic. With construction of piping, reservoir, and pumping station, the superintendent opined "practically prohibits the operation of the plant." See *Annual Report 1891*.

Recognizing growing public opposition and decreased sympathy in Congress, the Pool or Bath House Association dissolved itself on January 1, 1891. While Thompson observed, "It is hoped that the lessees of bathhouse sites and hot-water privileges will find it to their interest to avoid these objectionable combinations and complications in the future," he noted "this form of combination and monopoly has not been abolished." The multiple-ownerships were, however, in the process of dividing and separating their interests subject to Interior's approval and he credited the March 3, 1891, act for accelerating this new reality.

Empowered by the new-found congressional interest and authority granted to him, Interior Secretary John W. Noble ordered seizure of the closed Superior Bathhouse on February 15, 1890. A week later, Thompson re-opened it to the public and operated it through October 25 at a profit. Similarly, the superintendent shut-off water from the Rammelsberg on July 1, 1891, "for noncompliance with the rules and regulations of the Department, and the house closed subject to the orders of the Secretary of the Interior." The third seizure occurred on June 12, 1891, when Thompson assumed control of the "Smithmeyer Site," under lease since 1883 but with no bathhouse erected and the water-rent had not been paid since late 1890. Clearly, Department of the Interior now had the upper hand at Hot Springs.[201]

Figure 50. Superior Bathhouse, 1889 (HSNP 6727, Courtesy of the Kenna Collection, West Virginia State Archives)

FIGHTING THE DRUMMING EVIL

The practice of dichotomy, or fee-splitting, has deep roots in medicine. As various specializations emerged, fee-splitting became more prevalent as physicians made recommendations to steer patients to certain surgeons or specialists. Unethical physicians would give rebates to other doctors, patients, or social elites for sending wealthy patients to their practice. Even hospitals engaged in such fee-splitting to fill their beds. At Hot Springs, the "drumming evil" flourished as doctors, bathhouses, druggists, hotels and boarding houses employed professional drummers to increase patronage. Historian Fred Cron wrote:

> *The invalids were usually complete strangers to Hot Springs. They knew nothing of the accommodations of the various hotels or the*

[201] Ibid.

qualifications of the many resident physicians. It was natural for them to inquire of local residents for the best place to stay and the name of a competent doctor. So, there grew up in the town a class of professional furnishers of such information. These were the 'drummers' whose activities evolved from helpful volunteering of information into a vicious traffic in which the sick person became a commodity to be sold to the highest bidder. His welfare was as completely ignored as if he had been a hog or a steer. Drumming eventually became so well established and thoroughly organized as to levy tribute on the entire resort, and so firmly entrenched politically as to defy uprooting. At one time the medical profession was so dominated by a ring of drumming doctors and their drummers that a reputable physician could hardly make a living.[202]

Figure 51. Ozark Bathhouse, 1889 (HSNP 6730, Courtesy of the Kenna Collection, West Virginia State

After the Civil War, as services in Hot Springs expanded to meet increased demand and competition flourished, bands of mounted solicitors rode out to greet incoming coaches and hacks or rode the train from Malvern and handed out free promotional business cards and flyers of various service providers. While this practice was not seen at first as illegal or immoral, it became so when drummers began steering visitors to doctors and their associated druggists, boarding houses, hotels, and bathhouses. Initiated in the early 1870s, the use of doctor drummers became universal. Cron observed:

"In addition to the employment of solicitors, two other forms of drumming appeared. One was the practice of doctor-financed construction of boarding houses, with the stipulation that the proprietor send the doctor all guests for treatment. The other was the hotel subsidy, under which, by secret contract, a doctor agreed to pay the hotel a prescribed sum at regular intervals. In return, every guest in need of medical care was referred to the doctor, who was known henceforth as the 'house doctor.'"

But the practice grew even more insidious:

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[202] Fred Cron, "Drumming in Hot Springs," vol. 32 *The Record* (Hot Springs: Garland County Historical Society, 1991) 37.

Figure 52. South end of Ozark Bathhouse, and Rammelsberg Bathhouse, 1889 (HSNP 6731, Courtesy of the Kenna Collection, West Virginia State Archives)

"The subsidized hotel or the doctor usually employed an 'inside man' to assist in winning the guests over to the 'house doctor.' This individual, although without visible means of support, always had a pleasant room in the house, dressed well, and was an interesting talker with a pleasant personality. According to his own statements, he had had every disease known to medicine, but had survived, thanks to the superlative skill of 'Doctor X.' who was, incidentally, the 'house doctor.' Should it happen that the guest had come recommended to some other doctor by his physician back home, the 'inside man' by shameless misrepresentation, undermined the guest's confidence in this doctor."[203]

Predatory drummers boarded trains in Little Rock and Malvern, even as far away as St. Louis and Memphis. Gaining the confidence of incoming visitors, the drummer steered them to his particular hotel where the 'inside man' completed the task of delivering the "suckers" to the drumming doctor with help from the proprietor. Rival drummers were omnipresent attempting to steer the same "suckers" their way and the competition ended once visitors registered at the drummer's hotel or boarding house. According to Cron, "The inevitable result was that the drummers moved from a position of being mere employees of the doctors into one from which they were able to dictate policy to the whole medical profession of Hot Springs."[204]

Figure 53. Hale Bathhouse with Hale/Maurice Spring on right, 1889 (HSNP 6728, Courtesy of the Kenna Collection, West Virginia State Archives)

[203] Ibid., 38.
[204] Ibid., 39.

The drumming evil spread to all facets of Hot Springs business and trade, including the bathhouses. Owners formed the "Pool" ostensibly to combat drumming, but that merely transferred the public face of drumming to their attendants. Nevertheless, bathhouses remained in the drumming business as they demanded a cut on the price of bathing supplies from druggists in exchange for steering customers their way. Druggists were also complicit in the drumming evil. Some leased rooms to doctors above their stores at cut-rate rent in order to benefit from filling all the doctor's prescriptions. In turn, they had to split profits with drummers for bathing outfits and other supplies sold to invalids.[205]

Figure 54. Horseshoe-Magnesia bathhouses, 1889 (HSNP 6729, Courtesy of Kenna Collection, West Virginia State Archives)

Figure 55. Lamar Bathhouse, 1889 (HSNP 6732, Courtesy of the Kenna Collection, West Virginia State Archives)

The city attempted to crack down on drumming using various means. The city council declared drumming a misdemeanor with a $100 per annum fine.[206] In 1883, the ordinance was amended so that drummers had to wear a tin or brass badge not less than two and half inches in diameter on their coat lapels. The aim was to destroy the individual drummer's credibility but the ordinance proved impossible to enforce. Hot Springs City Council directed the chief of police to print and distribute hand bills declaring: "Visitors Beware! Of Ropers, Steerers, Doctors and Hotel Drummers on trains at Depots, on the streets and elsewhere; Pay no money in advance until satisfied as to the responsibility of parties." The police chief was charged with placing a "policeman on each in-coming train at the lower depot whose duty it shall be to distribute said hand bills among the passengers."[207] Finally, the city mandated all drummers be licensed and required they make no fraudulent statements or any other infraction on a long list of offenses. Licensing fees—charged quarterly at $25 for soliciting for hotel, boarding and bath houses, or drug store and a separate $25 license

[205] Ibid., 41.

[206] *Ordinance*, Hot Springs City Council, 13 June 1883, Box 65, Folder City Council Records Minutes, 1878-1890, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. The same ordinance outlawed opium dens, imposed penalties on opium smokers, closed Wollmer's Shooting Gallery as a nuisance, made running at large of horses illegal, and mandated confiscation of concealed contraband weapons within city limits.

[207] Ibid., Ordinance, Hot Springs City Council, 2 November 1883,

quarterly fee for doctors, along with fines for infractions—added to the city's coffers but did not curtail drumming.[208] Arkansas law specified that doctors found guilty of using or employing drummers would forfeit their license to practice in the state.[209]

Public emotion against the drumming evil sometimes resulted in violence. An extreme case came in 1896 when the mayor, enraged by a drummer he had already fined for drumming without a badge, met the culprit on the street. The drummer demanded his fine be revoked and a fight ensued. The mayor took his penknife and severed his foe's jugular vein. A *New York Times* editorial writer, noting that the public praised his actions, questioned whether or not local authorities would hold an inquest. The publicity made Hot Springs appear to be a violent and uncivilized place.[210]

Figure 56. Central Avenue view from North Mountain in the 1890s looking south with Arlington Hotel and Bathhouse Row on Hot Springs Reservation on left (HSNP 1310, National Park Service)

In the early 20th century, Interior regulations specified patients of a known drumming doctor or resident of a hotel or boarding house employing drummers would not be allowed to bathe in thermal water. Rules of the new Federal Medical Board in 1904 dictated that owners or managers of bathhouses who employed or associated with drummers would lose their right to operate. Railroads were enlisted and government employees boarded trains to pass out leaflets and announce in each passenger car against the practice. The Business Men's League, forerunner of the chamber of commerce, fought diligently against the evil and gradually over time it became extinct.[211]

HOT SPRINGS DEVELOPMENT IN THE 1890S

In October and November 1890, Arkansas State Geologist John C. Branner conducted a chemical analysis and temperature determinations of Hot Springs water and published the results in July 1891. Branner determined no significant difference in the

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[208] *Ordinance*, "Licensing and Regulating Drumming to Hotels, Bath Houses, Boarding Houses, Drug Stores and Doctors in the City of Hot Springs, and Repealing all Ordinances in Conflict With This Ordinance," 12 October 1892, published in *The Hot Springs Medical Journal* (1892), 235-37, Library Vertical File "Drumming System Ordinance in Hot Springs," HSNP Library.

[209] "Hot Springs Medical Matters," editorial, *The Hot Springs Medical Journal* 15 November 1892,

[210] "The Decline of Chivalry," *New York Times editorial,* 26 May 1896, 4.

[211] Mary D. Hudgins, "The Drumming Evil," *The Record* (Hot Springs: Garland County Historical Society): 91-92, 94-95, undated article in Library Vertical File, folder "Drumming Evil 1892 Ordinance," HSNP Library. Hudgins wrote: "'The drumming evil' had been so much a part of Hot Springs life that citizens even today scarcely dare recommend a single hotel or physician. Invariably, on being asked to recommend a doctor or hostelry they made and even make a practice of naming several alternatives, in fear of being considered drummers."

chemical compositions of seven thermal springs tested: "On average, the seven spring waters contain 12.94 grains of material in solution to the gallon. Of this material nearly 60 per cent is carbonate of lime, over 21 per cent is silica, 9 per cent is carbonate of magnesia, while the remainder is chiefly chloride of sodium (common salt), sulphate of soda (Glauber's-salt) and sulphate of potash."[212]

February 23, 1891 saw the grand opening of the Government Free Bathhouse. The brick structure had dressing rooms and bathing compartments for both sexes, but had no tubs as people still bathed collectively in large sunken masonry pools—men's measured 26 by 26.5 feet and women's stood at 15 by 12.5 feet. Each pool was subdivided by a brick partition so that one could be emptied and refilled while the other was in use. Interior plaster walls and ceilings featured wainscoting of native yellow pine. The heating system in the basement was operated with thermal-powered steam. The second story served as a primary residence for the manager and his family. Public comment proved extremely favorable and reflected positively on government operations. The year also saw completion of the new reservoirs, pumps, and piping which the superintendent assumed control of on June 9 and construction began on the superintendent's new office and residence. The new buildings were 55 feet from Fountain Street and slightly east of the old fenced-off office building.[213]

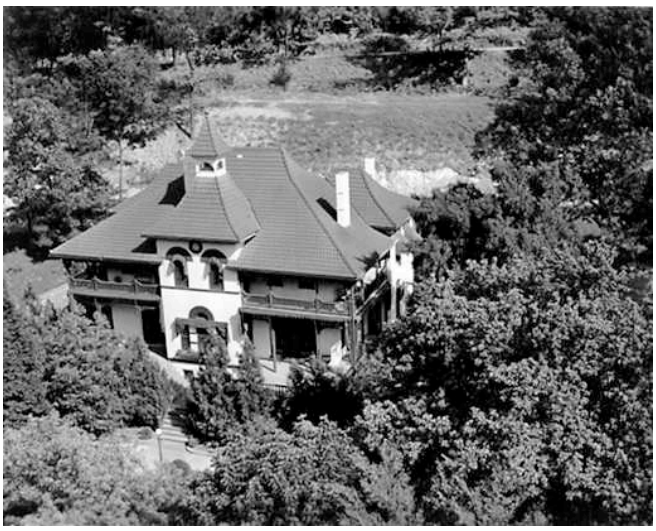

Figure 57. Built in 1893 for the superintendent, this house (1938 view) was later occupied by the chief clerk, and then by the assistant superintendent. It was demolished in 1958-59. (Historic Photograph Collection, Harpers Ferry Center, National Park Service)

Bath House Park began to sparkle in 1891. Thompson reported that "it is fairly well sodded with clover and grasses, maturing into a beautiful and inviting lawn. The many young shade trees on it are in good condition, and in a very few years will afford ample shade." The new reservoir impoundment system also featured a basin for irrigation purposes, an added feature approved by Interior to keep Bath House Park thriving. Its piping rounded the north side of Arlington Hotel and stretched to the superintendent's new office and residence as well as along Bathhouse Row. Thompson recommended completion of landscaping in the area:

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[212] *Annual Report for 1891*.

[213] Stacey S. Eley, "A Look at the Origins and Challenges of the Government Free Bath House, 1878-1922," 38 *The Record* (Hot Springs, Ark.: Garland County Historical Society, 1997): 97

> *"I respectfully recommend that the present walk through the center of the park be abandoned, that the surface of the ground be brought to the established grade of Central avenue, that suitable brick or concrete walks be put down from the main entrance to each bath house out to the east side of said avenue, and that the grounds between said walks be subdivided into lawns and grass plots and meandering walks.*
>
> *"I also respectfully recommend that an appropriation be made for the purpose of putting down a concrete sidewalk on the south side of Fountain street, the east side of Central avenue, and the north side of Reserve avenue, adjoining the reservation front, from the northeast corner of the yard of the superintendent's office south and east to the southwest corner of the grounds set apart for the use of the Army and Navy General Hospital on Reserve avenue. The distance is about 2,500 feet. The total cost is estimated at $7,000. The ordinances of this city require property owners to bear the expense of putting down sidewalks in front of their property."*[214]

Thompson again advocated Interior make improvements to the assorted mountain parks for the benefit of health-seeking visitors: "It would be a real blessing to the invalids who come here for the benefit of these waters if these splendid park sites were improved and made accessible. They need the invigorating atmosphere, and the quiet and rest which may be found on these mountains." Thompson continued the pitch, stating: "The scenery is charming, sublime, and beautiful. It would seem that nature had designed them for restful resorts for those who visit the nation's sanitarium. It is sincerely hoped that Congress may be induced to make a liberal appropriation for the improvement of these national parks."

Figure 58. A crowd awaits the opening of Hale Bathhouse, 1892 (HSNP 10524, National Park Service)

Now that the Hot Springs of Arkansas was a paying proposition as a national park and not a drain on the nation's budget, Congress became more inclined to listen to development plans. Un-appropriated revenues in the permanent reservation's U.S. Treasury account totaled more

[214] *Annual Report for 1891.* Thompson added: "This small park is in the heart of the city, is accessible to visitors and invalids, and should receive special care and attention."

than $18,570 in 1891 with more revenue added each year. Recognizing the changing political climate and an appropriation for a mere $5,000, Thompson advocated basic improvements to open Hot Springs Reservation to the public. A fundamental need for walks and roads, he argued, constituted "a public duty and necessity." With federal control in place for 15 years, it was time to embark on more improvements. Thompson observed:

> *"Yet, with all of this valuable and important interest, and in the face of the implied obligation to protect and improve this property, not one foot of sidewalk has been put down nor one foot of walk or road up to and about the hot-water springs has been built. The Government owns 1,636 feet of ground fronting on Central Avenue in the heart of the city, but not one foot of sidewalk has been built there."*

Additional funding upward to $50,000 was required, Thompson asserted, because "the construction of walks and roads up to and around the springs, and on the western slope of Hot Springs Mountain, and over other portions of the mountain areas, will be expensive. The ground is rough and rocky and the grades heavy."

In addition, Thompson advocated reserving a pool of cool water and a series of thermal drinking fountains for the public along Bathhouse Row. He observed that a large tract of land reserved along Whittington Avenue (the future Whittington Park) featured numerous springs along Gum Springs Creek which flowed into Hot Springs Creek at Park and Whittington Avenues. This "abundant and constant supply of water" could be collected in a reservoir near the western boundary and piped to Bath House Park for use in five or six cool-water fountains. Thompson declared that "there is not a suitable and respectable hot water drinking fountain on the permanent reservation. There ought to be 6 or 8 handsome modern fountains put up in Bath House Park for public use. They could be fed from the hot water springs on the mountain side." He estimated the appropriation should be $11,000.[215]

Thompson reported to the department that bathhouse owners were delaying all necessary repairs until new leases could be prepared. For example, the New Rector was so deteriorated that the superintendent recommended it be "condemned and ordered demolished and removed… and the lessees required to construct such a bathhouse as is contemplated and required by law." Visitors expected better accommodations and supported government efforts to secure them. Owners were not making repairs but superficially appeared willing to comply with government requests:

> *"Ask one of them what improvements are contemplated and he will replay, in almost every instance, 'whatever is required of me, I want the Secretary and Superintendent satisfied.' But they… are not doing anything…. The fact remains that all of the bath houses on this Reservation, except the*

[215] Ibid. The first public drinking fountain did not come until 1896: John W. Noble Fountain.

> *Superior, are in a very poor condition for the season commencing January 1, 1892."*[216]

Interior sent Thomas Musick back to Hot Springs to advise on construction of walks and drives proposed in front of Bathhouse Row. After conferring with Musick, preliminary drawings were prepared by Engineer in Charge Horace M. Woolman. The men found the task onerous due to the confined space along the row and "no disposition on the part of the city authorities to assist the Government in preserving the Park"—still coveting the land for street purposes. He reported that the grass could not be protected without fencing and pavement areas would be numerous and expensive. Because construction on Big Iron, Old Hale, and Smithmeyer were planned for the summer, and three others required reconstruction or significant repairs, Musick concluded that the plan be delayed: "All this building cannot be done without extensive use of the Park grounds. It seems to me that inevitably the grass nearly all and most of the trees will have to go and it seems to me that it will be a waste of money to have paved walks and graveled carriage ways made until this building is through with."[217]

Thompson went before the city council in May 1891, asking that a strip three or four feet wide paralleling Central Avenue along the Hot Springs Reservation front be dedicated for sidewalk purposes. In August, the council voted to approve a three-foot-wide strip sidewalk from the Arlington Hotel to Reserve Avenue, control of which remained with the city.[218] Inexplicably, the city abruptly rescinded its offer. Thomas Musick reported to Interior

> *"In view of the refusal of the city to contribute a part of the ground for a side-walk along the Park front I am decidedly of the opinion that the electric companies should be required to remove their Posts from the Park grounds and I hope you will instruct the Superintendent to have such removal made, since the strong presumption is that the influence of these companies with the street railroad company have been potent in determining this retrograde action of the Council."*

Musick continued:

> *"The fact is that a little knot of capitalists here seem to run and control everything; every public interest is under their domination, and they have exceedingly little regard for the rights of the Government where those rights fail to administer to the satisfaction of their avarice…. They are without gratitude for what the Department is proposing to do for them…."*[219]

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[216] Superintendent Thompson to Secretary Noble, letter, 28 November 1891.
[217] Thomas Musick to Secretary Noble, letter, 28 December 1891, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 14. Assistant Secretary Cyrus Bussey recommended a profession engineer and landscape gardener (architect) be sent to compile a comprehensive plan for improvements. See Bussey to Secretary Noble, letter, 15 October 1891.
[218] May 1, 1891 and August 13, 1891, Box 65, Folder 65-2: City Council Records, Minutes 1891-1927., MC 534 Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.
[219] Musick, Chief P & M Division, to Secretary Noble, letter, 10 December 1891, RG 79, Box 14, Entry 1.

Reporting on the practice of drumming, Thomas Musick observed: "I have satisfied myself that it is an evil which should be suppressed so far as it is in the power of the Department to suppress it." Denouncing drumming as an unwelcome tax and an "annoyance to visitors," he reported that only the Superior refrained from paying for drummers by charging the attendants or rubbers—it shared the expense with them. "No one and no three or four houses can abolish the custom for some being into it forces all the others into it in self-defense. It is a detriment to all the better conditioned and managed houses for it prevents them getting all the patronage which their merits would bring to them while it helps the rotting down shells by dragging a patronage into them which would not reach them without such influences." He concluded that the only effective means of prohibiting drumming was to insert clauses into hot-water leases that if found guilty of employing drummers, the Superintendent would issue an order to shut-off the supply of thermal water.[220] On orders of Secretary Noble, Musick began drafting new leases for January 1892 and inserting such a clause in each lease. He reported: "The evil practice is now almost universal and carried to a shameful extent making a system of the most open black-mail on both visitors and bath house attendants. The commonest drummer rob and rope in the visitors and then boycott the bath houses which refuse to pay tribute. The bath house managers recoup from the poor helpless rubbers who have to pay or travel." Recognizing that it would take time to develop all new leases, putting some bathhouses at a disadvantage to other establishments in the interim, Musick recommended Interior formulate anti-drumming regulation to be imposed on all bathhouses to be posted by the Superintendent throughout Hot Springs.[221]

Secretary Noble promulgated "Bath House Rules" on February 6, 1892, as follows:

BATH HOUSE RULES.

> *The following rules and regulations for the lessees of bath houses supplied with water from the permanent reservation, all employees, servants, and others thereat, will go into effect on and after February 15, 1892*
>
> *1. No bath house or hotel shall be supplied with more than enough water for forty tubs of the usual size; and vapor baths, when especially agreed upon, and then only for so much hot water as said vapor baths absolutely require upon an economical use of such water.*
>
> *2. Unnecessary waste of water is strictly prohibited and if continued after receipt of written notice from the Superintendent calling attention to the same will be regarded by the Department as good ground for cancellation of the lease. The constant flow of hot water for vapors or other baths even during business hours will not be allowed unless it be essential for actual and present use by bathers.*

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[220] Ibid., letter, 11 December 1891.
[221] Musick to Secretary Noble, letter, 31 December 1891, RG 79, Box 15, Entry 1.

3. Rentals shall be paid quarterly in advance, at the office of the Superintendent. If not paid within five days from the first of each month the supply of water will be cut off.
4. The charge for baths in bath houses shall not exceed the rates fixed by the department, which rates shall be conspicuously posted in print in such bath house office, and no extra charge whatever shall be made, except for an attendant, who shall be entitled to receive not exceeding 15 cents for each bath, or $3 for a course of 21 baths.
5. The bath house attendants shall not be required to pay any part of the running expenses of any bath house, nor for the supplies and implements needed or used therein nor for repairs made upon the bath house or furnishings, but any attendant may be required to make good any breakage, loss or damage occasioned by reason of his or her dereliction or negligence.
6. No bath house owner, or manager, nor any agent, or employee, attendant, or rubber employed or permitted to work therein, or in connection therewith shall, directly or indirectly employ, pay or engage any agent, drummer, or person for the solicitation of patronage to said bath house; nor shall any such drummer, agent or person, be allowed in or about said reservation, or bath house thereon, to pursue his business or engagement.
7. All bath houses must be kept in neat, clean, and good sanitary condition, and all sewerage and waste properly conducted away, and all under-drainage kept in perfect order. The water closets shall have sufficient and free connection with the public sewers and be kept in the best order and with the best plumbing, furnishings, and appliances.

A printed copy of these rules and regulations shall be posted in a conspicuous place in each house.

FRANK M. THOMPSON,
Superintendent of Hot Springs Reservation.

Approved, February 6, 1892.

JOHN W. NOBLE,
Secretary of the Interior.[222]

Interior's increased authority resulted in major improvements to bathhouses in the two years following passage of the 1891 Act of Congress. The department approved assignment of leases for New Rector and Arlington Hotel to the Arlington Hotel Company with the provision that both structures be demolished and a new hotel and bathhouse be erected. Plans submitted provided for a nearly "fireproof" four-story building with 300 sleeping rooms, assorted public rooms, and furnished with modern conveniences at a price of $300,000. In addition, 326 went to auction and 170 lots, appraised at $60,120, were sold. [223]

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[222] Secretary Noble, 6 February 1892, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 15.
[223] "Report of the Secretary of the Interior: Hot Springs Reservation," *The Executive Documents of the House of Representatives for the Second Session of the Fifty-Second Congress, 1892-93*, Vol. 12 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1893). Congress reserved one tract from sale. Act

The Act of 1891 also led Interior to request the War Department to detail Lt. Robert R. Stevens to prepare plans to build roads and other features. Plans were drawn and approved, contracts let, and construction initiated in 1892. Secretary Noble reported to Congress that

> *"The ground abutting the bath houses on the reservation front, extending along the main avenue of the city, is to be formed into a park with walks, rests, drinking fountains, and shrubbery; that part of the ground on the lower slope of East Mountain to be made into a natural park with walks, summer houses, and rests; portions of the lower slope of each mountain to be generally improved with ornamental roads and walks, and winding roads to be constructed to the summit of each of the Hot Springs mountains."*

Noble continued: "The pipes now supplying the bath houses with hot water are to be relocated, the unsightly cooling tanks in the rear of the houses to be removed and replaced by more ornamental ones, and a more equitable distribution of the hot water among the bath houses provided." Noting that congressional appropriations were insufficient, Noble designated $75,000 from the Hot Springs Reservation fund from sale of lots for any new developments. Noble also reported an addition to the free bathhouse of 30 by 40 feet to accommodate male bathers, with 800 to 900 men bathing daily, and the newly built combined superintendent office and residence was complete. Noble praised it as "a handsome and durable structure and a credit to the Government."[224]

SUPERINTENDENCY OF WILLIAM J. LITTLE, 1893-1900

Figure 59. William J. Little (National Park Service)

Curiously, Superintendent Thompson's *Annual Report 1892* was noticeably brief, perhaps reflecting his pique that he had to share authority over Hot Springs Reservation with the new construction boss: Robert R. Stevens. As that relationship played out, Interior downplayed a statement made in a *New York Times* editorial which stated: "It is accordingly clear that Congress does not need to make any more appropriations to this reservation, since it is self-sustaining: in fact, several thousand dollars a year are already available for adding to the attractiveness of the hillside parks." There was a clear downside for utilizing government revenues for improvements.

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of Congress, 22 June 1892 (27 Stat. 58) held out Lot 53, Block 89. It also granted Lot 1, Block 72, to the local school district for school purposes: Act of Congress, 14 July 1892 (27 Stat. 174).

[224] Ibid. Quote in "Hot Springs Reservation--Self-Supporting Management by Government," 31 January 1892, 4.

With a change in presidential administrations following the election of 1892 came a new top man at the Department of the Interior. Upon President Benjamin Harrison's retirement, Secretary John W. Noble resigned his post. This meant that incoming Interior Secretary M. Hoke Smith, appointed by President Grover Cleveland, would appoint new political patrons to various department positions. This brought about the end of Frank M. Thompson's four year tenure at Hot Springs Reservation effective May 31, 1893. Secretary Smith subsequently appointed William J. Little to serve as the national park superintendent, effective June 1, 1893.

Local hotel accommodations improved exponentially in 1893 when the rebuilt Arlington Hotel opened on March 25. The Spanish Renaissance-style structure built of stone, brick, iron, and wood featured mosaic floors throughout the ground floor where offices, reading and writing rooms, barber shop, bowling alley, grand parlors, and billiard

Figure 60. Arlington Hotel book illustration, c. 1893 (HSNP 10015, National Park Service)

and bar areas were decorated with expensive furnishings. Superintendent William J. Little reported the "halls are wide and have easy connection, by means of iron bridges, with the roads and walks on the side of the mountain, making an excellent system of fire escapes." The hotel featured steam-heat and had both electricity and gas for lighting. Fireplaces were limited to the rotunda and grand parlors. Passenger and baggage elevators were hydraulic. "The plumbing," Little reported, "is excellent, the closets throughout the house having mosaic floors, marble partitions, and exposed plumbing, and are ample in number for each portion of the building." Cost of construction and furnishings came to $400,000, plus $53,000 for the attached 40-tub bathhouse. Little bragged, "The hotel accommodations in Hot Springs have been greatly increased and improved… [and] they probably surpass any other health resort in the country."[225]

[225] *Annual Report for 1893.*

Staffing levels at began to increase as facilities came on-line and during seasonal peak times. Little listed all nine employee positions and salaries as follows:

Superintendent	$2,500
Manager of free bath house	$1,020
Male attendant at free bath house	$660
Female attendant at free bath house	$360
Scavenger at free bath house	$120
Watchman at pumping station	$600
Policeman on reservation	$480
Waterman on reservation	$480
Messenger at superintendent's office	$180
Total	**$6,400**[226]

STEVENS, OLMSTED, AND HOT SPRINGS IMPROVEMENTS

First Lieutenant Robert R. Stevens, 6th Infantry, United States Army, received his instructions from Interior Secretary John W. Noble on May 31, 1892. Detailed from the War Department and headquartered at the "Reservation Improvements Office" attached to the Office of Acting Assistant Quartermaster, Army and Navy Hospital, Stevens was charged with carrying out all aspects of project design, planning, supervision, and construction. His physical office space was the old superintendent's office building, vacated when the incumbent occupied his new office and residence. Noble advised Stevens that he would be answerable directly to Interior and that Interior took Hot Springs and its development seriously: "You will bear in mind, of course, that while the fund is considerable that I have in hand, that I am strictly responsible for every dollar of it, and that I must show an economical administration of it, and you will incur, of course, no expenses not absolutely necessary."[227]

Figure 61. Robert R. Stevens (National Park Service)

John Willock Noble, secretary of the Interior throughout President Benjamin Harrison's administration (1889-1893), espoused a comprehensive view of the national parks. He treated them the same in terms of their protection and care. Along with Hot Springs, Interior was entrusted with Yellowstone, Yosemite, and Sequoia national parks. While he believed these federal reservations to be

[226] Ibid.

[227] Secretary Noble to First Lt. Robert R. Stevens, letter, 7 May 1892. Noble kept a keen eye trained on Hot Springs. For the summer of 1892, he charged his First Assistant Secretary to watch over Hot Springs business while he was away from Washington. Noble reserved for himself, however, any decision to grant new leases. See Noble to First Assistant Secretary George Chandler, letter, 21 June 1892, RG 79, D21, no number.

special places where Americans could resort and highly prize, any developments in them should be ones that were worthy of the nation. According to one national news report, "[Noble] intends to see that all the laws designed for the care and preservation of these reservations shall be fully carried out, and he is fully convinced that the time has come when a broad, liberal policy should be adopted in regard to these parks."[228]

Secretary Noble expressed his own vision for Hot Springs improvements, much of which Stevens attempted to incorporate. Noble articulated it following Stevens' appointment as follows:

> *"My general purpose is, as a first improvement, to have foot-ways some four feet broad and graveled, going up the mountain immediately in the rear of the bath-houses at intervals, with benches, etc., and correspondingly, on the opposite mountain, together with walks through the town, leading to these places, and so easy of ascent that invalids can use them. I would also have a large part of the woods cleared up, and made into a park, in some degree, with an observatory on the top of each mountain."*

Noble added, "There would, of course, have to be a tasteful arrangement of the park in front of the bath-houses, with convenient approaches from the street for wagons [and] carriages" on pavement outside the park along with various fountains.[229] Stevens responded by rearticulating Noble's vision: "As I understand it, the Secretary's design is to take advantage of these natural features by laying out a massive plan, such as winding roads to the top of each mountain, and then working from the base of the Mountain upward, thus bringing decorative finishing work in the fore-ground, and leaving the back-ground to massive effects." In order to fulfill the vision, Stevens asked that Frederick Law Olmsted "whose success as the designer of Central Park, New York and of Niagara Falls and Yellowstone Park improvements has established his superiority in this line of work" be employed to design Hot Springs Reservation improvements. He estimated the cost might be $1500 and that Olmsted contracts at Chicago World's Fair and parks in Kansas City would be bringing Olmsted to the region in the near future.[230]

The Olmsted firm had doubts about accepting "Government work" at Hot Springs. Partner and Landscape Architect Henry Sargeant Codman told J. C. Olmsted "we ought to undertake no more Government work; that it is unsatisfactory, and that it requires more time and 'official' work than we can afford to give it…. If we make the plan complete, as they apparently ask, we have no guarantee that it will be carried out in full, and that alterations and changes will not be made regardless of our intention."

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[228] "The Hot Springs Reservation: Secretary Noble Wants a Uniform Plan Laying Out the Grounds," news clipping, no source/no date (circa 1892), RG 79, D21, no number.
[229] Secretary Noble to Stevens, letter, 21 April 1892, copy obtained from Library of Congress (Olmsted Papers).
[230] Stevens to Secretary Noble, letter, 18 May 1892, RG 79 B58: 1490

Codman worried about the distance to Hot Springs and the cost to perform the work.[231] Nonetheless, the Brookline, Massachusetts firm accepted the task, asked for topographical maps upon which to begin preliminary designs, and began making plans for a site inspection.[232] Henry Codman, busy supervising design and construction of Chicago's World Columbian Exposition for Olmsted, arrived at Hot Springs at the end of June.[233] He toured the area with Stevens and collected maps and data and subsequent letters were exchanged. However, Stevens continued to press for Frederick Law Olmsted's personal involvement, causing him to delay making fundamental design decisions for many months. Stevens complained, "I have postponed the adjustment of all question until I can ascertain whether Mr. Olmsted could make the trip which I deem so necessary for a proper performance of the work contemplated here."[234]

Stevens continued to press for the senior Olmsted's involvement. He argued, "Such a visit is also needed at this time in connection with work which will fall upon private citizens who conduct the business of the bath-house interests here, and who will be compelled at their own expense to arrange the vicinity of their buildings so as to conform to the requirements of your design for the grounds." Olmsted's specific directions would give them time to complete necessary work prior to the busiest bathing season and minimize disruptions to business. Also on hold was road-building, as Stevens explained:

Figure 62. Formal Entrance to Hot Springs Reservation under construction, 1893 (HSNP 10195, National Park Service)

> *"I have contracts already pending for the performance of the road work, but while I have outlined the entire length of the roads, I desire, before laying them out, in the exact curves upon the ground, to consult you as to what general disposition you would want to make along the grounds through which the roads may pass, in order that I may make the minor*

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[231] Henry Sargeant Codman to J. C. Olmsted, letter, 26 May 1892, Manuscript Division, Frederick Law Olmsted Associates Papers, "Hot Springs" Job File #1244, container B-81), Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (Hereafter cited as Olmsted Associates Papers).

[232] F. L. Olmsted and Company to Robert Stevens, letter, 4 June 1892, Olmsted Associates Papers. The letter mentioned F. L. Olmsted "has been in Europe for several weeks and is expected home about June 16th." See Stevens' acceptance for preliminary or consultation visit with offer of $200 for expenses: Stevens to F. L. Olmsted and Co., letter, 11 June 1892.

[233] F. L. Olmsted & Co., to Stevens, letter, 18 June 1892, Olmsted Associates Papers. Senior Olmsted's European trip continued through the end of July and he remained unavailable, much to Stevens' disappointment.

[234] Stevens to F. L. Olmsted & Co., letter, 12 September 1892, Olmsted Associates Papers.

> *adjustments of the road conform to the work which is to fall under your design."*[235]

Delays continued due to the ill-health of Codman and Frederick Law Olmsted with consultation pushed back until early 1893.[236] Preliminary Olmsted designs including a colonnade met with Secretary Noble's objections for Hot Springs Reservation's front. Stevens explained,

> *"The conditions and object involved in the matter prescribe a lighter method of decoration on this ground; the objection to the architectural method being due to the fact that the front of the bathhouse row forms a part of the central street or plaza of the city, and it is not desired to interpose any structure that would make such a continuous and marked division between the Reservation and the city grounds as a colonnade would form."*

Narrow Central Avenue might have to be widened as traffic volume increased and it "is important to avoid placing any very heavy masonry or expensive stationary work along the street border of the [Reservation] front." The secretary vetoed any arcade or arch along the front entrance, preferring instead "masonry columns of a decorative order and finish" and drinking fountains. Stevens asked for sketches, "limiting the cost of any designer or architect's services to the lowest prices for such standard work." Noble concurred with the 12-foot-wide concrete sidewalk parallel to and nine feet from the Reservation boundary, leaving that area as a buffer from the street. Stevens revealed the reason why he seemed so pressed for time: he wished to have the improvements in place under John W. Noble's tenure in office as President Benjamin Harrison's secretary of the Interior in order that Noble received the credit due him.[237]

Stevens wrote Olmsted & Company to eliminate any provision for an entrance roadway from Central Avenue through Bath House Park proceeding up Hot Springs Mountain because of elevation and grade restrictions. He limited it to a formal entrance to connect to the supply road behind Bathhouse Row and a proposed casino. This opening was between Palace and Maurice bathhouses.[238] Designs for the entrance to Hot Springs Reservation were developed through the Olmsted firm but drawn by Andrews, Jacques & Rantoul, Architects, which had offices in Boston, Chicago, and Denver.[239] Following Henry Codman's untimely death following an emergency appendectomy, Olmsted partner Charles Elliot made a one-day trip to Hot Springs in January 1893, with Stevens pressing for landscape designs for West Mountain and the Lake Reservation. Stevens laid out a road "to pass from the south-east face of the range around on a practical grade, to the north-west side, and to connect with Whittington Avenue near the

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[235] Ibid.
[236] Stevens to F. L. Olmsted & Co., letter, 17 October 1892, Olmsted Associates Papers; and Stevens to Secretary Noble, letter, 24 October 1892.
[237] Stevens to F. L. Olmsted & Co., letter, 28 November 1892, Olmsted Associates Papers.
[238] Stevens to F. L. Olmsted & Co., letter 20 December 1892.
[239] Andrews, Jacques, and Rantoul, Architects, to Messrs. Olmsted and Codman, letter, 15 December 1892. The principal partners were Robert Andrews, Herbert Jacques, and Augustus Rantoul.

Lake Reservation." He envisioned dividing that area into three small lakes and provided a plan to Olmsted & Company for them to design.[240]

By August 1893, the failure in performance by Olmsted & Company forced an exasperated Robert Stevens to terminate the tortured, one-sided business relationship. In a nine-page letter, Stevens poured out his frustrating experience to the Massachusetts firm. It had failed to provide any contracted work for West Mountain designs and the work on Hot Springs Mountain was nearly negligible. Stevens fumed: "The only park design made by you pursuant to this agreement was that for the lawns in front of the bath-houses [in Bath House Park], an area of about one half the extent of the ground on Hot Springs Mountain which was assigned for park treatment, and less than one-fourth the total area designated for such improvement." Stevens continued:

> *"The records show a delay on your part in this matter from the beginning, which certainly can not* [sic] *be justified on the ground of prior contract or more extensive engagements. This record of our correspondence will show that I am not unwarranted in saying that our agreement has not been fairly fulfilled upon your part, either in the details of its performance or in the consideration as to time. The result of this want of attention to the work here has been the cause of much inconvenience to the Government, in embarrassing delays as well as in actual failure to attain some of the important results desired."*[241]

The firm had never appointed a landscape foreman to assist in on-going construction developments. It had even ignored Secretary Noble's orders to omit the colonnade which again appeared on plans drawn by Andrews, Jacques, and Rantoul—and those plans including a "method of walks and garden planting" arrived too late to be of any use. The only element of their plan Stevens implemented were the decorative eagle columns at the main entrance.[242] In a letter of termination to Secretary Hoke Smith, Stevens outlined the actual expenses incurred:

For services on preliminary visit	*$200.00*
Traveling expenses on said visit	*$64.89*
Architect's fee for designing park buildings and Other compositions	*$100.00*
Traveling expenses for final visit	*$47.70*
Total	*$412.59*

He noted that the $500 fee for Frederick Law Olmsted's services remained uncovered by vouchers. Stevens declared:

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[240] Stevens to F. L. Olmsted & Co., letter 23 February 1893. See also Stevens to F. L. Olmsted & Co., letter, 23 January 1893, and Stevens to Messrs. Olmsted, Olmsted & Elliot, 6 April 1893 and 6 June 1893, Olmsted Associates Papers.
[241] Stevens to Messrs. Olmsted, Olmsted & Elliot, letter, 19 August 1893, Olmsted Associates Papers.
[242] Ibid.

> *"I have witheld* [sic] *the papers adjusting this closing fee from the fact that Mr. Olmsted has not completed nor fulfilled his engagement. He has delayed and slighted the work which he has assumed here in one instance after another since the time of his employment. Regarding his services as of great value to the Government in this work, I have tried to adjust it to accommodate Mr. Olmsted's conditions and delays. Of the detriment to the public service resulting from his first neglect of this work, he has shown no fair recognition by a corresponding degree of effort to further the improvements since. But on the other hand, has seemed to test the forbearance of the Government to its furtherest [sic] extent."*[243]

Stevens pressed ahead on other development matters. One of the first issues Stevens addressed involved potential construction of a railroad on the east side of West Mountain and west or south side of Hot Springs Mountain. Acknowledging Interior's opposition to the plan, Stevens declared such a feature would "stand as a complete mutilation of all improvements that could ever be made on either of those mountains." The only feasible option would be if the railroad "could approach the summit of West Mountain from the south side, far enough to the west to be completely beyond the field of view from any of the improved grounds." On a positive note, he believed it could result in desirable public improvements to the mountain top and provide an easy means of access to Hot Springs Reservation. Stevens wrote, "Visitors arriving at the summit could easily descend to the parks along the face of the mountain, while the difficult ascent by foot from the street below, would otherwise probably prevent those parks from being frequented as places of resort by visitors generally."[244]

Following up on Stevens' recommendation, Noble informed the chairman of the House Committee on Public Lands of his opposition to any railroad being built until the extensive improvements envisioned for Hot Springs Reservation were completed.[245] Interior was worried that not only would the railroad potentially mar the natural landscape, but for-profit developments such as a gambling casino serving "intoxicating liquors" and other avenues of vice would harm government interests and not be subject to rules and regulations. The department was worried because the initiative was being pushed by the Mountain View Railway Company of Hot Springs and had the backing of influential Col. S. W. Fordyce. Draft legislation, H.R. 8465, was introduced and being considered by the Public Lands Committee.[246] Nonetheless in late 1893, Congress passed the bill and President Grover Cleveland signed it into law granting a railroad right of way 45-feet-wide to George W. Baxter, John Ware, Leslie Webb, and George M. Baxter for West Mountain. To be built within two years, it was not to interfere with any roads and the same interests were granted the right to build observatories, hotels, and other

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[243] Stevens to Secretary Smith, letter, 23 August 1893.
[244] Ibid., Stevens to Secretary Noble, letter, 21 June 1892,
[245] Secretary Noble to Chairman, Committee on Public Lands, U.S. House of Representatives, letter, 30 June 1892, RG79 D21:1709. Noble declared: "Not until such time can the relations of the proposed railroad to the public interests be comprehensively considered and understood."
[246] First Assistant Secretary Chandler to Secretary Noble, letter, 31 January 1893; George Baxter, President, Mountain View Railway Company, to Secretary Noble, letter, 11 June 1892; and H.R. 8465, 29 April 1892, Act to amend Act of Congress, 19 October 1888, RG 79, D21: 1709.

buildings for public benefit on five acres of Hot Springs Reservation.[247] In exchange, Interior would receive two percent of gross annual earnings semi-annually and the secretary would set all tolls and charges. The local group incorporated as the Hot Springs Inclined Railway Company to build a railroad, casino, park grounds, observatory, hotel, restaurant, and theater with capital stock announced at $300,000. Interior did everything possible to obstruct the effort and, thanks to the adverse national economy, the effort fizzled and the two-year period elapsed.[248] Nonetheless, these powerful interests were able to obtain two extensions but, in each instance, the time limit expired and the idea finally died.[249]

Robert Stevens announced the first phase developing plans and estimates for improving public areas of Hot Springs Mountain and West and North mountains "by the construction thereon of parks, roads, walks, and other features of a health resort; and also for the greater development of the resources and bathing interests of Hot Springs by improvement of the method of supply and means of application of its waters." The second phase involved implementing those projects for Hot Springs Mountain for which funding was available. Stevens began by launching a "thorough and accurate" survey, preparing topographical maps for landscape designs as well as engineering and architectural elements. Survey work ended by November 1892, and preparation and approval of plans by the following spring. While landscape architecture assistance was sought from Boston's noted Frederick Law Olmsted during the initial phases, it proved limited and Stevens grew frustrated and ultimately admitted defeat. He reported, unfortunately, "owing to inconveniences as to distance, and to unforeseen conditions which arose" the Olmsted involvement terminated. Landscape plans were completed by others. Specifications and contract award followed.[250]

Development strategy focused on topographical features and site-specific adaptations for the best public use. As Stevens explained:

> *"On Hot Springs and West mountains the general plans provide for roads and walks along the entire mountain sides, and for parks along the foreground. The main summit grounds are especially adapted to use for hotels and observatories under lease privileges. On North Mountain, which has less elevation than the other two, and is in the form of a long divide, the summit grounds are made the site of the main improvements, and the plan outlines, as a principal feature of these improvements, a mountain drive to connect with the drive of Hot Springs Mountain, and*

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[247] *Act of Congress*, 28 Stat. 21, 21 December 1893. The act specified that failure to comply with provisions of the Act "will forfeit rights granted."

[248] "A Hot Springs Enterprise," *Arkansas Gazette*, 1 January 1895, news clipping from Maurice Bathhouse scrapbook, Hot Springs Resort Miscellaneous Articles, HSNP Library Vertical File.

[249] *Act of Congress*, 31 Stat. 51, 26 March 1900, provided three additional years; and Act of Congress, 32 Stat. 788), 30 January 1903, provided one additional year.

[250] First Lt. Robert R. Stevens, "Report of the Officer in Charge of the Hot Springs Reservation Improvements" in *Report on Hot Springs Improvements to the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1893) 3-5. Hereinafter cited as " Stevens, *Hot Springs Improvements, 1893*"

> *follow along the summit of North Mountain around to Park avenue, a distance of 1.5 miles."*[251]

Construction activity focused primarily on Hot Springs Mountain along Bathhouse Row and up Fountain and Reserve. The War Department contributed by building a "massive masonry entrance" connecting the hospital with Bathhouse Row. Stevens reported progress made along Central Avenue/Bath House Park:

> *"The front of the entire bath house park on Central and Reserve avenues, a distance of 1,613 feet, was curbed with sawed Alabama limestone, and along the same front was extended a concrete walk 14 feet wide, leaving a lawn border 9 feet wide between its outer edge and the curbing. By this construction the walk forms a promenade with rows of shade trees on each side. Elevated electric car landings 12 feet wide, and crossings, in concrete, from the streets to the bath houses were laid to complete the walks of this park. The earth filling over the entire ground was removed, a layer of rich loam soil was supplied in its place, and blue grass lawns made along the whole front."*[252]

Stevens described alterations along the frontage of Fountain Street:

> *"A sandstone curbing of extra grade was set along the reservation front from the corner of Central Avenue up to the entrance of the reservation drive from Fountain street, a distance of 1,459 feet. The sidewalk limits of 12 feet were excavated to grade. This work involved considerable expensive cutting away of earth and rock of a projecting bluff, and in extending the walk, a stone arch 30 feet long by 6 feet wide by 5 feet deep was constructed over the draining creek of the street."*[253]

Stevens paid special attention to entrances and fountains. Multiple access points for delivery of supplies along Bathhouse Row were eliminated. A single entrance drive in the middle of the row now connected with a supply drive to the rear of the bathhouses. Stevens reported:

> *"About three entrances are left along the mountain side, and one entrance for bath-house use in reaching the water supply valves. The main entrance is to be marked by massive white limestone columns, about 16 feet high, surmounted by bronze eagles 3 feet high and bearing inscription of 'U.S. Hot Springs Reservation.' A circular wall, forming an exedra with central drinking fountain, is to be built from the columns on each side of the entrance. The eagles were modeled by Edward Kemys, the well-known sculptor of animal figures. A balustrade and successive masonry stairways are to lead up the mountain side from the entrance*

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[251] Stevens, *Hot Springs Improvements, 1893*, 5
[252] Stevens, *Hot Springs Improvements, 1893*, 7.
[253] Ibid.

> *columns to connect again with the main branch of the drive. Footway entrances on the front are to be finished less elaborately, but with stone steps and ornamental wing walls."*[254]

Substantial stone fountains, Stevens explained, were spaced along the reservation front:

> *"A massive stone drinking fountain, possibly with bronze figure, is planned for the south end of the reservation front, and a fountain of less elaborate design is to be placed at the north end of the same front. These fountains and the two at the central exedras are to be supplied with hot water from the springs of the lower level. A smaller fountain is also planned for a recess in the wall higher up the mountain."*[255]

Much effort and expense was expended in laying drainage mains into the creek arch as well as building retaining and parapet walls along roads and drives, including six stone bridges crossing waterways. Completion of the 1893 work saw the principal features of the newly-landscaped Bathhouse Row, entrances, and fountains finished. Stevens added, "The main planting will have been done, and the roads and walks will have been completed in regular practical grades to an intermediate point on the mountain side. The continuation of the road from this point will form a simple and comparatively inexpensive construction of about equal excavation and embankment."[256] He provided Interior with estimates for recommended work forecast on West and North mountains, Lake Reservation along Whittington Avenue, and additional creek arches. After the first year of intensive developments, Stevens noted in his concluding remarks that the city had "built up in the valley, and rows of buildings and excavated bluffs closed in the town and resort of Hot Springs from the wooded landscape of which it once formed part." Stevens added:

> *"All free space in the valley has been gradually taken up by private improvements, leaving no ground available for purposes of public recreation in connection with the springs, except that within the Government lines.*
>
> *"Improvement of the public grounds of Hot Springs with a view to their application to the use for which they were reserved by the Government is, altogether, recommended as a means of developing the value of the Government property of the reservation, and at the same time of serving an important public interest…."*[257]

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[254] Ibid.

[255] Ibid. The city, cognizant of social etiquette concerning public thermal fountains, passed an ordinance declaring it a "nuisance and unlawful for any person to bathe his face, eyes, or nose or syringe or douche his or her nose or gargle in public view on any street, avenue or sidewalk, public place or on the U.S. Reservation between the east side of Central Avenue and the Bath Houses or within 200 feet of any spring or fountain of water in the City of Hot Springs." See *Ordinance*, Hot Springs City Council, 5 June 1889, Box 65, Folder City Council Records Minutes, 1878-1890, MC 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

[256] Stevens, *Hot Springs Improvements, 1893*, 8.

[257] Stevens, *Hot Springs Improvements, 1893*, 12.

Construction activities continued into 1894 with Stevens consulting closely on many assorted details with Superintendent Little and Interior officials. He put forth an overall estimate in late June for the department as follows: "The cost of the entire work, as it is deemed it will in time be accomplished by the successive application of the means arising from increased values of the public interests involved, aided by probable appropriations, will somewhat exceed $450,000." The estimate included items that were considered but rejected, including a federal building at the corner of Central and Reserve Avenues to accommodate the U.S. Post Office, U.S. Marshal Service, and other federal offices. Stevens outlined the parameters of what he termed "the foreground park" above the main entrance balustrade which tied Bathhouse Row into the Army and Navy Hospital grounds perched on Hot Springs Mountain: "In its center is a circular ground, shaded with trees, and terraced to form an intermediate landing of the main stairway plan, as well as a central ground of the park. It is to be finished with some ornament in lamps and vases. From this landing ground connecting walks lead off to adjoining grounds on the north, and a walk, passing as a lane between shade trees, leads to the new open springs in the south of the park." In that area was the "tufa park," left in its natural state to demonstrate the flow of thermal water out of the mountain. Springs in the vicinity were arched over with white rustic stone surrounded with vines and shrubbery. The remainder along Fountain Street "is finished as a wooded park, with natural walks leading, by ramps, to the main drive." Finally, Hot Springs Reservation had eight designed entrances or gateways available for public access.[258]

Among Stevens' recommendations in 1894 was construction of the stone shelter pavilion over the main entrance to the reservation front. Affording shelter on the mountainside, it represented the "finishing piece" of the designed landscape overlooking the central Hot Springs valley. The shelter "situated on the border of the principal drive of the mountain, at a meeting point of the stairways and near the entrance from the War Department grounds" was one of only two provided for public use. The other, the former wooden pavilion once covering Alum Spring, was moved and placed elsewhere on the mountain to provide shelter. With a mind toward historic preservation, Stevens admitted to "the sake of preserving a feature remaining from past times." He also recommended completion of the road system on Hot Springs and West mountains and finishing of stonework—coping and facing—to protect masonry of various bridges.[259]

Superintendent Little favored preserving two new hot springs in situ in places where construction activity uncovered them. He noted that most of the springs had been capped or covered with stone arches and the new springs presented the opportunity to show visitors where thermal water emerged naturally from the ground. In total, Little estimated he was required to provide water in the amount of 1,000 gallons per day per tub, a combined total of 495,999 gallons. Add in the 345,000 gallons stored in the impounding reservoir, the total available daily thermal water supply at Hot Springs stood

[258] First Lt. Robert R. Stevens, "Report of the Officer in Charge of the Hot Springs Reservation Improvements" in *Report on Hot Springs Improvements to the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1894), 3, 6-7.
[259] Stevens, *Hot Springs Improvements, 1894*, 11.

at 840,000 gallons. Unfortunately, machinery at the pumping station—not used to supply bathhouses as the reservation still relied on gravity for its distribution system—suffered from rust and neglect. Little employed the services of an engineer to dismantle, clean, and oil the parts in anticipation of the system being used for landscape sprinkling. To keep plant material alive it was necessary to hand-carry water long distances, a time- and labor-consuming process. Again the superintendent asked for a system of water-piping for such a sprinkling system. Lacking that, he requested employment of five additional foresters and gardeners to supplement his existing force of three men.[260]

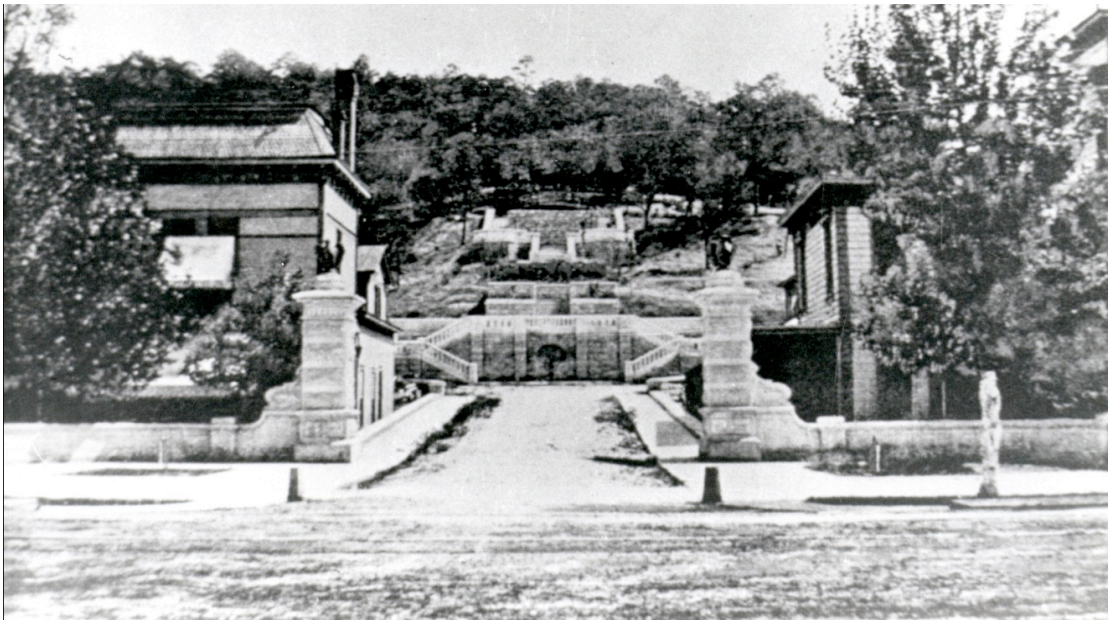

Figure 63. Formal entrance to Hot Springs Reservation nearing completion, 1895 (HSNP, National Park Service)

In 1894, Superintendent Little reported the presence of several places in the creek arch being undermined by water flow. Many of them were beneath Bath House Park (which was now also being referred to as "Reserve Park") and where the foundation did not extend into bedrock. He determined that repair work would be difficult and expensive due to the high temperatures inside the arch tunnel. Little proposed that if Interior purchased the material, he would superintend the work by his existing staff of foresters and gardeners augmented by additional skilled labor.[261]

Because Stevens' military station changed in May 1894, he transferred daily supervision of improvement work and contract administration to Superintendent Little. Promoted to captain and assistant quartermaster at Little Rock, Stevens took on the role of consulting engineer, traveling to Hot Springs every two weeks to inspect the work and

[260] *Annual Report for 1894.* Little also asked for proper tools and the purchase of a horse and cart to assist in watering shrubs and plants.
[261] Ibid.

consult with Little on every detail to ensure the government received quality work.[262] During the year, stonework at the main entrance continued, as did cultivation and improvement of contiguous areas and extension of roads and drives. Little added two more miles of road on Hot Springs Mountain

> *"by opening and improving the old road to and around the top of the Mountain sufficiently to make it an excellent road for horseback riding. There are yet two loops to be put in, to relieve some steep grades, and the road widened and graveled. When this is done it will complete the system of roads and drives on the Hot Springs Mountain as far as laid out, and will make an excellent drive about 3½ miles in length. I consider the completion of this drive the most important of any of the improvements yet undertaken."*[263]

Discovery of a cold spring two hundred feet east of the superintendent's office on Fountain Street prompted Superintendent Little to make the 66-degree water available for drinking purposes and draw up plans to build a triangular fountain there. The spring produced an estimated 960 gallons of cool water each day. Little reported the spring was already a popular attraction and believed to possess "valuable medicinal qualities." Hot Springs physician J. H. Leslie prescribed it to patients with stomach, liver, and kidney troubles.[264] In 1896, a wooden pavilion covered the spring, piped through a concrete floor in its center graced with a simple drinking fountain. Little constructed a concrete sidewalk 750 feet long to connect it with Central Avenue.[265]

Uniform rates imposed by the department effective December 1, 1894, had the effect of ending "the bath-house-rate war." Little reported that the rates caused fewer improvements among the bathhouses but he assured Interior that all were kept neat and sanitary and proved popular with visitors. The public was also quite curious about the Government Free Bathhouse. The facility opened each morning at 6:00 until noon, when bathing rooms were opened to air-out and replenish bathing pools for thirty minutes. Bathing then resumed until 6:00 in the evening, closing time, and the pools emptied and everything was scrubbed and disinfected for the next day. Little reported, "The demand of strangers to be shown through the bath house has grown to such an extent and has been found so objectionable to bathers that it has been deemed expedient to suspend bathing during one afternoon of each week to allow strangers and visitors to look through and inspect the house. Wednesday from 2 to 6 o'clock has been set apart for this purpose." As for who was allowed to use the free baths required by law, Little had to use "fine discrimination to be able to determine who are actually indigent persons and who are not." This required a written application with individuals providing their personal financial situation before being issued bathing tickets. As Little determined each admission, he wrote: "The word *indigent*, disassociated from the word *pauper*, being

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[262] *Stevens, Hot Springs Improvements, 1895*, 3; and Stevens to Secretary Smith, letter, 24 May 1894. In June 1895, Capt. Stevens was transferred to Fort Yellowstone to be in charge of "Office of Improvement of Yellowstone National Park," Mammoth Hot Springs, Wyoming.
[263] *Annual Report for 1895*.
[264] Ibid.
[265] *Annual Report, 1896.*

defined, means a person in destitute circumstances—one without means of comfortable subsistence." During the fiscal year 1894-95, 155,500 free baths were given to indigents. Of that number, he estimated 75 percent were cured and a similar success rate was noted at the Army and Navy Hospital.[266]

Congress continued its close scrutiny by passing three Hot Springs bills during 1894. Interior received authorization to enter into a 20-year lease on West Mountain for a Hot Springs Water Company cold water reservoir, offering possible extensions for additional two-decade periods and charging an annual $100 rent.[267] Another bill authorized the local school district to sell lot 8, block 93, on Ouachita Avenue.[268] Congress also awarded Barry Hospital the right to occupy and improve government-owned land selected by Interior outside Hot Springs Reservation for the purpose of building a charity hospital.[269]

On October 31, 1895, Interior Secretary Hoke Smith ordered his chief of the Patents and Miscellaneous (P & M) Division William P. Couper to Hot Springs to report on the on-going improvements, need for additional funds, and allegations of rule violations by certain bathhouses.[270] The P & M Division was attached to the Secretary's Office and handled much of Hot Springs and other national park matters. At this time, Interior began recognizing five distinct "permanent reservations" constituting the Hot Springs national park: Hot Springs, North, West, and Sugarloaf Mountains, and Whittington Avenue Lake Reserve. A twenty-seven-year career civil engineer, William Couper found that federal funds were expended correctly on improvements conducted by Capt. Robert R. Stevens and continued to be so when, in June 1895, Stevens transferred to Fort Yellowstone and Superintendent Little assumed full authority. Couper noted: "The continuation of the improvement under supervision of Supt. Little is being economically and expeditiously prosecuted, and is in accordance with the plans. I find that he is faithful and energetic in his duties, is a man of good judgment and practical sense, the only fault that has been found with him (I doubt if justly) is that among the many contending interests at Hot Springs he is not firm enough in his decisions." Couper inspected all 21 bathhouses on and off the permanent reservation and found them to be "in the main well managed, in good repair, clean, and in a desirable condition for the public use." Couper observed the superintendent had already dealt with the Alhambra and Ozark bathhouses for rules violations and effectively "remedied the objectionable conditions." He concluded, "I think that it is advisable to drop the charges with the understanding that any further violation of rules will be summarily dealt with."[271]

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[266] *Annual Report, 1895.* The application was U.S. Government Form No. 2108b-10m.
[267] *Act of Congress*, 28 Stat. 263, 7 August 1894.
[268] *Act of Congress*, 28 Stat. 274, 9 August 1894.
[269] *Act of Congress*, 28 Stat. 95, 21 June 1894. This facility was named for Dr. W. H. Barry, employed by the city as its chief executive health officer. He founded a hospital to serve the indigent poor of Hot Springs, both visiting and resident, and operated it through charitable contributions. See "A Charity Institution," *The Hot Springs Medical Journal* 15 March 1892, 61; and *Ordinance*, Hot Springs City Council, 17 February 1890, Box 65, Folder City Council Records Minutes, 1878-1890, MC 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.
[270] Secretary Smith to Chief Couper, letter, 31 October 1895. P & M Division Files, Directive 265.
[271] William P. Couper to Secretary Smith, letter, 26 December 1895.

William Couper became the first man from Interior to inspect the Hot Springs Creek Arch to investigate charges that the "work was badly done, that the supporting walls which should have been sunk to the bed rock had not been so constructed, and that the torrent of water in times of freshet, sometimes 20 ft. wide and 10 ft. deep, had undermined the walls, that the arch was sinking, and would cause immense damage and expense." With lantern in hand, he descended into the arch tunnel to inspect its 4,000-foot length, 20-foot-wide walls and 15-foot arched ceiling. Couper scrutinized the tunnel for two hours, finding it "dark as midnight, full of vapor and steam" at 110 degrees Fahrenheit. He observed, "I find the work well done, the first half of cut stone, the remainder of rough stone, but well jointed, with good cement. In some eight or ten places the walls were not down to the bed rock, and in such places the strength of the wall was such that it had not cracked or settled. The most dangerous point is near the Old Hale Bath House where the wall has cracked four or five feet." He recommended a remedy: "I estimate that by having this work done from 12 midnight to 9 A.M. when the arch can be cooled by opening the man holes and there is no discharge of hot water from the bath houses, thus enabling the men to work continually, that it can be repaired and placed in a safe condition for a sum not exceeding $500."[272]

Couper conferred with the superintendent on other matters and forwarded recommendations. He rejected Dr. William Barry's selection of lots for the charity hospital sanctioned by Congress because they were too valuable, instead preferring a site near Whittington Lake Reservation or on the west side of town. He noted "There is a great difference of opinion in Hot Springs as to advisability or advantage of this Hospital to the place or the general public." As for new bathhouse leases, he advised against granting any new ones as "the accommodations now are more than sufficient." He recommended proceeding with development of Whittington Lake Reserve, in direct contradiction to Interior's previous held view. He argued that its development into a park environment would benefit invalids unable to enjoy the arduous mountain roadways and slopes. This area, in contrast, "is situated in a valley on a fine level drive of about 2 miles, can be reached by the present Street railway system, and would add the feature of a level Park with water, scenery, easy of access to all, the rich and poor," he reasoned. "The Government owns more salable property in the vicinity of this Reserve than any other, and the carrying out of the proposed improvement would add to its value; these improvements should be commenced at an early day." He advised against roads on rugged West Mountain, detached from Hot Springs and North mountains, and advocated maintaining the original concept of keeping West Mountain as pristine as possible.[273]

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[272] Ibid.

[273] Ibid. Couper reported that five days of rain and coming in and out of heated bathhouses and the arch resulted in a severe cold which had impeded his investigation.

The Panic of 1893 which ended the "Gilded Age" in United States history brought about a deep economic depression which lasted until 1897. At Hot Springs, adverse economic conditions caused noticeably fewer people traveling to take the waters but the fiscal year ending in 1896 saw a daily average of 7,000 baths with 347 daily at the Government Free Bathhouse. There were no new leases or applications for new bathhouses. It was a year in which finishing work, primarily the five public thermal water drinking fountains, was accomplished. The marble John W. Noble Fountain, adjacent to the free bathhouse at the lower end of the promenade, complimented the engraving on one of the two massive stone columns at the main entrance, inscribed: "John W. Noble, Secretary of the Interior, 1889-1893." The other column featured the

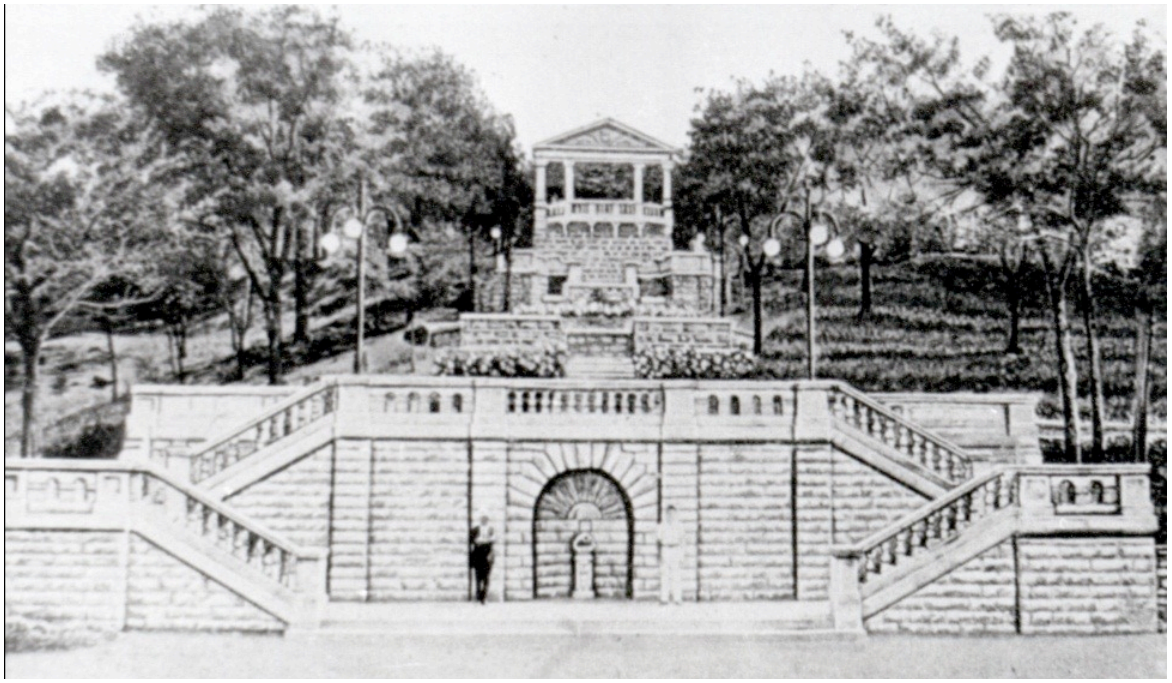

Figure 64. Formal entrance to Hot Springs Reservation completed with Stevens Balustrade and bandstand pavilion, 1896 (HSNP 10199, National Park Service)

engraving "Hoke Smith, Secretary of the Interior, 1893-1897." Engraved above the small fountain in the front wall of the main entrance was the inscription: "Captain Robert R. Stevens, U.S.A., Engineer, 1892-1895." The two exedra fountains on either side of the grand entrance, a small shell fountain at the foot of the grand stairway leading up to the stone pavilion, and the block fountain at the upper end of the promenade adjacent to the Arlington Hotel completed the public hot-water fountains on Hot Springs Reservation. Work on the central entrance concluded with its capstone accent: a stone pavilion at the head of the grand stairway. Little called it "the crowning work of this magnificent entrance on the reservation" and that it "brings out the completeness of the work as a whole, and adds greatly to the beauty of the grounds." The pavilion, complete with concrete floor and park seating, proved wildly popular. Little exclaimed:

> *"It is much resorted to and enjoyed by the better class of visitors, who find it cool and restful, besides presenting a pleasing view of the city and the*

reservation from this somewhat elevated position. All the landings along the grand stairway leading up to this pavilion have been neatly concreted and the retaining walls coped with white limestone, which makes the final completion of this entrance. To say that it presents a grand and imposing appearance only does justice to the work as it now stands."[274]

In late February 1896, Secretary Hoke Smith directed Superintendent Little to begin plans and estimates for Whittington reservation to include two lakes with the remainder as parkland. Authorized by Congress in 1892, Smith allocated $30,710 from the reservation fund for the Whittington Avenue Lake Reserve. The area constituted eleven acres traversed its entire length from the west by Hot Springs Creek. Little complied by modifying plans drawn up by Capt. Robert Stevens in 1892. He reduced the scale from four lakes to two, and forwarded the information to Interior for review. Much of his attention in 1896 was devoted to a severe drought beginning in April and continuing through the summer months, delaying progress on beautification efforts on the grounds along with additional expense to replace nearly all the year's plantings. He lamented that severe summer heat had scorched the grass, shrubbery, and trees despite constant sprinkling efforts. Little also reported that the old wooden 80-foot tall observation tower, severely rotted and removed, had not been replaced although he had received applications to install a modern steel tower. Lacking authority to approve them, he advocated congressional legislation to do so.[275]

Improvements to Whittington Avenue Lake Reserve proved to be more complex than Little originally anticipated, i.e. excavating sold rock for the proposed lake beds, building large embankments on the sides and upper end of the park to accommodate fence lines at the same grade as roadways, and straightening the creek and leveling its banks. Much of the un-compacted dirt fill washed out during heavy March rains causing Hot Springs Creek to flood and fill the upper lake and partially fill the lower lake with gravel, sand, mud, and other debris. The flood forced a new excavation of the lakes, widening the creek from eighteen to twenty-five feet, erecting dry stone retaining walls four to six feet high, and three small dams averaging two to three feet high as preventive measures to tame the creek. Five stone bridges set on abutments seven to eight feet above low water levels were erected crossing the creek for pedestrians and carriages and graded to connecting drives and approaches. Tennis courts measuring 80 by 160 feet graced the upper end of the park bordered by walkways, drives and pavilions with a seating capacity of 150 to 200. The larger pavilion, designed for musical performances, stood near the upper lake. An imposing wrought iron fence surrounded the park. Little reported:

"The main carriage entrance to the park consists of six white limestone columns placed in semicircular form connected by low walls of same material and massive iron gates, in accordance with places

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[274] *Annual Report for 1896.* A branch of Hot Springs Creek, it is also called Whittington Creek in the area.
[275] Ibid.; *Annual Report for 1897;* and *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1896* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1896): 109.

> *heretofore submitted for this work. The iron fence to surmount these walls and the pipe fence, some 70 feet long, to be placed on the retaining wall at the head of the lower lake have not yet been put under contract. This carriage entrance to the park is a conspicuous feature of the improvement; it presents a pleasing appearance and is ample in size and design to promote easy and rapid ingress and egress. The carriage drive which extends across the park at this point is wide, affording ample room for carriages passing in opposite directions. The entrance to the grounds from the north side at this point is through massive iron gates, supported by iron columns…."*[276]

Improvement work included constructing a five-room gardener's cottage to house Alfred Eddleman, reservation forester and gardener. Eddleman also served as foreman for the Whittington Avenue Lake Reserve project as well as being a special reservation policeman.

Both Whittington lakes measured a total of 79,000 square feet, the upper lake 35,400 square feet and the lower lake 43,600 square feet. The superintendent contemplated their use and regulation, writing to the department:

> "*While the water surface of these lakes is not large it is sufficient to afford ample room for small pleasure boats, and, being the only lakes in or near Hot Springs where any kind of boating may be had, I deem it advisable to allow two or more small boats of suitable design to be placed on each of these lakes, under such regulations as will secure this recreation to visitors who may be sojourning here for the use of the hot waters. The plan which seems most feasible and desirable for this would be to allow some suitable person to place two or more boats on each lake with the privilege of charging, say, 25 cents per hour for the use of each boat and also to serve as special policeman and preserve order on or about the lakes. It is thought that these fees would be sufficient remuneration to a person serving in this capacity, and that in this way an additional means of recreation may be afforded to visitors without cost to the Government."*[277]

In his annual report to Congress, Secretary of the Interior Cornelius N. Bliss addressed Whittington Avenue Lake Reserve. Approved by the sundry civil act of August 5, 1892, Bliss observed that "The park in question is not located on the reservation with the Government bath houses, but a considerable distance therefrom [sic] in the city of Hot Springs" and would require maintenance, utilities, landscaping, and an onsite manager at $2,200 per annum." The secretary opined that money should not be used from the reservation's fund which Congress established under section 7 of the act of

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[276] *Annual Report for 1897.* The same flood caused damage to the creek arch which required immediate emergency repairs. Little asked that he be provided with a standing fund to make future repairs.
[277] Ibid. Three foresters and gardeners were paid a salary of $40 a month, while five others received $1.50 a day.

June 16, 1880 (21 Stat. 290) as follows: "to be held as a special fund for improvement and care of the permanent reservation at Hot Springs and of the Hot Springs Creek, adjacent to and between the permanent reservations, and for the maintenance of free baths for the invalid poor of the United States." Secretary Bliss further stated, "I have, therefore, to recommend that Congress make appropriation for the care and maintenance of this park, or that it be ceded to the city of Hot Springs upon the condition that it will properly care for the same."[278] Until Congress provided a separate appropriation, the secretary ordered shrubbery and evergreens be transplanted from the permanent reservation to Whittington Avenue Lake Reserve. He wrote: "It is the desire of the Department that the expense of the maintenance of this reserve, which is a charge upon the reservation fund, be reduced to a minimum."[279]

The city council assisted Interior by passing an 1896 ordinance governing protection of public parks, including Hot Springs Reservation. The ordinance made it unlawful for:

> "*A person to cut down, mark, deface or injure any tree or shrub in a public park in the city, or who shall carry away or misplace, or mark, or deface, any seat, or settee or any movable property in a public park, or shall habitually lounge, or loaf in any public park in this city, or who shall be drunk or intoxicated while in such park, or who shall use vulgar or profane language, or who shall make an indecent exposure of the person or who shall spit upon the floors or walls of any pavilion or other building or on the sidewalks or who shall hawk, peddle, or beg, or solicit alms, or who may be offensive by reason of loathsome disease."*[280]

William J. Little and his successors instructed federal reservation policemen to enforce the provisions of this ordinance.

Superintendent Little laid out and opened 3.5 miles of roadway on North Mountain in 1897, with 1,500 feet graded for carriages. It proved popular for horseback riding and those looking for recreational walks. Little noted that women and children particularly enjoyed it because of the striking views from the sides and top of the mountain and was in constant use by coaches and horseback riders. Visitors clamored for additional roadways for recreational use. The superintendent recommended Interior consider expanding the road system for the large population of people taking the waters with time on their hands who sought mountain drives and walks for physical exercise. He asked permission to utilize the unexpended balance of funds from the Fountain Street pavilion project to connect the head of that street to the junction of Hot Springs and North

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[278] *Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1897* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1897): 92.
[279] Acting Secretary Thomas Ryan to Superintendent Little, letter, 12 October 1898, Library Vertical File, HSNP Administration Papers, HSNP.
[280] Ordinance, City of Hot Springs, 4 June 1896, printed in *Laws and Regulations Relating to the Hot Springs Reservation, Hot Springs, Ark., Compiled in the Office of the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1908): 32.

mountains, a distance of 3,000 feet. To do so would obviate the need to ascend or descend North Mountain without passing twice over the same road.

The public drinking fountains proved to be extremely popular and in constant use. Thousands drank daily from the John W. Noble and Hoke Smith fountains, the latter of which was illuminated at night and visitors used all four of its discharge pipes. Little reported, "The favorable location of this fountain and its commanding appearance, being lighted at night, makes it a favorite drinking place at all hours of the day and night. It is constructed of Bowling Green (Kentucky) limestone, and is, perhaps, the best finished piece of work yet erected on the reservation."[281]

Maintenance upkeep on park buildings proved a constant reality. The government pump station and equipment put in place in 1891 sat idle as water distribution continued to be provided by gravity from the thermal reservoir. While the plan to pump water to bathhouses was shelved, periodic disassembly of the machinery parts for cleaning and coating with white lead paint and tallow to retard rust had to be performed. The building itself required repairs in 1897 as did the superintendent's office and residence. The latter structure suffered from a poor foundation which resulted in severe settling thereby cracking the plaster inside. Little recommended patching the cracked areas and wallpapering all the walls and ceilings. The office and residence building also received a better roof and heating system as well as repairs made to the plumbing.

Little expounded on the daily demands of his superintendent duties. Busy throughout the daytime hours overseeing projects and inspecting park operations, he oftentimes had to work long hours into the night performing office duties. He wrote, "The duties of the superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation are many and must be performed with but little instruction from his superiors in office. To say that they can all be performed in a satisfactory manner to all those with whom he comes in contact is to say too much. This can not [sic] be done in Hot Springs." Managing bathhouse operations and ensuring they conformed to government regulations and policies consumed much of his time and "causes much trouble and anxiety" being ever vigilant for drumming. He lamented, "The city government itself gives countenance to this practice by issuing licenses to persons to drum visitors to hotels, doctors, and bath houses, and a large number of hotels, boarding houses, and doctors are intimately identified with it; indeed, there are a number of doctors in Hot Springs who would probably never get a patient except in this way."

Because of Interior's rules, bathhouses were the only entities not openly engaged in the drumming evil. Management of the Government Free Bathhouse also required considerable time and attention. Little spent countless hours ensuring its cleanliness and reviewing and approving indigent applications to take the waters there.[282]

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[281] *Annual Report for 1897.* Secretary Bliss endorsed the recommendation for an expanded road system and called on Congress to provide targeted funding for the purpose.

[282] Ibid. Little began working on a revision to Bathhouse Rules to clamp down on drumming further.

PROMULGATING RULES AND REGULATIONS, 1897

Superintendent William J. Little prepared a revision to Bathhouse Rules to clamp down on drumming and forwarded it to Interior. He warned, "changes and additions to the Rules and Regulations… are somewhat far reaching and might prove to be as objectionable to the Visitors coming to Hot Springs and the public generally, as the system of soliciting complained of." Little observed,

> *"Bath House Drumming has been reduced to that which is carried on mainly through the Doctors, many of whom, no doubt have secret arrangements with some of the bath houses by which they receive remuneration by way of the bath house recommending them or the payment of a commission for those sent. The Public Drummers are not allowed to bring persons to the bath houses or show them through or to loiter about them. The City has ordinances against all these classes of drumming, but they are not very vigorously enforced."*[283]

Secretary Cornelius N. Bliss approved the revision of regulations on October 15, 1897, as follows:

R U L E S A N D R E G U L A T I O N S,
for the
GOVERNMENT OF ALL BATH HOUSES RECEIVING HOT WATER
FROM THE
PERMANENT RESERVATION AT HOT SPRINGS, ARKANSAS

The Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation is directed to enforce a prompt and faithful compliance with the following rules:

Rule 1.

Rentals shall be paid quarterly in advance, at the office of the Superintendent, and if not paid within five days from the beginning of each quarter, the supply of water will be cut off.

Rule 2.

No bath house or hotel shall be supplied with more than enough water for forty tubs of the usual size; and vapor baths when especially agreed upon, and then only for so much hot water as said vapor baths absolutely require when used economically.

Rule 3.

The constant flow of hot water for vapor or other baths, even during business hours, or the unnecessary waste of water in any manner is strictly prohibited, and will, if continued after written notice for the Superintendent to stop such waste of water, be considered by the

[283] Superintendent Little to Secretary Bliss, letter, 8 June 1897, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 21.

Department sufficient grounds for the cancelling of the lease of such offending lessee.

Rule 4.

The charge for baths at the different bath house shall be the rates fixed by the Department, and no bath or ticket shall be sold for more than said rate. No bath or ticket shall be sold except at the office of the bath house issuing them, and must show the date when issued, serial number, number of baths for which it is issued, the name of the purchaser and the amount paid therefor. Bath tickets shall be redeemable for the same proportionate price for which they were sold, when presented by the original purchasers together with satisfactory evidence of being unable to use them. Application for change of rates may be made through the Superintendent to take effect at the beginning of the next quarter. A neatly printed copy of the rates for baths and attendants fees shall be conspicuously posted in the office of each bath house.

Rule 5.

Bath house attendants shall be allowed to charge not exceeding 15 cents for a single bath, 75 cents per week or $2.25 per course of 21 baths, payable weekly in advance. It shall be optional with bathers whether they employ attendants or not. Bath house attendants may be required to make good any breakage or damage caused by his or her negligence or dereliction of duty, but shall not be required to pay any part of the operating expenses of the bath house.

Rule 6.

The payment of any sum of money or anything of value, directly or indirectly, by any bath house owner, manager, clerk or attendant, as a compensation for drumming customers to said bath house; or allowing any hotel or doctor drummer to show persons though or to loiter in or about any bath house, is positively prohibited by the Department; and upon satisfactory proof of the violation of this rule, the Superintendent may shut off the water from any bath house and report the case to the Department for action upon the facts.

Rule 7.

The Superintendent may cause the discharge of any bath house manager, clerk or attendant for drumming or making false statements about any other bath house, and when said persons are so discharged, they shall not be employed again by the same or any other bath house without the consent of the Superintendent.

Rule 8.

The payment of any sum of money or anything of value for drumming, the giving away of single bath complimentary tickets, the

frequent visits of hotel or doctor drummers, whether licensed or not, or those known to work with them as inside men, or hotel or boarding house proprietors, or those employed by them, or by any doctor employing drummers, or the sale of bath tickets through brokers or otherwise than at the office of the bath house is positively prohibited.

Rule 9.

All bath houses shall be kept in a neat, clean and good sanitary condition and all sewerage and waste water properly conducted away and all under drainage kept in perfect order. The water closets shall have sufficient and free connection with the public sewers and be kept in the best order and with the best plumbing furnishings and appliances. Each bath house lessee on the permanent reservation shall under direction of the Superintendent cultivate and maintain a part of the bath house park in front of their respective bath houses, the space for each to cultivate to be allotted by the Superintendent.

Department of the Interior
October 15, 1897
Approved.
Reservation
C. N. Bliss, Secretary[284]

William J. Little
Superintendent
of the Hot Springs

At the same time, policies were established for the Free Bathhouse as follows:

RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FREE BATH HOUSE AT HOT SPRINGS, ARK.

These baths are provided and maintained for indigent persons only; neither the manager nor attendants are authorized to supply them to others.

The manager of the free bath house is required to enforce a strict observance of the following rules and regulations:

RULE 1: No baths will be supplied except on written applications made on blanks furnished at the office of the bath house, making full answers to the questions therein propounded, when, if the applicant is found to be indigent, the manager will issue a ticket good for 21 baths, which may be reissued on the same application, if necessary.

RULE 2: Persons using the free baths are required to maintain quiet and orderly deportment while in or about the bath house; to abstain from the use of tobacco, either by chewing or smoking, while in the pool

[284] *Rules and Regulations, for the Government of All Bath Houses Receiving Hot Water from the Permanent Reservation at Hot Springs, Arkansas*, 15 October 1897, C. N. Bliss, Secretary of the Interior, and William J. Little, Superintendent, Hot Springs Reservation, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 21. Handwritten on this is "Retain this copy in P & M Div. Room 22."

rooms or dressing rooms; not to scatter rags or paper on the floor, or to loiter in or about the building after bathing.

RULE 3: The wanton exposure of person or entering any of the front rooms in a nude state, the use of loud, vulgar, or profane language, the use of rags, paper, soap, or any foreign substance in the pool rooms is positively prohibited.

RULE 4: Persons using these baths are not allowed to stand or sit on or in any way interfere with the water pipes or valves, or to stand on the chairs or benches. All persons entering the house are required to clean their feet at the door and avoid as much as possible bringing dirt or mud on the floors. Boys over 5 years of age will not be allowed in the female department during bathing hours.

RULE 5: Any wanton or repeated violation of these rules, or any disorderly or contemptuous conduct, will subject the person so offending to suspension or expulsion, at the discretion of the superintendent of the reservation.

RULE 6: Neither the manager nor attendants shall be allowed to receive or become responsible for any valuables or to accept any fees or other remuneration for any service rendered to persons using the baths or others.

RULE 7: The manager is required to enforce all the foregoing rules and to maintain good order in and about the bath house, to see that all indigent persons applying are supplied with baths, and to make a written report to the superintendent each week on blank forms supplied for that purpose. He may reject any application for free baths if he has reason to believe the applicant has made false answers in his written application, and refer the same to the superintendent of the reservation.

William J. Little,
Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation.

Approved. *DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,*
October 15, 1897.
Cornelius N. Bliss, Secretary.[285]

Two complaints received at Interior in the fall of 1897, prompted yet another high level investigation into Hot Springs affairs. The first came from U.S. Attorney, Eastern District of Arkansas, Jacob Trieber, who reported grand jury testimony that the Bath House Pool was back in business. Trieber informed Interior that "all of the lessees of the hot water privileges, with the exception of the hotels and two or three of the bath houses, have formed a combination or pool whereby all the receipts are collected by one man, called an auditor, who thereupon distributes the same according to agreement of the parties belonging to the pool." Specifically, Trieber alleged "One C. W. Frye is said to be the Auditor who attends to this matter publicly; whether with the consent of the Superintendent of the Reservation or not I am unable to ascertain, but as the matters seems to be conducted publicly, there is but little doubt of his knowledge of the existence

[285] These rules were first published in *Annual Report for 1899,* pages 12-13.

of this pool."[286] The second complaint came in the form of a petition from four bathhouse owners who protested an unfair privilege granted to Hale Bathhouse where, in the basement's interior a "hot cave" had been excavated featuring a thermal spring. The petitioners charged the Hale used it "as a drumming service to attract people to the bath house" and demanded government permission to utilize it be revoked.[287]

THE ZERELY REPORT AND CLOSING OUT THE 19TH CENTURY

Disturbed by persistent rumors emanating from Hot Springs and determined to quash any scandal for his department, Secretary Bliss ordered Special Land Inspector J. W. Zerely to Arkansas. Bliss asked him to investigate William J. Little's management of Hot Springs Reservation. The secretary provided Zerely more than a dozen questions or areas to investigate. Zerely scrutinized whether or not Little was derelict in his duties or "performed with any partisan spirit or interest." He took testimonies from dozens of people and provided them to the secretary, both for and against Little, and found that the charges were not sustained. He could find no evidence suggesting that employees were required to make purchases at the William J. Little Mercantile Company or receive goods in exchange for their salary. Rumors of government corruption or misuse of office were baseless other than nepotism which, at the time, was not illegal. The superintendent employed his sons as an office clerk and as a watchman at the pump station. Little was indebted to several bondsmen, both relatives and leading citizens, for his mercantile business. The allegation of a resurrected Bath House Pool proved correct. In late August, ten bathhouse proprietors (Imperial, Alhambra, Lamar, Rammelsberg, Ozark, Magnesia, Horse Shoe, Palace, Maurice, and Superior) had agreed to re-form the Pool, primarily to "suppress the pernicious habit of drumming." Little admitted knowledge of it, but conceded "it is a good thing," and reported no further to Interior about it.

Special Land Inspector J.W. Zerely also found an agreement reached by the "Bath House Attendents [sic] Association." He reported, "The bath house attendents [sic] are practically all colored men and women, and I think the purpose of their agreement very commendable, and they ought to be supported and helped in every way possible by the Department." A committee from that association met with Zerely and confirmed that under the old Pool, they were required to pay a drummer one dollar out of their weekly $3 per patient fee—a third of their earnings to the drumming system. Currently, they advised drumming under the new Pool "has practically gone out of existence" and that they themselves were no longer required to drum for business. Two attendants from the Rector admitted they paid out thirty per cent of their fees to the bathhouse manager. All committee members confirmed they contributed one dollar a week to their bathhouse porter to keep the facilities sanitary. When paralyzed or helpless invalids had to be lifted in and out of tubs, the attendants were required to hire and pay helpers to do this task out of their fee receipts. They reported the manager of the Horse Shoe was also extorting

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[286] Trieber to Secretary Bliss, letter, 21 October 1897, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 21. On October 23rd, First Assistant Secretary Thomas Ryan asked Superintendent Little to investigate and report "with the least delay possible."

[287] Petition to Secretary of the Interior, 17 November 1897, signed by W. G. Maurice (Maurice), Charles B. Platt (Magnesia), D. F. Platt (Horse Shoe), and S. W. Fordyce (Palace), RG 79, Entry 1, Box 2. Bliss referred it to J.W. Zerely, Special Inspector, "for investigation and report."

arrearages from attendants for a three-month lull in business there. After all these deductions, their average pay came to a paltry one dollar per day, not counting extra tips from patrons. Interior's recent fee reduction from three to two dollars, twenty-five cents imposed an extra hardship to the attendants.[288]

As for the "hot cave" at Hale Bathhouse, all the owners joined the call for Interior to withdraw the privilege. Most Hot Springs physicians said it possessed no advantage over any of the "Hot Rooms" at other bathhouses, and one called the hot cave "dangerous, for the reason that it utterly lacks ventilation." Zerely added, "This cave, I find by personal inspection, is practically a tunnell [sic] running into the Hot Springs mountain for a distance of thirty or forty feet; the ceiling is very low; it is equipped with electric lights, a rough board floor and stools for the patrons to sit upon while in the cave." Because the attraction was despised by other bathhouses and had posed no medical benefit, he recommended Interior order it closed and require the Hale to utilize hot rooms similar to its competitors. (Interior failed to adopt this recommendation; the hot cave continued in use until the Hale's lease expired on December 31, 1907.)

Zerely also opined on Dr. H. O. Perley's request to use the government pump station as a medical dispensary. The Army and Navy Hospital surgeon made the request because the pump station, a prime site at Reserve and Central avenues, remained empty since its construction. After an inspection, both Zerely and Perley agreed it was unsuitable, but that the second story of the Government Free Bathhouse, currently occupied by the assistant manager there, would be a better location. He recommended Interior establish the dispensary for Perley and his associates, stating:

> *"It is not their purpose to dispense medicines or to perform surgical operations, but merely to determine whether or not persons seeking the baths are in fit physical condition to take them, or whether they suffer from such maladies as could be in any wise alleviated or benefitted by the use of the waters. The Hot Springs physicians concur in the opinion that the use of the waters, without prescriptions, are very dangerous, and the pools in the Free Bath House are at pretty high temperature, and generally thought by the Physicians of Hot Springs to be dangerous when used without proper precautions."*[289]

Special Land Inspector J.W. Zerely then tackled the issue of race, segregation, and the fact that "white and colored, under existing conditions, are required to bathe together" at the Free Bath House where there were only two pools. In the previous fiscal year, a daily average of 245 white males, 70 black males, 32 white females, and 37 black females bathed. "I have talked with a great many people in Hot Springs," Zerely wrote, "doctors and citizens, of all kinds, touching this matter, and I am very strongly of the

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[288] J. W. Zerely to Secretary Cornelius W. Bliss, letter, 18 December 1897, RG 79, Box 4, Entry 1. Zerely's report was 28 pages in length. In his 1898 annual report, none of Little's relatives were listed on the government payroll.

[289] Ibid. He recommended the pump station be converted to an "Electric Light Plant" to illuminate government property, including the two thousand-foot Bathhouse Row, Army and Navy Hospital grounds, and Whittington Avenue Park.

opinion that the Free Bath House ought to be so enlarged and employed as to permit the bathing of the races separately." Along with Superintendent Little, he made measurements, consulted with contractors, and estimated alterations would cost $3,000. He declared, "I think this [is] one of the most important improvements that can be made in connection with the Free Bath House, and earnestly recommend that you order it done."

Previous attempts to operate bathhouses for African Americans were all short-lived. According to rule one of the Government Free Bathhouse's Rules and Regulations, baths could not be supplied except through written application providing proof of indigent status. He observed, "Prior to my visit at Hot Springs there had been no place except at the Free Bath House where colored persons could get baths at all, as none of the bath houses being operated by private enterprise would admit them. I think that it would therefore be well to rescind this rule altogether, so far as colored persons are concerned, and permit them to have the benefit of these baths without the signing of this application," particularly if Dr. Perley's dispensary received approval. "If that Dispensary is established I recommend that no person be permitted to bathe in the Free Bath House who has not been examined by said Board and found to be suffering from some ailment which would be benefitted by the baths." Perhaps as a result of Zerely's inspection, nine bathhouses (Ozark, Rammelsberg, Lamar, Palace, Magnesia, Maurice, Superior, Imperial, and Alhambra) agreed to supply baths to African Americans from 4 to 6 P.M. daily during fall and winter months, and 5 to 6 P.M. daily during spring and summer months. Free enterprise and the Jim Crow system of racial prejudice merged at Hot Springs.[290]

On the subject of drumming, the inspector observed: "I believe that the drumming for bath houses cannot be stopped until the incentive for drumming is entirely removed. I believe that if the present temporary agreement which has been entered into by ten of the bath house owners were, in some way, amended and put under the immediate direction and supervision of the Secretary of the Interior, and all bath house owners were required to enter into it, (as I think they would) the practice could be stopped." Leases should be strengthened to prevent monopoly or such agreements established to fix prices in order to encourage competition and keep the bathhouses in excellent operating conditions. Zerely concluded the "temporary agreement" of the Bathhouse Pool to combat drumming was a necessary evil. He wrote: "The only feasible way of [suppressing drumming] will be to legalize this pool, and to have the moneys collected by an officer of the Government, and also to have the disbursements made by him." The same officer could make constant investigations for physical condition and adherence to Interior regulations. Relating stories of doctor drumming and dirty tricks to fleece patients, Zerely and Dr. Perley conferred on a plan whereby only government-certified physicians could prescribe baths and no one without a prescription could take the waters. If the dispensary at the Free Bath House was established and the medical board put in place, such certified prescriptions could then be issued. He added, "If, in addition to this, the Superintendent of the Reservation were made to administer the law with a strong hand, the incentive to bath house drumming, and to doctor drumming would

[290] Ibid.

be gone, and the quack doctors who now prey upon people from all parts of the country who visit the Springs in the hope of regaining health would be cleaned out."

In order to end local influences or entanglements by Interior-appointed superintendents, some of whom were already local residents at the time of their appointment, Zerely recommended the secretary choose more wisely. He advised: "I feel that a man who was entirely free from all local influences would be able to enforce more fully and more impartially and more rigidly the rules of the Department for the management of the Hot Springs Reservation, and in the event that any change should be made in the superintendency, my judgment is, that it would be for the benefit of all concerned if an Army Officer were detailed as such superintendent. What is needed here is a disciplinarian of the first order." He found that government facilities at Hot Springs were well-built and maintained and bathhouses clean and efficient. While praising Little for being "honest and conscientious" in that aspect of his duties as well as correcting mistakes or injustices, Zerely determined that Little had not done his duty in the matter of bathhouse drumming. The investigator found him lax in enforcing department rules and should have shut off thermal water to bathhouses guilty of drumming. While Little argued he did not have conclusive proof in several cases, Zerely concluded,

> *"I think that he has misconstrued [Rule 6], and my opinion is that the rule ought to be so amended as to make it clear that that matter would be in a large measure within the discretion of the Superintendent, and the Superintendent ought to be further instructed to enforce this and all other rules promulgated by the Department touching the government of the Hot Springs Reservation without fear or favor and to the letter."*[291]

Interior took the Zerely report to heart and implemented the recommendations. Superintendent Little, vigilant for abuse of bathhouse attendants, reported in his 1898 annual report that the attendants received up to 36 percent of total receipts, making them "as well paid for the labor performed as any other class of people." In order to quash doctor-drumming, Little recommended the secretary use his power granted under the 1891 act to establish rules and regulate bathhouse operations by establishing a medical board. Appointed by Interior, including the officer in charge of the Army and Navy Hospital and two prominent Hot Springs physicians, the board would examine all doctors desiring to prescribe the waters in terms of professional qualifications and "moral standing." Those deemed fit would be issued official certificates to practice medicine on Hot Springs Reservation. He advocated amending the rules to include a provision prohibiting bathhouses from bathing anyone being advised by a non-certified doctor. Another item from Zerely's report, the dispensary, opened on the second floor of the Free Bath House on May 1, 1898, with Dr. H. O. Perley in charge. It proved quite popular with visitors and helped facilitate management of the Free Bath House.[292]

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[291] Ibid.

[292] *Annual Report for 1898.* Public contributions for free medicines for invalids were also solicited and Little recommended $50 from the reservation fund to purchase such drugs.

G. G. Latta, president of the Bath House Association, presented a copy of the "temporary" organization's articles of association to Superintendent Little and asked permission to make it permanent with Interior's permission. Recognizing the Zerely report and the fact that the drumming evil had declined in its aftermath, the association of bathhouse owners wanted to know the department's position. Little advised the secretary that the bathhouses were under stress, some returning to drumming and he was gathering evidence to use against them.[293] Secretary Cornelius N. Bliss denied Latta's application, ordering a ban on January 14 against the Bath House Association. In effect, the ban only stiffened the resolve of those die-hard drummers. In late April, Little forwarded sworn affidavits against eleven bathhouses suspected of drumming (Ozark, Magnesia, Palace, Lamar, Imperial, Maurice, Hale, Rammelsberg, Horse Shoe, Superior, and Rector). He admitted that he lacked hard evidence to warrant shutting off thermal water but wanted Interior to be aware of the sworn testimony he had gathered thus far and render advice on how to proceed. Little wanted whatever action he took to be affirmed by Interior. He added:

> *I desire it to be known to the Department that the facilities at my command for getting this testimony is inadequate for the purpose; the bath houses are scattered over a territory almost a mile long, the one Policeman on duty during the day cannot keep tract [sic] of fifty or sixty licensed drummers and as many more assistants or 'inside men' who work with them on the streets and at Hotels and Doctors Offices, and at the same time keep in sight of each of the bath houses. My own time is almost entirely taken up at the office and on the improvements where the work is going on, and Citizens as a rule will not give any information against the bath houses or drummers. The City its self [sic] recognizes the drummers by giving them license, and it is only by using the Waterman, when he can be spared from his other duties, and the occasional detail of some of the Foresters and Gardeners for this purpose, that I have been able to collect the information herewith submitted.*[294]

A decision on how to proceed with regard to drumming had to wait as Secretary Bliss continued to ponder the implications. The question to be settled was whether or not he had authority to do anything to regulate bathhouse or doctor drumming. The prevailing legal opinion among Interior's solicitors was negative and that jurisdiction rested with the state.[295] In the meantime, he approved a request that the Government Pump House be adaptively reused as a new office for the superintendent. Funds were provided to remove the equipment, install a new floor, plaster and finish the walls, and purchase office furniture. Removed from two small rooms in the residence, the new office would be easily accessible to visitors seeking information on Bathhouse Row.

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[293] G. G. Latta to Superintendent Little, letter, 7 January 1898, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 22. Little made his observations on January 8 and forwarded Latta's letter to Interior.
[294] Superintendent Little to Secretary Bliss, letter and 11 affidavits, 22 April 1898, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 22.
[295] *Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1898* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1898): 154. Interior doubted it had authority to establish a medical review board. The secretary wrote: "The authority, however, of the Department to prescribe a regulation… is very doubtful."

Interior abolished the position of Pump House Watchman ($600 per annum) and authorized creation of Superintendent's Clerk ($840 per annum). The incumbent, the superintendent's son, William W. Little, received the new appointment.[296]

Congress continued its close oversight and interest in Hot Springs by passing four new laws at the end of the nineteenth century. On March 19, 1898, Congress authorized the secretary to grant leases and privileges for construction and operation of observatories, pavilions, and refreshment stands on the permanent reservation.[297] Two months later, Congress granted the Supreme Lodge of the Knights of Pythias land near the Army and Navy Hospital to erect a quarter-million-dollar bathhouse and sanitarium and rights to a 99-year lease.[298] On February 10, 1900, Congress authorized lot 16, block 78, donated to the city in 1880, for use as a city park, building, auditorium, or other public purpose.[299] Interior continued to oppose pending legislation to erect a federal building on Hot Springs Reservation to accommodate the park superintendent, U.S. Post Office, and other government officials.[300] Nonetheless, Congress appropriated $78,000 to erect such a building on March 2, 1899,[301] and Interior sent U.S. Indian Inspector J. George Wright from Muskogee, Oklahoma, to scope out a location on the permanent reservation. His recommendation was that the former pump house-turned-superintendent's-office location was the only feasible one, with future potential expansion once the 15-year Lamar lease (negotiated in 1897) expired.[302] However, Interior vetoed that recommendation citing the Act of October 2, 1888 (25 Stat. 527) calling for a system of reservoirs, pumps, and piping for thermal water as well as the Act of March 3, 1891 (26 Stat. 844) that water be supplied by gravity, not pumping. Converting the pump station into the superintendent's office was reversible if an emergency required the engine be put back in place and used for its original purpose. Secretary of the Interior Ethan A. Hitchcock referred this conundrum to Congress, stating, "I do not see my way clear to consenting to the use of this site for the purpose of the construction of a Federal building thereon, unless Congress specifically so authorizes. In my judgment, it is not desirable that a post-office building should be constructed on this permanent reservation in such close proximity to bath houses, and that a much more suitable site can be obtained by purchase in the city of Hot Springs." In fact, Hitchcock recommended that Congress put its building on "lot 16, block 78, granted by act of June

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[296] Acting Secretary Thomas Ryan to Superintendent Little, letter, 12 October 1898, Library Vertical File, HSNP Administration Papers, HSNP. Interior provided funds for all recommended roadway extensions.
[297] *Act of Congress, 19 March 1898*, (30 Stat. 329). This provided authority for construction of an observation tower and gift shop at its base on Hot Springs Mountain. An interpretation of the law stated it provided "an adequate basis for diversifying activities of bathhouses currently experiencing a severe decline in business." See no author, draft "Origin of Concession Bathing at Hot Springs National Park," 1973, Library Vertical File (same name), HSNP.
[298] *Act of Congress, 9 May, 1898*, (30 Stat. 403). The Knights of Pythias is a fraternal organization founded at Washington, D.C., in 1864. It is the first to receive a charter by Act of Congress. It espouses friendship, charity, and benevolence as well as universal peace.
[299] *Act of Congress, 10 February 1900*, (31 Stat. 28).
[300] Treasury Secretary to Interior Secretary, 20 July 1898, Box 23, item 2107; and Acting Treasury Secretary to Interior, 23 December 1898, Box 23, item 3491, both in RG 79, SY12-E-2.
[301] *Act of Congress, 2 March 1899* (30 Stat. 983). The building, for "a post-office and other Government offices," was to be constructed by the secretary of the Treasury in coordination with Interior.
[302] J. George Wright to Secretary Ethan A. Hitchcock, letter, 29 April 1899, RG 79, Box 19, Entry 1.

16, 1880 (21 Stats., 288), to the city of Hot Springs, Arkansas, as a town or city park, but which has been used only to a limited extent for that purpose."[303]

In May 1899, Interior sent U.S. Indian Inspector for Indian Territory J. George Wright back to Hot Springs to follow up on the Zerely report and make further recommendations. Wright called the new dispensary a success and noted Army and Navy Hospital physicians were serving without compensation at the Free Bath House where as many as 500 to 800 people bathed daily. An added benefit provided vaccinations for smallpox to the indigent bathers. He called for Interior to pay a physician $100 a month to assist, to make weekly "rigid sanitary inspections" of all bathhouses, and to prepare regular reports to the superintendent. He endorsed the road-building effort on North Mountain and called for a new roadway over West Mountain to meet public demand. Inspector Wright heard numerous complaints from African Americans about lack of bathhouse accommodations, refusing to go to the Free Bath House where they were required to report themselves indigent. "I understand application has been made for a lease for a colored bath house," Wright noted. "I recommend [it] be given favorable consideration, it being represented to me that there are several colored persons in Hot Springs able and desirous of procuring a lease and to construct such a bath house."[304] For law enforcement, Wright noted that one day policeman ($40/month) and one night policeman ($50/month) patrolled the parks and federal property but both were not properly outfitted. He reported:

> *"These men are not uniformed, and it may be doubtful if many persons recognize that they are policemen. As they patrol along the promenade in front of the 'Bath house row' they should be required to wear a uniform, and present a neat appearance at all times the same as police employed elsewhere. The Superintendent should be so advised and if necessary the salaries of these men sufficiently increased to make it possible for them to provide themselves with suitable uniforms. There should also be a man constantly to sweep and keep clean the promenade in front of the bath houses, and who should be required to wear a white duck uniform and present a neat appearance. A man for this service could be engaged at $40 a month, and as this promenade is much used by ladies and the only attractive walk in the Springs it should be kept neat and clean."*[305]

Wright called a meeting of all bathhouse managers and owners. The Rammelsberg lobbied to raise its rates because of extensive repairs made but Wright denied the request because of the confusion resulting in a constant re-ordering of rates whenever improvements were made. Wright used the opportunity to investigate

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[303] *Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1899* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1899), 52-53. City officials concurred with the recommendation.
[304] J. George Wright to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 26 May 1899, RG 79, Box 24, Entry 1. Other recommendations included a government-sponsored analysis of the thermal water; granting a lease for an observatory on Hot Springs Mountain, preparing estimates to repair the promenade; and authority to refund any part of a 21-bath ticket package not used.
[305] Ibid.

drumming and questioned each one under oath. While most denied the practice, managers and owners of the Lamar, Imperial, Magnesia, and Superior declined to answer his questions. Evidence from several individuals indicated that the manager of Alhambra paid them to drum customers. While denied by the lessee, he agreed to Wright's demand that the manager be fired. The assembled group concurred that no punitive action be taken against the four unresponsive businesses and unanimously agreed "no more drumming be tolerated," and appointed a committee of three to investigate any such charges and report the evidence to Superintendent Little. Conclusive evidence would result in immediately turning off the water to the offending bathhouse. Wright recommended that future refusals to answer Interior's questions or investigations should be considered a lease violation with the water shut-off penalty enforced.

Wright tackled the issue of doctor drumming and took testimony from a drummer who recommended various physicians while admitting he had no personal knowledge of their abilities. His hotel and daily expenses were paid by his drumming. Wright examined the bathing directions from 85 bathers at the Magnesia and found 75 were from known drumming doctors. Wright reported:

> *"The numerous instances brought to my attention of persons 'drummed' to these undesirable physicians demonstrate the importance of some means whereby the persons visiting these Springs for treatment could to some extent be protected from these drumming quack doctors.*
>
> *"All circular and pamphlets issued from Hot Springs emphasize the statement that such springs 'are under the entire control of the government, and that therefore people are protected' etc, while the reverse is the fact and people are entirely at the mercy of these designing people.*
>
> *"More persons have visited these Springs this year than ever before, and I cannot too strongly urge upon the Department the recommendation that some action be taken whereby the suffering humanity coming to these springs for treatment can be protected from the professional drummer and the unscrupulous physician, and I therefore respectfully ask… a 'Board of Government Medical Examiners' to whom all physicians should be required to demonstrate their ability to properly treat persons in connection with the use of these waters"* [be established].[306]

(In late 1899, the city abolished its practice of licensing drummers, declared it a public nuisance, and imposed fines.)[307]

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[306] Ibid. Wright added: "It is certainly an outrage that people going to Hot Springs sick and discouraged should be left at the mercy of unscrupulous persons as at present, and go away condemning the government, stating that all circulars issued led them to believe that they would receive protection from such source."

[307] "An Ordinance to Prohibit Doctor and Bath House Drumming," 2 November 1899, RG 79, Box 24, Entry 1.

Renovation and expansion of the Free Bath House caused it to be closed for more than two months in late 1898. Upon reopening, it neared capacity with the segregated facilities—four separate bathing departments with a pool and dressing/cooling rooms accessible through the main office—said to give "great satisfaction… to those of both races." The public's morbid curiosity to see the indigent bathers, many of whom were in the advanced stages of syphilis and other diseases, had become a tourist attraction. Bathing ended at noon on Wednesdays and it was open to the public for tours. The superintendent ultimately forbade entrance to curiosity seekers during regular bathing hours after hearing too many complaints from offended bathers. Written permission from the superintendent for entry could be obtained only by physicians, journalists, and "others in the pursuit of public or scientific knowledge." The manager kept busy enforcing department rules, receiving applications, issuing and punching tickets, and supervising the facility and its large crowd of bathers.[308]

In mid-1899, President William McKinley, signaling a retreat from former President Grover Cleveland's aggressive practices of civil service reform, exempted several thousand positions from competitive examinations. One of the exempted positions was that of superintendent of Hot Springs Reservation.[309] The position had become one of great prestige and authority and the incumbent served at the pleasure of the secretary of the Interior. Superintendent William J. Little, fifth superintendent and the second native of Hot Springs to hold the office, who completed the developments initiated by Robert R. Stevens, railed against the drumming evil, and promoted the mutual interests of the government and city, retired after seven years of service on March 31, 1900.

At century's end, Superintendent Little left behind a national park that had finally come into its own, where Americans and citizens of the world—nearly 50,000 annually—flocked to take the waters and heal their afflictions, and a Congress that appreciated its virtues. The national park/sanitarium held 26 bathhouses and hotels with 534 tubs yielding $18,670 in revenue to the U.S. Treasury. Hot Springs, a city of 10,000 people, featured a national park of substantial beauty and scenery, graced with carriage roads and walking trails, bridle paths, sculpted parklands, and scenic overlooks. Visitors and invalids enjoyed all these benefits in addition to the magical thermal waters. Open-air concerts at the stone pavilion band stand in Bath House Park, dances at the grand hotels, horse races, gambling, amusement parks, and ostrich and alligator farms provided additional diversions for recreation and enjoyment.[310] The spa resort town boasted of its many amenities but heralded the fantastic health-restoring cures for a long list of diseases and afflictions. On the eve of the twentieth century, Hot Springs Reservation prepared for ever more glory and accomplishment as America's premier destination national park.

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[308] *Annual Report for 1899.*
[309] "New Civil Service Rules; President McKinley Issues His Long-Considered Amendments," *New York Times,* 30 May 1899, 3. A review of presidential executive orders during 1899 revealed he did not use this tool to amend Rule 3 of the Pendleton Civil Service Act of 1883 to curtail the patronage spoils system.
[310] J. Clayton Bedell, "Federal Supervision of Hot Springs National Park," *The Record*, vol. 22 (Hot Springs: Garland County Historical Society, 1981): 22.

CHAPTER FIVE

Hot Springs Enters The Twentieth Century

At the turn of the twentieth century, Hot Springs had a population of 10,000 and five-fold that number of annual visitors. The city possessed all the modern conveniences of the age: waterworks, electric lights and street cars, telephone and sewerage systems, fire and police departments, public schools, numerous churches, hotels, fraternal lodges, and fine houses that "compare favorably with those of larger cities, and are pleasing evidences of wealth and refinement."[311] The existing rail link, now a part of the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad (which subsequently became part of the Missouri Pacific Railroad), was augmented in 1900 by an additional railroad route: Little Rock and Hot Springs Western, known as the "Fordyce road."[312] The innovation further improved ease of access for national park visitors.

SUPERINTENDENCY OF MARTIN A. EISELE, 1900-1909

Upon William J. Little's retirement, President William McKinley appointed Martin A. Eisele the sixth superintendent of Hot Springs Reservation. Eisele, the third Hot Springs native to hold the office, entered on duty April 1, 1900 and set about selecting his staff.[313] He found his new office, the converted pump station, a bustling center of activity at the end of Bathhouse Row. Eisele noted: "Its convenient location upon Reserve Park makes it accessible for those having business with the office and at the same time much information on important questions relative to this reservation is imparted through the medium of this office." The superintendent's office proved to be too accessible, however, and he found himself in such demand that it interfered with official business:

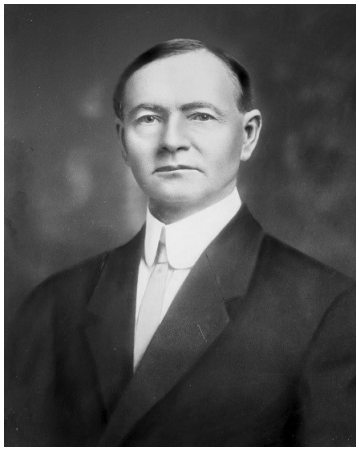

Figure 65. Martin A. Eisele (National Park Service)

"Inquiries are made upon every point of interest embracing the legendary, historical,

[311] *Annual Report for 1900.*

[312] A historian has marveled that Arkansas, unlike other states, failed to build electric interurban rail lines linking major cities to compete with the steam-powered railroads, particularly one linking Hot Springs to Little Rock. See H. Roger Grant, "Arkansas's 'Paper Interurbans,'" *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* vol. 39, Spring 1980: 62.

[313] With William J. Little's resignation came a virtual "house cleaning" of reservation staff. April 1900 saw a blizzard of correspondence concerning appointments for various positions (RG 79, Interior/Hot Springs, Box 25). Appointments are discussed in "Eisele was Right," *Sentinel Record* 25 April 1900, 2.

scientific, area, volume of water, number of springs, demands, etc. Many prominent visitors from all sections of the country call at the office and many interesting suggestions are gratuitously received as to the manner in which the Government should conduct this reservation. Some find fault with the stinted manner of making improvements, while others commend its liberality. All are cordially received and all information furnished as far as is possible and every consideration shown the visiting public, as well as those having official business to transact. I conclude that much of the increased inquiry is due to the important interest created by the Hot Springs as a health resort, and think it is an indication of the great future in store for this national sanitarium."[314]

The new superintendent became a staunch advocate for Hot Springs development, primarily roads. He came on board with the opening of a new West Mountain road, tying Canyon Street on the north to Hawthorn Street to the south. With a maximum grade of

Figure 66. Bathhouse Row with Army-Navy Hospital in the foreground, 1902 (Historic Photograph Collection, Harpers Ferry Center, National Park Service)

six percent, it received constant use by the public. Connecting with Hot Springs and North Mountain roads, there were now eight miles of government-built roadways. Martin Eisele's instructions from Interior included completing the West Mountain road system, including loops and switch backs and a drive along the mountain top to take advantage of scenic views. At points of interest, he removed trees and dense undergrowth to afford better views. He recognized the importance of limiting grades so as not to deplete animal power for carriages. He observed: "Inasmuch as these roadways are intended to be pleasure drives, the pleasure derived from using them is almost entirely destroyed by witnessing the full capacity of animal force in climbing steep grades. This

[314] *Annual Report for 1900.* Eisele consulted Little about the matter and wrote the secretary about his selections and to confirm the appointments. See Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 9 April 1900, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1. Curiously, the large safe-deposit vault holding government records remained at the residence, causing some delay in retrieval time for needed reference material until Eisele asked Interior for $100 to have it moved to the superintendent's office. See *Annual Report for 1902.*

detracts seriously from these roads as pleasure drives. In my opinion the percentage or limit of grade should not exceed 5 per cent."[315]

Included with roads, Eisele continued the practice of building more walks or footpaths for pedestrians. Built by his force of foresters and gardeners as available, these grades, too, were designed so as not to fatigue invalids. He reported, "It will be my purpose to continue the construction of these popular footpaths with this force when not otherwise engaged, thus extending the facilities for pedestrians to enjoy mountain climbing." He envisioned placement of small pavilions for rest and protection from the sun and elements along these trails.

The need for road repairs and upgrades became a prime concern. Eisele recognized the urgency of installing a guttering system to protect roads from washouts. Deep ravines had developed from downpours along roadsides, something that was unsightly as well as dangerous, and he advocated using cobblestones and cement to address the issue. Washing and settling areas required repair with cement gravel, particularly at entranceways and elsewhere on Hot Springs Mountain. With some urgency he wrote: "It is essential to repair the roads and drives already constructed…. The roads are washed and narrowed at places by the swift-running mountain streams, and need attention. The importance of providing sufficient drainage and suitable gutters at points along the roads to resist the force of the water currents is a matter of much concern." He recommended reconstructing culverts and retaining walls:

> *"Many of the wooden culverts are in such defective condition that they should be replaced with stone. The roads should be widened at certain points which can be accomplished by going into the banks and setting the gutters back…. At many points along the line or roads there are retaining walls built of pine logs, which have reached such a stage of decay that they should be removed and replaced with stone and earth embankment; many of the turns are short and sharp and should be widened and lengthened."*[316]

THE HAYWOOD CHEMICAL ANALYSIS, 1901-1902

Superintendent Eisele completed a new 26,109-gallon impounding reservoir in 1900, between the tufa bluff and former Big Iron Bathhouse. Collecting thermal water that previously had gone to waste, it now supplied five bathhouses. To improve fire suppression and sprinkling the lawn and flowers, he secured permission to extend a waterline six hundred feet to the superintendent's residence, again using reservation laborers. He recommended that a new barn and wagon sheds for park maintenance be erected, and those deteriorated, unsightly structures be removed from the residence grounds. While Eisele was intrigued by the water distribution system, he set about locating the seventy-three known thermal springs. Retrieving the 1875 survey by French and Douglas—prepared at a time when all the springs were exposed and a system of

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[315] *Annual Report for 1900.*
[316] *Annual Report for 1901.*

board troughs laid on the ground conveyed water to bathhouses—he attempted to pinpoint each spring on a new map using railroad levels and U.S. Geological Survey points as well as on a table with their reported temperatures. He discovered it nearly impossible to find some of the springs and recommended that Interior officially mark all springs with suitable monuments. Also, he reiterated his predecessors' appeals for an official analysis of the waters, noting that previous analyses were out-dated and not made under government certification. Water distribution, Eisele firmly believed, had to be dealt with soon. He reported:

> *"The present system is discriminating and has unfair features. Under it dissatisfaction and suspicion of favoritism on the part of the superintendent and his subordinates are themes of discussion among the managers of bath houses. The present system allows unfair competition. The selfishness of human nature is the incentive for the promulgation of fictitious and false claims for superiority of one establishment over another, as for example the claim of location in close proximity to the springs; the assertion that some particular bath house obtains its supply from some spring famous in legendary lores as the most superior in medicinal qualities, or for the cure of certain diseases, or of higher temperatures, or for the various reasons evolved in the fertile imagination of the different owners and managers. In my opinion, every act of the Department should be to promote confidence in the public mind as to the equal value of the hot water; that it should be distributed in a manner that is alike fair to all is of the highest importance."*[317]

Much of the superintendent's time was consumed in endless discussion of the pros and cons of the virtues of thermal water supplied on and off the reservation. Official policy was to assure everyone of the equality and value of all thermal water, regardless of its source. A scientific analysis, Eisele believed, would settle the argument once and for all.

Secretary Hitchcock concurred and arranged through the Department of Agriculture to send chemist J. K. Haywood to Hot Springs. Haywood, from the Bureau of Chemistry, had Eisele's staff expose forty-five springs for the analysis. Many of the springs were enclosed with wooden box coverings that were rotted away and required replacement for which Eisele recommended "walling up with brick and arched over with the interior walls concreted with cement." Arrival of Haywood for the analysis had Hot Springs citizenry energized. Eisele commented: "I am pleased to state that no other order of the Department has met with more universal approval by the citizens than this; great interest is manifested in the outcome of this work." Hayward utilized the laboratory at the Army and Navy Hospital to conduct his methodical analysis which took more than a year to complete and publish.[318] Eisele reported in 1901 that the previous total of seventy-three hot springs was incorrect, a number which included all known seepages but with development and channeling work, the number now stood at forty-six. Total daily

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[317] Ibid.

[318] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 8 November 1900, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

flow was 830,000 gallons and temperatures ranged from 97.2 to 147 degrees Fahrenheit. He reported: "The springs have been walled up with brick and the side walls carefully covered with cement, and an arch sprung over each spring, with manhole entrances, which will protect the springs from pollution and allow opportunity for examination and repairs to pipe connections." He added, "Suitable stone monuments are to be placed over each spring, with the designating number chiseled thereon."[319]

Monumenting the springs took place in January 1902. Walter H. Weed of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and local engineer G. M. French, assisted by Gibson Mills, used the surveys of Capt. Robert R. Stevens to verify spring and piping locations. They prepared a new map, tracings of which were made for the department, to keep on file to facilitate future development work. Weed recommended design of the sawed stone monuments, six by six inches square, with 2½ inch numbers chiseled on each, and placed two feet in the ground with one-foot exposed. Because five springs were already enclosed with above-ground stone-arched vaults, Weed suggested chiseling the designated spring number on the arch keystone.[320]

Eager to announce progress on the government-sponsored thermal water analysis, the superintendent provided a table noting spring serial numbers, temperatures and flow which was published in his 1901 annual report. A condensed version is as follows:

No.	Name	Degrees F.	Gallons/Day
1	Egg Spring	113.4	28,800
2	Arsenic Spring	125.4	5,400
3	Arlington Spring	143.1	19,938
4	Cliff Spring	132.6	3,600
5	Avenue Spring	142.5	17,280
6	Boiler House Spring	135.5	32,400
7	Imperial Spring (north)	140.2	9,257
8	Crystal Spring	95.4	2,000
9	Rector Spring	142.0	25,920
10	Cave Spring	135.3	18,514
11	Little Iron Spring (north)	134.2	12,960
12	Little Geyser Spring	97.2	524
13	Little Iron Spring (south)	133.3	12,960
14	Ral Spring	141.6	8,640
15	Big Iron Spring	147.0	201,600
16	Imperial Spring (south)	141.4	9,257
17	Arsenic Spring (north)	131.7	5,400
18	Hitchcock Spring	135.2	35,000
19	Sumpter Spring	133.5	13,292
20	Superior Spring (north)	115.4	3,677
21	Alum Spring	109.9	1,152
22	Superior Spring (south)	134.8	2,700

[319] *Annual Report for 1901.*
[320] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 25 January 1902, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 26.

23	Twin Spring (north)	143.6	5,400
24	Twin Spring (south)	144.1	5,400
25	Old Hale Spring	144.8	3,500
26	Palace Spring	146.1	25,847
27	Tunnel Spring	125.4	800
28	Maurice Spring	139.6	21,000
29	Dripping Spring	134.8	2,618
30	Arch Spring	129.0	34,045
31	Haywood Spring	124.5	3,600
32	John W. Noble Spring	114.8	28,800
33	Lamar Spring	118.9	3,600
34	H. W. Wiley Spring	118.2	28,800
35	Ed Hardin Spring	102.2	2,469
36	Eisele Spring	120.0	9,600
37	Stevens Spring	127.2	5,760
38	Horseshoe Spring	137.8	40,000
39	Army and Navy Spring	142.5	35,000
40	W. J. Little Spring	138.0	4,320
41	Mud Spring	116.2	4,000
42	Magnesia Spring	136.9	50,000
43	Reservoir Spring	115.3	20,000
44	Liver Spring (cold)	46.4	659
45	Kidney Spring (cold)	55.4	511
46	Fordyce Spring	124.7	25,000[321]

Naming the springs became an issue and subject of departmental inquiry to which the superintendent responded at length. Many of the springs over time had locally acquired names by association or supposed ownership and the Haywood analysis necessitated the arbitrary assignation of both numbers and names. Haywood and Eisele collaborated to make the process both logical and easy. In the few cases where a spring did not have a name, they supplied one. Their numbering system began at the north with consecutive numbers generally running to the south. Historic names were retained for all but nine springs; two of those had been named by Capt. Robert R. Stevens (No. 32, John W. Noble Spring, after the former secretary of the Interior; and No. 37, Stevens Spring, so inscribed for Capt. Stevens on the spring arch keystone). No. 18, Hitchcock Spring, was named for the incumbent secretary of the Interior. No. 28 proved problematic as it had been locally known as Hale Spring, yet the original by that name actually lay beneath the Hale Bath House. Because it was not on the Hale lease and it supplied water to the Maurice Bath House, its designation became Maurice Spring, in honor of Charles G. Maurice. No. 31, Haywood Spring, never previously bore a name, and was tagged for J. K. Haywood. No. 34, H. W. Wiley Spring, was named by Professor Haywood for his boss: Harvey Washington Wiley, director of USDA's Bureau of Chemistry and renowned food chemist. Haywood also selected the moniker for No. 36, Eisele Spring, after its developer, Martin A. Eisele. Both men named No. 39, Army and Navy Spring,

[321] *Annual Report for 1901.* Omitted are the Celsius temperatures and only the first recorded Fahrenheit readings are reported here. With few exceptions, two readings took place several weeks or months apart.

because of its location on hospital grounds. No. 35, Ed Hardin Spring, was named after its developer, the reservation's waterman. Names for the springs hereafter remained constant.[322]

J. K. Haywood's analysis first came before the Senate Committee on Public Lands on April 4, 1902. In addition to flow, Haywood measured temperature on most springs twice, collecting 10-gallon samples of each spring, and shipping them to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Chemistry in Washington, D.C., for intensive determinations of their various mineral constituents. Those constituents in the 44 hot springs and two cold springs were as follows:

Oxygen, consuming capacity	Chlorine
Albuminoid ammonia	Boric acid
Free ammonia	Phosphoric acid
Lithium	Nitric acid
Sodium	Nitrous acid
Potassium	Sulphuric acid
Magnesium	Silicic acid
Calcium	Carbonic acid
Iron and aluminum	Bicarbonic acid
Manganese	Nitrogen
Arsenic	Oxygen
Iodine	Hydrogen sulphide
Bromine	Total solids

Haywood used Big Iron Spring (No. 15), the largest spring by volume, as an example. It possessed a chemical composition "so nearly alike" to them all. It also contained the following substances:

Barium
Strontium
Fluorine[323]

After addressing the chemical makeup of the thermal water, Haywood theorized on its medicinal value:

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[322] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 23 November 1903, Superintendent Letter Books and Journal, HOSP 4713 to 4720, March 1903 to April 1904, Archives Box 1.

[323] Senate Document No. 282, 57th Congress, 1st Session, *Report of an Analysis of the Waters of the Hot Springs on the Hot Springs Reservation, Hot Springs, Garland County, Ark. with an Account of the Methods of Analysis Employed and the Medicinal Value of Various Substances Usually Found in Mineral Water, by J. K. Haywood, In Charge of Laboratory of Insecticides and Agricultural Waters of the Bureau of Chemistry, U. S. Department of Agriculture, and Geological Sketch of Hot Springs, Arkansas, by Walter Harvey Weed, Geologist, United States Geological Survey, Prepared Under the Supervision of the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1902) 11-12. Hereafter cited as Haywood and Weed, *Analysis of the Waters of the Hot Springs and Geological Sketch*.

> *"The curative effects of thermal waters are undoubtedly due, to a large extent, to their stimulating effects on the excretory organs of the skin and the kidneys. To fully understand this we have only to examine the routine through which a patient passes at these thermal resorts. The pores are first thoroughly opened and sweating begun by immersing the patient in hot water from three to ten minutes. The patient is then placed in the steaming room for about five minutes and at the same time drinks copiously of hot water. This treatment, of course, produces a profuse perspiration. After this the patient is wrapped in blankets and passed on to a warm room for twenty to thirty minutes, where the perspiration runs off in streams. After this the patient is rubbed down and allowed to dress. A desire to urinate soon comes. Thus we see that the system is thoroughly flooded with water and washed out each day, and that tissue changes take place with wonderful rapidity. It is no wonder then that uric acid, syphilitic poisons, other materials of disease, and mercurial and other metallic poisons are soon eliminated from the system. With such effects as those mentioned above, hot baths then must be of value in the treatment of rheumatism, gout, syphilis, neuralgia, etc."*[324]

In summarizing his analysis, the chemist noted that while the mineral matter content was virtually identical throughout the springs, there were some minor variations, namely in springs 12, 20, 27, and 43. The variations differed from 170.1 (No. 12) to 310 (No.43) parts per million. The average among the springs was 275 to 280 parts per million. While mineral composition was similar, there were anomalies among springs 12, 27, 37, 41, and 43. Hayward elaborated: "Spring 12 has a higher percentage of silica and sulphuric acid than the average, and a lower percentage of bicarbonic acid and calcium; spring 27, a higher percentage of silica and a lower percentage of bicarbonic acid and calcium; springs 37 and 41, a higher percentage of sulphuric acid; and spring 43 a lower percentage of silica, bicarbonic acid and magnesium, and a much higher percentage of sulphuric acid, potassium, and sodium." The differences were not sufficient enough to cause of difference in medicinal value except, Haywood wrote, for two springs. The first, No. 12 (Little Geyser Spring), was "markedly weaker in medicinal constituents," while the second, No. 43 (Reservoir Spring), had a higher concentration of "salts present which have a laxative effect."[325]

Chemist J. K. Haywood opined that the thermal water had excellent results for treating various illnesses because of four principal reasons:

> *"(1) The waters are hot, and consequently possess the medicinal value of all thermal waters, i.e., when used as a bath, in the ordinary manner followed in such cases, they stimulate the flow of sweat and urine, and thus give the system a thorough washing out each day. In this manner uric acid and syphilitic poisons are removed from the body. Mercury and other metallic poisons are also removed, in consequence of which much*

[324] Ibid., 29-30.
[325] Ibid., 78.

larger doses of mercury can be given to the patient than would otherwise be possible.

"(2) These waters contain iodides and bromides, which, although present only in traces, undoubtedly have a marked alternative effect on the system, and form soluble compounds with the salts of mercury, thus aiding in their elimination from the system.

"(3) The presence of lithium in these waters, even though in traces, very likely accounts, to some extent, for the removal of some of the uric acid from the system, and the consequent improvement in the condition of rheumatic and gouty persons.

"(4) All of these springs contain quite large amounts of calcium and magnesium bicarbonates. The calcium and magnesium salts of uric acid are much more soluble than the uric acid itself. Taking these two facts into consideration, it seems plausible to assume that a great deal of the curative effects of these waters is due to the formation of the more soluble compounds, calcium and magnesium urate, which can more easily be eliminated from the system than the uric acid itself."[326]

USGS Geologist Walter Harvey Weed weighed in on the much-speculated means by which hot springs acquired its thermal qualities: "a great body of still heated igneous rocks intruded in the earth's crust by volcanic agencies." He pointed to evidence seen in the granite at Potash Sulphur Springs and Magnet Cove, where at the latter were tufa deposits from former thermal springs. Dr. Weed further opined:

"The hypothesis is strengthened by the occurrence of intrusive dikes at various localities about the springs, and their trend and occurrence indicate that the molten material which filled the fissures did not come from the bodies of rock now exposed at Potash Sulphur Springs or at Magnet Cove, but had some deep-seated source whose location is indicated by the dikes as being approximately under the hot springs. Deep-seated waters converted into vapors by contact with this 'batholith' of hot rock probably ascend through fissures toward the surface, where they probably meet cold spring waters which are heated by the vapors. As the igneous dikes nearby are fissures reaching down to this great mass of igneous magma which have been filled by it to form dikes, it is not unreasonable to suppose that fissures extend down to the now solid but still hot igneous mass."[327]

With the water analysis and source of heat questions answered, daily realities of park operations continued. A casualty of success and over-work came in 1900 when the free dispensary at the Government Free Bath House closed: "discontinued by the

[326] Ibid.
[327] Ibid., 93-94.

physicians abandoning the work." All three members of the medical board abruptly left and "moved from the city." Efforts to re-staff by the manager proved unsuccessful. Instead, existing manpower needed to be altered with the recommendation the scavenger position be abolished in favor of a laborer at $30 per month. Assuming the scavenger duties, the laborer was also expected to assist the male and female attendants "in keeping the house in a cleanly and healthful condition." For the first time, the superintendent reported an anomaly among bathers, so-called "bathing fiends, this class being similar in their cravings for the baths to those addicted to the tobacco, liquor, and opiate habits, and whose continuous bathing is the source of much annoyance to the management." He reported that approximately five percent of bathers suffered from this physical and mental condition in which bathing was contraindicated to their health. In such cases, the manager followed a policy of refusing the baths until a bather provided a medical certificate to indicate the baths would be beneficial.[328]

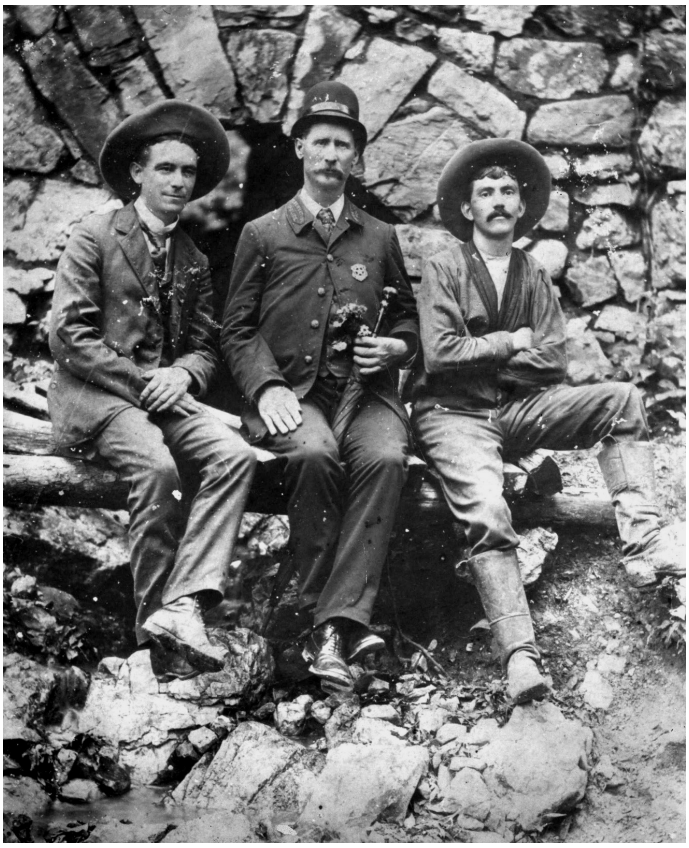

Figure 67. Hot Springs Reservation Policeman George Middleton Burrough in center with two unidentified men, c. early 1900s (HSNP 10149, National Park Service)

THE GAMBLING EVIL

Tipped-off that slot machines were in the Arlington Hotel rotunda, Interior ordered the superintendent to investigate. On June 29, 1900, Martin Eisele reported that, indeed, he found two slot machines in the hotel's rotunda and ordered their removal. He assured the department that there were no other slot machines or gambling devices in bathhouses on or off the permanent reservation.[329] Gambling had always been an issue at Hot Springs, as well as most other western frontier areas. Gaming of all kinds met with universal acceptance and popularity among a more open and tolerant society in the American West. Folk hero-gamblers abounded in the popular press of the era; from 1850 to 1910, gamblers typically

[328] *Annual Report for 1900*. "Contraindicate" is to state to be inadvisable, i.e., to state something to be inadvisable while taking particular medication or treatment because of a likely adverse reaction.

[329] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 29 June 1900, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1. Eisele reported: "I am assured by the management that there is no other gaming allowed in the Hotel except such games of cards which are occasionally arranged between the guests without their knowledge or consent. They have a card room where the guests play all kinds of games such as whist, euchre, dominoes, chess, checkers and various other games…."

plied their trade in the western United States to Alaska. In the American South, gambling flourished in three states: Arkansas (Hot Springs and Fort Smith); Mississippi (Vicksburg and Natchez); and Louisiana (Shreveport and New Orleans).[330]

Gaming had deep roots at Hot Springs, an economic boon that rivaled the thermal waters. Called the "Monaco of America," a front-page expose in the 1891 *New York Times* revealed that eleven gaming houses were actually licensed by the city, and private clubs and poker rooms proliferated. Private games could be had in hotel rooms, saloon back rooms, and anyplace else where tourists could be fleeced. State law forbade gaming, but Hot Springs licensed it at $50 a month, imposed as "fines" against the proprietors on the first of each month. Payment insured the establishment could operate day and night, free from police interference. Also operating freely was the Arkansas Investment Company, an off-shoot of a Louisiana lottery firm, again felonious under Arkansas law. With a Hot Springs-levied $50 monthly "fine," daily drawings occurred at 11:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.[331] Preventing encroachment of municipal gaming activities within Hot Springs Reservation became a routine law enforcement obligation within the national park.

USE OF DYNAMITE ON HOT SPRINGS MOUNTAIN

Another more immediate and potentially deadly intrusion on government property involved a powder magazine installed on Hot Springs Mountain by a local hardware store. Concerned for their safety and property, citizens in the area, petitioned to have it removed. Assured by the owner that it was empty and no longer used, Superintendent Eisele issued a 30-day order for its removal. Noticing it was still in place on December 19, 1900, he commanded reservation workmen to perform the task, but they discovered it full of explosives. Eisele gave the company one hour to take away the dynamite after which time his men demolished the wooden powder magazine.[332]

Blasting through tufa rock for construction purposes continued to be an issue and caused friction between Interior and the War Department. Complaints arose when Maj. Torney, commanding surgeon/acting quartermaster of the Army and Navy Hospital, used dynamite to excavate an area for a new power and light plant measuring eighty by twenty-five feet and a depth of twelve feet. Blasting took place within a short distance of a spring and resulted in a cacophony of citizen complaints. Eisele also feared for the long-term effect: "The risk is too great for the amount of conveniences involved to take

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[330] Robert K. DeArment, *Knights of the Green Cloth: The Sage of the Frontier Gamblers* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982), frontispiece and 22-23. One of the more famous gamblers, George Devol, who earned an estimated $2 million during his 40-year career, retired in Hot Springs in 1886. He died there in 1903, "virtually penniless" and "eked out a subsistence by selling copies of his book extolling his exploits. Ibid., 331.

[331] "Gambling at Hot Springs: A City Which May Be Called The Monaco of America," *New York Times* 16 March 1891, l.

[332] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 18 August 1900; Superintendent Eisele to W. L. Babcock, letter, 28 October 1900; and Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Babcock, letter, 22 December 1900; all in Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

the chances of disarranging the structural conditions of the rock and diverting the water into other channels, and allowing it to flow off under ground [sic] at such low elevations that its utilization will be destroyed." Maj. Torney asserted his dominion over Army and Navy Hospital property and disputed Interior's interest therein. Eisele pointed out that the excavation was less than 60 feet from the Government Free Bath House containing up to 200 bathers and four feet from a newly constructed cooling tank built to collect water flowing out of the nearby spring. Further blasting could either increase or diminish its flow. Reminiscent of the 1884 water war between the two government agencies, Eisele wrote to Interior:

> *"It has been the custom of all previous Superintendents to utilize the hot water found on the Army and Navy Grounds, and provide the Hospital with water from other and more voluminous springs. As the Act of Congress makes it obligatory on the Secretary of the Interior to provide hot water for the Hospital, it would seem to indicate a supervisory control. On account of Maj. Torney challenging our jurisdiction and control of hot water on their grounds, I desire to be specially instructed on this point. I have made no specific demand for this supply, and all conferences between us have been friendly and cordial."*[333]

At the beginning of Eisele's superintendency, there were 24 individuals, co-partnerships, and/or corporations owning bathhouses paying water rents. During his second year in office, another off-reservation bathhouse opened in conjunction with the Moody Hotel. A modern brick bathhouse, its design specifications were reviewed and approved by Interior and featured ten tubs. On site of the former off-reservation Rockafellow, a new brick bathhouse with 18 tubs also opened in connection with the New Rockafellow Apartment Hotel.

THE WRIGHT INVESTIGATION, 1901

Exercising keen interest in Hot Springs affairs, Secretary Hitchcock ordered U.S. Indian Inspector J. George Wright back to Arkansas in early 1901 to conduct a follow-up investigation. Wright began with the Government Free Bath House. On his April 1 inspection, there were hundreds of bathers crowded into the patchwork structure which had badly cracked walls, ever-shifting foundations, and an unsafe, failing heating system. He advocated demolition and erection of a new facility with a capacity of at least 500 people. Because efforts to revive the dispensary were thus far unsuccessful, he called for Interior to employ a physician to examine applicant bathers, provide them with any required medicines, and verify proper thermal water temperatures. Wright found that the water pools were 105 to 115 degrees Fahrenheit—too hot according to most physicians.

To uphold high government standards, Wright advocated that a government-employed physician should make weekly sanitation inspections of all bathhouses. He observed that several houses had questionable cleanliness, "a disagreeable odor

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[333] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 22 April 1901, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

prevailing throughout the building," and that most managers remained in their offices and did not supervise attendants. The latter, he noted rarely used thermometers to check water temperatures or were literate enough to read and carry out instructions submitted by physicians for each bather. He repeated his advice that a medical board of examiners be established in order to protect the public and combat drumming. In addition to credentialing physicians, the board could also certify attendants. In order to implement the recommendation, he recognized that the state needed to cede legal jurisdiction to Interior and that his idea for a federal medical board had strong local support.

Figure 68. U.S. Indian Inspector J. George Wright (Oklahoma Historical Society)

The Indian Territory inspector had several final recommendations for Secretary Hitchcock. He believed the road system was sufficient and no new roads should be built, but that funding be provided for road repair and maintenance. Water-rent funds should be expended on the Government Free Bath House and park maintenance. In response to a complaint from the Waverly Hotel Bath House that the Arlington charged exorbitant rates for pumping thermal water to it, Wright advised Waverly be permitted to install and directly pump from the reservoir. He suggested no bathhouse be built between the Hale and Maurice because the public utilized a valuable thermal spring at the rear of the site. Intrusions there should also be removed, namely, a high board fence that Hale Bath House used to store wood and the Maurice's small brick pump house. When the Arlington's lease expired, their annual ground rent should be doubled or tripled. Litter seemed to be a problem along walks and drives and in the rear of Bathhouse Row. To solve this problem, trash receptacles should be installed with appropriate signage so that "more care is taken to see that this park presents a clean and attractive appearance."[334]

Taking Inspector Wright's commentary to heart, Eisele paid closer attention to the bathhouses and soon submitted his own report to the secretary. He observed that bathhouses had a tendency to crowd as many bathers as possible through with a minimum number of tubs. He fielded complaints from morning bathers, principally from the Maurice, Superior, and Magnesia, but it was a problem elsewhere, too. This piqued Hitchcock's interest and he requested a follow-up account focusing on reservation bathhouses with less than thirty tubs and how each might facilitate an increase in tubbage. Eisele eagerly replied with existing and potential increase: Imperial (25 increase by 5); Rammelsberg (18 increase by 12); Ozark (22 increase by 8); Palace (23 increase by 7); Maurice (24 increase by 6); and Hale (26 increase by 4). As for Lamar (40), Magnesia (30), Horse Shoe (30), and Arlington (40), he stated: "There is no good reason why these houses should pay on more tubs than the others as they have no

[334]J. George Wright to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 17 June 1901, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 26. His report totaled 13 pages. In response to too high temperatures, two cooling tanks were added at the Government Free Bath House.

advantage over the others. The minimum number of tubs should be 30, and if any bath house desired more it should be granted up to the limit of the law, viz. 40 tubs. The lessees on the reservation would thus all be treated alike."[335]

Crowding had indeed become an issue to such an extent that in 1902 the superintendent feared a near-future thermal water shortage. Visitation, estimated at 65,000 that year, had taxed the distribution-by-gravity thermal water system, and Eisele predicted that growing visitation numbers could soon necessitate pumping. While storage capacity in the permanent reservation's south end was plentiful, reservoirs in the north end were too small and at an increased usage rate, would prove insufficient in two to three years. To capture the large volume of thermal water going to waste below existing storage reservoirs, a deep storage reservoir could be built at bathhouse site 12, where the former Big Iron Bathhouse once stood. Eisele estimated its cost at $10,000. Another option, he believed, would be to build a large Hot Springs Mountain storage reservoir at a high elevation, pump water to it, and use the gravity distribution method whenever emergency supply events mandated it.

Because increased visitation should translate into increased government revenue, Martin Eisele recommended Interior consider seeking legislation to amend the Act of 1891 to raise tubbage limits from the 40-tub limit upward to 50, 75, or 100. This would accommodate the larger hotels (Arlington, Eastman, and Park) which desired placing tubs in individual guest rooms and have their clientele pay the increased water rents. "The demand for these private baths," Eisele wrote, "is growing constantly. There is a large percentage of wealthy people coming here each year who are anxious to get these comforts and conveniences and who are willing to pay for them, and are greatly disappointed because they cannot be obtained." Eisele noted that only the Arlington Hotel's eight tubs were semi-private and he fielded constant complaints from "visitors who prefer the luxury and comforts of a private bath to the inconvenience of going to the public bath houses, even though the bath house be connected with the hotel proper." He advised it would boost annual revenues for Interior as well as the lessees and at the same time satisfy a growing public need.[336] In a similar vein, the superintendent advised only the most modern bathhouses with the latest equipment and furnishings should be sanctioned. No more wooden buildings and none below a minimum $25,000 construction cost.

Interior followed up on the attractive idea of boosting its revenue. Congress granted the secretary full discretion in deciding tubbage for both hotels having bathhouses as well as stand-alone bathhouses. It allowed the secretary "the right to install, maintain, and use as many bathtubs as he deems proper and necessary for the public service and as the amount of hot water will justify" (U.S.C., Title 16, Section 361).[337] Using this authority, Interior authorized the Arlington and Eastman Hotels to install tubs for thermal water in their guestrooms. By early 1905, there were 18 and 23

[335] Quote from Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, 17 September 1902; see also, Eisele to Hitchcock, 31 July 1902, and Hitchcock to Eisele, 6 August 1902, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 27.
[336] *Annual Report for 1902.*
[337] *Act of Congress, 12 April 1904* (33 Stat. 173).

tubs in each respectively. Concerning the issue of trusting hotel management to operate them on an honor system, the superintendent installed a printed certificate in a glass-covered frame on the inside door of each guest room featuring a private bath certifying the integrity of the thermal water being furnished. "Absence of such a certificate," he reasoned, "in any room purporting to give Hot Springs water bath would be prima-face [sic] evidence of the hotel management surreptitiously using water without paying for it, or fraudulently giving baths with other water."[338]

Reporting on Whittington Lake Park, Eisele observed that it did not enjoy the visitation that its beauty deserved: "The number of people who take advantage of the recreative [sic] features of this picturesque little park is somewhat limited, but for the present this is not surprising when it is remembered that the entire reservation may be said to be one vast park, more centrally located and more accessible, but with the continued growth and expansion of the city this little park will become popular as a recreative resort." The lakes, he said, were actually nothing more than ponds and had proven to be a failure because their shallow depth of five feet combined with Whittington Creek's seasonally diminished flow turned them into stagnant swamps. Nearby residents, fearing malaria, were petitioning to have them abolished. Eisele concurred and called on Interior to order them filled-in and converted to parkland. In the meantime, park crews would continue draining them and using the muck and decaying vegetative matter as fertilizer, spread over flowerbeds and lawn areas.

Considerable time spent on preparing the information-laden annual reports to the secretary paid off. The superintendent's annual reports were always published and presented to Congress, the media, and the American public, educating everyone as to the national parks many issues and funding requirements. A generous 57th Congress approved an appropriation of $48,562 for the protection and improvement of Hot Springs Reservation, including funds to remodel the Government Free Bath House. It read as follows:

Repairs to roads and drives	$14,700
Repairs to walks, footpaths, etc.	1,360
Completion of retaining walls	4,750
Loam soil for parks	1,000
Repairs to drainage system	1,402
Trees, shrubbery, flowers, grass seed, etc.	350
Remodeling and enlarging Government free bath house	25,000
Total amount appropriated	$48,562[339]

Clearly, Congress saw the value of its Arkansas national park and was willing to supplement its investment there with public funds.

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[338]Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 1 January 1905, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1. The original application provided half of that amount but the error was corrected and approved. See Eisele to Hitchcock, letter, 7 January 1905.

[339] *Annual Report for 1902.*

Secretary Hitchcock sent U.S. Indian Inspector J. George Wright back to Hot Springs for a follow-up inspection in June 1903. He found the superintendent to be "rendering faithful service" with no complaints about his management. Bathhouses were observing Interior's rules and regulations but he discovered "sanitary arrangements are not perfect, and at times a disagreeable odor prevails." Wright suggested during the busy season inspections be held at least twice a month and deficiencies noticed by the superintendent reported to managers at once with demand to remedy them. Wright advocated the urgent need for an African American only bathhouse and endorsed ongoing negotiations to have one built off-reservation. He recognized the department's requirement that a bond be secured and pointed out none had been required from white developers in advance of construction, adding that attempts to secure bond had failed. White bankers and investors were unwilling to grant it. He recommended that if the local black operators possessed the land and capability to erect a bathhouse according to an approved plan with assurances to follow department rules, the secretary should give his consent to a lease. Wright reiterated previous recommendations on litter, drumming, roads, and dispensary, and endorsed the concept of additional tubbage for hotel guest rooms [340]

The issue of sanitary conditions and potential spread of contagious or infectious disease resulted in Eisele responding to Interior's concern. Interviews with physicians and bathhouse managers revealed no reported cases of infection, with much of the concern surrounding those with venereal diseases. Standards of cleanliness for the most part were upheld; bathers furnished their own robes and towels and tubs were thoroughly scrubbed after every bath with alkaline solutions. Floors were swabbed with lye water and disinfectants twice daily and bathhouses were ventilated at night for a fresh exchange of air. Only five bathhouses had laundry facilities where water was brought to the boiling point; others merely used the thermal water which was below 212 degrees Fahrenheit, along with concentrated lye or other alkaline solutions and washed thoroughly with soap. Towels and robes used on syphilitic patients were laundered separately. Concerns about sanitary conditions were hyped, Eisele believed, by those with fertile or mischievous imaginations.[341] He noted: "I am aware, however, of a certain degree of revulsion that pervades the minds of over fastidious persons concerning the effects of promiscuous bathing in public bath houses, fearing the acquirement of infectious or contagious diseases." No case of infection through thermal bathing had ever been reported, but there was a possibility, but the probability, very remote.[342] Nonetheless, Interior wanted to put the issue to rest. On September 17, 1903, the superintendent instructed bathhouse owners and managers to supply their laundry facilities with equipment heating water to the boiling point and that "all bath robes, towels, bath mats and other accessories to the bath which require laundrying [sic] be immersed in water of this temperature until thoroughly sterilized in order to destroy all disease germs." He directed them to remove all "decayed and unsightly carpet strips" and replace them with new or with rubber strips. Toilet seats were to be scrubbed daily with boiling water and disinfectants and he mandated

[340] U.S. Indian Inspector Wright to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 20 June 1903, RG 79, Box 28, Entry 1.
[341] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 28 August 1903, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.
[342] *Annual Report for 1903.*

scrubbing each tub following a bath with alkaline solutions--all of this designed to ensure strict government-imposed sanitary standards.[343]

Figure 69. Crystal Bathhouse, segregated facility for African Americans at 415 Malvern Avenue, in 1904 (Courtesy Mosaic Templars Museum, Little Rock)

guaranty company willing to provide a bond as well as their financial inability to furnish a certified check for the required amount in lieu of a bond. Eisele personally vouched for their character and capacity to construct a bathhouse according to standards as both were in the construction business. He forwarded plans and specifications to the secretary, stating "I am so anxious and desirous of having a bath house for colored people that I recommend favorable consideration of this application without exacting conditions that will prevent them from complying. I feel morally certain that if a lease is granted them we will have a bath house for colored people."[344] Interior Secretary Hitchcock agreed. August 1, 1903, saw a ten-year bathhouse lease executed and the Crystal opened its doors on April 1, 1904. The off-reservation brick bathhouse on Malvern Avenue had twelve tubs and a rate of $5 for a course of twenty-one baths.[345]

As the U.S. temperance movement gained strength, Interior Secretary Hitchcock--in response to a complaint about a "bar for the sale of liquors" operating within Hot Springs Reservation--sought clarification. Laws prohibiting liquor sales on government-owned military reservations or to Native Americans in Indian Country did exist. Eisele acknowledged recent congressional attempts to ban alcohol sales on any government property but said since 1895 a bar had operated inside the rebuilt Arlington Hotel. The Arlington's lease did not prohibit it nor was there "any statute which prohibits the sale of intoxicating liquors either upon Government reservations in general or upon the Hot

[343] Superintendent Eisele to Owners and Managers of Bath Houses Receiving Hot Water from the Hot Springs Reservation, Arkansas, letter, 17 September 1903, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.
[344] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 15 June 1903, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.
[345] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letters 4 August 1903 and 21 March 1904, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

Springs Reservation in particular."[346] Clearly, the Arlington bar was a situation for the department to monitor.

The War Department wanted to expand its Hot Springs holdings in order to make improvements at the Army and Navy Hospital. Deputy Surgeon General, Lt. Col. Blair D. Taylor, hospital commander, requested the transfer of five acres to the hospital's east, stating that the "wild and uncultivated" area would alleviate crowded conditions and permit their dump and manure pile to be moved further away. The tract in question had been conferred by Congress in 1898 to the Knights of Pythias to build a national sanitarium and bathhouse. The five-year construction deadline had expired in May 1903. Under instructions from Interior, Eisele wrote to the supreme lodge headquarters to inquire if Knights of Pythias intended to ask for an extension or had decided not to proceed. The answer was no, that the organization's membership declined the Hot Springs endeavor. Legislation was now necessary to re-convey the tract.[347]

An oddity, granting a thermal lease to a business to rehabilitate injured or diseased horses, came in 1903. The off-reservation enterprise supplied a therapeutic thermal pool operated by Simon Cooper. Another non-bathhouse lease went to the Hot Springs Medical Company.[348]

Local interest in building a railroad over West Mountain continued since 1893 with extensions granted and too little progress made. Ten years later, Eisele, ever the pro-development advocate, reported that the right of way had been cleared of timber and graded, but financing and further progress stopped with legal entanglements. Yet another bill to extend the deadline, H.R. 9298, had been introduced and the superintendent believed the investors would proceed if granted a franchise. He recommended favorable department consideration of the bill, arguing it would increase the recreational opportunities of Hot Springs as a summer resort. Another bill, H.R. 10143, with similar intent, also received enthusiastic endorsement:

> *"These incline and scenic railways are operated successfully at many other resorts but nothing of the kind has as yet been consummated here, although there is a constant, popular demand for these features from the public. The road proposed… will aid materially to the recreative [sic]*

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[346] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 3 August 1903, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

[347] Lt. Col. Taylor (through U.S. Surgeon General of the Army and Secretary of War) to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 27 October 1903; Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 16 November 1903; Superintendent Eisele to Supreme Chancellor Tracy R. Bangs, letter, 27 January 1904; and Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 6 February 1904, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

[348] *Annual Report for 1903.* St. Joseph's Infirmary at Hot Springs was also in the process of adding a bathing department for which it applied for a lease for ten tubs. For the first five years of the lease, Cooper paid the water rent regularly but never installed a pool and did not use any water. Cooper applied to renew and Smith concurred, recommending a $120 per annum charge with the hope that the he put "his experimental ideas into practical operation." See Superintendent Smith to Secretary Garfield, letter 28 December 1907, 1907-09 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4717.

features of this place and will no doubt strike a popular chord as a means of diversion and pleasure of visitors and citizens."[349]

H.R. 9054, introduced on January 6, 1904, provided for a railroad over East Mountain or Hot Springs Mountain with a 45-foot-wide right of way for two tracks and one acre park area upon which to erect buildings for public amusement, all subject to Interior's approval. Remaining steadfast in opposition, the secretary did not approve passage of any railroad bill.[350]

Improvements for 1903 included building a temporary structure to continue operations while the adjoining Free Bath House was rebuilt. Smaller pools and dressing rooms could accommodate smaller summer crowds while at the same time segregating the sexes and races. Reservation crews received authorization to construct a greenhouse, rebuild the barn and vehicle sheds, and erect a barbed-wire and post fence along the northern and eastern boundary of North Mountain and Hot Springs Mountain. The fence was necessary to protect government land from neighboring dairy and small truck gardeners whose livestock constantly invaded and grazed on grass, shrubbery, and flowers. This annoyance had employees scrambling day and night rounding up cattle and transporting them to the city pound. With the change to exclusive jurisdiction, the arrangement with the city also changed; the city had no authority to impound errant livestock or to impose fines on their owners. Other than continuously driving the animals out, the practical solution was to erect a three-mile barrier fence.[351] Eisele also secured permission to rebuild and enlarge the thermal water storage reservoir; it measured 100 by twenty feet and two separate depth levels, ten feet and 14.6 feet. Containment walls were three feet thick and the roof comprised of ten-inch steel girders four feet apart with concrete arches between them, all covered with smooth cement plaster two inches thick. Its front had a veneer of sawed Alabama limestone with pilasters for a more finished appearance facing Reserve Park. The deep-storage end had a capacity of 50,000 gallons supplied from Springs No. 9, 11, and 13. The surface storage end with a capacity of 92,000 gallons, filled from Big Iron Spring No. 15. The combined reservoir supplied via gravity thermal water to Bathhouse Row and the Reserve Park drinking fountains.[352]

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[349] Quote from Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 30 January 1904; and letter, 23 January 1904, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

[350] H.R. 9054, 58th Congress, 2nd Session, 6 January 1904, introduced by Representative Robinson (Ark.), Box 66, Folder 6-25 U.S. Government Documents, MC 534 Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville; and note from Interior on correspondence related to H.R. 10143, 5 February 1904, reads "to Hon. John F. Lacey, Chairman, Comm. Reporting unfavorably on bill," RG 79, Entry 1, Box 29.

[351] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 13 April 1903, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1; and *Annual Report for 1903*. Acting Secretary Thomas Ryan authorized $350 for the structures via letter dated 21 April 1903 and $500 for the fence via letter dated 24 April 1903. The barn reutilized brick from the old Free Bath House and contained stalls for stock, feed and harness rooms, saw-dust bins, and vehicle storage areas. The second story was for storage. See Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 1 June 1903.

[352] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letters, 13 August, 5 November, and 4 December 1903, RG 79, Entry 1, Box 28.

> Road upgrades and other pedestrian improvements accelerated with funding appropriated in 1902 in the sundry civil act. Roads were widened, turns extended, grades modified, and the drives all coated with cement gravel. Surface cross drainage was installed at problem areas. A follow-up appropriation in March 1903 provided $18,000 to complete West Mountain road. The road was extended from its former terminus at Canyon Street west along the mountain's north slope to Brook Street and then to a junction with Whittington Avenue. From Hawthorn Street, the new road extended south along the mountain's eastern slope to Pecan Street, over which it then connected with Prospect Avenue. The extension permitted the road to be in accordance with the original design and traversed a little more than four miles, adding to the total of mountain roads at $9^{7}/_{8}$ miles. Of the new road, Eisele noted *"The grades are moderate, not exceeding 4 per cent at any point, has safe width, the turns are large and safe, the roadbed is substantial and perfectly surfaced, the drainage is ample, and well distributed, and the road is located so as to give the most picturesque view of the mountains and surrounding country, giving a perfect view of the city from the extreme north to the extreme south with the city below in plain sight for the entire distance."*[353]

In addition, all retaining walls envisioned by Capt. Stevens were built, including one on Fountain Street from behind the superintendent's residence extending in a semi-circle to the street and on to the Happy Hollow entrance to Hot Springs Mountain road.[354]

Illuminating Bathhouse Row came in 1903 when the Hot Springs Water Company, operators of the local electric light plant, offered to furnish "sixteen all night, nominal, sixteen hundred candle power electric arc lights" for $7.50 each month with the government furnishing the posts and brackets." Interior approved their use with the caveat they "not be used during periods of bright moonlight." Eager to meet the public demand for such park lighting, Eisele told the secretary he had held off recommending it due to meager revenues but this was too good a deal from the local utility to pass up. Illuminating the front promenade at night would extend public use of and benefit parkland: "The concrete walk in Reserve Park is now the principal promenade in the city and is resorted to more than any other, especially is this true in the warm balmy evenings of spring, summer, and autumn. At present there is no light for this park except what is reflected from the shop windows on the opposite side of Central Avenue, and this fact detracts greatly from its attractiveness as many fear to walk in the darkness." He also urged consideration of lighting other areas: "Aside from the promenade, there should be a limited number of lights at advantageous points along the roads and walks running through the park from the Army and Navy Hospital entrance to the Happy Hollow entrance. The light reflected from arc lights at this elevation would light up the area of the improved park below it."[355]

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[353] *Annual Report for 1904.*
[354] *Annual Report for 1903.*
[355] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 23 February 1903; and H. E. Martin, Vice President, Hot Springs Water Company, to Superintendent Eisele, letter, 20 February 2903.

Concern over low government wages saw Superintendent Eisele advocating a five dollar a month raise to $540 per annum for his Foresters and Gardeners. He believed they had reached a level of proficiency in their work which entitled them to greater compensation. In addition, many were knowledgeable in other fields such as mechanics including the thermal water distribution system. He argued their work saved the government from employing skilled mechanics at higher wages.[356] Delay or denial of the raise resulted in the loss of one of his most prized employees. Four months later, Forester and Gardener Dan T. Richardson resigned in order to accept more lucrative employment. Richardson had worked for many years as a blacksmith and experienced pipe fitter and Eisele feared others might be looking elsewhere for better-paying jobs.[357] He also pitched for a $200 per annum raise for his clerk, B. Frank Bayley, to $1200 per annum, and that he be moved into the Classified Civil Service category. Eisele pointed to the clerk's important position, keeping track of routine correspondence, familiarity with all positions, and knowledge of all Interior forms, methods, rules and regulations. Moving it out of the Executive Civil Service, where it was subject to political patronage and removal, would make the clerk position permanent and provide necessary stability for the superintendent's office.[358]

Keeping talented employees on the government payroll proved problematic. Able to convince Richardson to return for another season, the superintendent reported losing him again the following year to better-paying employment. Eisele outlined the dilemma to the secretary: "The work of this force is varied, covering some mechanical knowledge, gardening and common labor. Their duties cover most all lines of work and after they get a comprehensive knowledge of the work and become valuable to us their abilities are recognized by private parties and are hired away from us. All of these men have families and can hardly support themselves and families on the wages received." He again pressed for a five dollar a month raise and in order to keep another valued employee, recommended he be re-classified as Assistant Waterman with a $600 per annum salary.[359]

Movement on potential sale of excess government lots came in July 1904 when a board of appraisers consisting of the register and receiver of the Little Rock General Land Office and the superintendent made a four-day inventory and appraisal of 154 unsold lots spread throughout Hot Springs. Values were assigned according to location and sales of contiguous property and a total value placed at $82,025. Some of the lots had long-time squatter homes on them. The board recommended scheduling a sale soon, that there was no reason to hold the lots for ongoing government supervision without gaining any income from them.[360] Their report elicited Interior's interest concerning potential whetstone quarrying and squatters. Eisele reported that there were indications of whetstone on lot 1, block 159, and lots 1 through 9 of block 194, but whether it was of

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[356] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 4 June 1903, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.
[357]Ibid., Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 6 October 1903,
[358] Ibid., Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 24 September 1903.
[359] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 21 September 1904, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.
[360] Board of Appraisers to Comissioner of the General Land Office, Washington, D.C., letter 19 July 1904, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

marketable quality remained in doubt. Upon conferring with reputable "whet-rock men" he determined that marketable whetstone only existed on lots 1 and 8 of block 194, and the rest of them would not sell "unless purchased by greenhorns who want to speculate." The squatters all had shanties and fences of little value. The superintendent wrote: "None of these improvements were considered of any real value by the board and they decided not to burden the report with a mention of them as they were of no consequence. They were all negro huts, old tumble down cabins, and not worthy of any serious consideration." The African Americans were penniless with no equity, mere trespassers who were permitted to remain on the lots without paying rent. He urged the department to ignore their claims and proceed to sale.[361]

Solicitations to sell commercial merchandise on parkland also came to Interior's attention with Eisele's recommendation not to stray from a strict policy of denying all applicants. It was the rule of present and past superintendents "not to permit hawking, peddling or begging on the reservation." To allow it would result in the park being

> *"over-run with all kinds of vendors, beggars and games to fleece the people or annoy them. All kinds of applications are received at this office for permission to sell all manner of articles, to establish booths, boot blacking stands, tents, fortune teller's wigwams, gambling devices, peanut and fruit stands, cigar stands, side shows, gospel meetings, political addresses, auction stands, and peddlers, hawkers, and beggars of all kinds and descriptions, and if permitted would convert this reservation into veritable Donny brook fair, an exposition midway or characteristic pike."*

Further, he added,

> *"People resort to this reservation for rest, recreation and quietude, for relaxation and pleasure, and in a measure to avoid the annoyances and cares of every day busy life, and to escape the vexatious solicitations of the commercial marts of trade. I respectfully recommend that no deviation be made from our established customs."*[362]

An enlarged Government Free Bath House opened in January 1904. While the original two-story front was retained to house administrative functions, the remainder of the house was completely rebuilt with separate and segregated bathing departments equipped with porcelain-lined bath tubs styled on the Roman system with the tubs recessed into the cement flooring. It featured private lockers for clothing, steam-heating as well as good lighting and ventilation and modern equipment throughout the building. Hot Springs visitation had doubled during the past five years to 101,000. With the newly-built Free Bath House, demand increased as well with "an avalanche of applications… with which we can hardly cope, either in capacity, service, or volume of

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[361] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 11 October 1904, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

[362] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 20 December 1904, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

water." The superintendent warned that as fame of the new bathhouse spread, the volume of indigent applicants would continue to increase and far exceed capacity. Thermal water, supplied both by gravity and pumping, was continuously flowing day and night to keep up with demand. In the 1904 fiscal year, applications granted stood at 5,190, with 318 refused, for a total of 134,589 baths.[363]

Curiously, Eisele reported on public perceptions in his 1904 report in which he stated full satisfaction would not be achieved until the government took over operation of all bathhouses. Present conditions only provided median benefits of baths provided under medical direction. "I am aware," he wrote, "that there pervades the public mind an impression that the various houses are not elaborate enough, either in size, equipment, and cost of construction, and that they expect the Government to require more extensive as well as more expensive and ornate designs of bath houses, coupled with details of equipment and furnishings and trained service with facilities for giving baths of luxurious splendor." He then addressed the capitalist system's shortcomings:

> *"There is also adverse comment on the spirit of commercialism which is apparent in the present system of baths at this place; that the rivalry for patronage among bath houses is in conflict with the ideas of the public regarding Government control. I am convinced that this adverse criticism will always exist under the present plan of having private lessees of these public utilities, and that this condition must continue as long as the present system exists."*

Going out on a limb, the superintendent concluded: "The ideal condition will never be realized or obtained until such time as the Government assumes entire control and operation of the bathing interests here, under strict rules as regards discipline and competent medical direction."[364]

In order to meet increasing demand for services, Congress sanctioned construction of two more water storage reservoirs ($11,500) in the annual sundry civil appropriations act. Adding to the two built the previous year, the 1904 reservoirs were located in back of the Free Bath House, 20 by 24 by 3½ feet and left open for cooling water to temper baths, and a 15 by 18 by 15-foot deep storage reservoir between the Palace and Horse Shoe Bath Houses. The latter collected water running to waste from low level mountainside springs and whose capacity could be utilized by pumping to augment supply at the Free Bath House. All reservoirs were fitted with overflow connections to the main distribution system.[365]

Congress also repealed its 1877 transfer of block 114 to the county to build a public building. Instead, in an act approved March 22, 1904, the government took back

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[363] Annual Report for 1904. The number was actually depressed because the temporary facility open during construction could not accommodate demand and only the most deserving indigent were bathed.
[364] *Annual Report for 1904*. Interior Secretary Ethan Hitchcock did not disagree as the official superintendent's annual report was printed and circulated.
[365] *Annual Report for 1904.*

3.62 acres of block 114 in exchange for granting lots 1, 2, 9, and 10 of block 94 to Garland County. It required the county to erect a building not less than $75,000 in value within three years.[366]

Its action came prior to another great catastrophe, a February 25, 1905 fire that destroyed nearly one-fourth of Hot Springs, including the county courthouse and its records. Fortunately, the main business district, including the hotels and bathing establishments, were spared. Two off-reservation businesses, the Alhambra and Moody Bath Houses, and some small hotels were consumed.[367] The fire swept through 104 acres and 400 buildings in the city's southern residential area for an estimated loss of up to $2 million. Five hundred families were homeless. Private homes, churches, bath houses, Army and Navy Hospital, and Government Free Bath House opened their doors to refugees to use as temporary sleeping quarters. Other bathhouses accommodated bathers holding Alhambra and Moody tickets without charge. U.S. Hot Springs Reservation remained opened for business as the nation's premier health resort and national park.[368]

RADIOACTIVITY IN THE THERMAL WATERS

Interior authorized a scientific examination of the thermal Hot Springs to determine their radioactivity. The 1902 analysis had failed to indicate anything remarkable concerning the curative agents in the thermal water. With the discovery of radium by the Curies in 1898, its properties in relation to humans proved the source of much speculation. As early as mid-February 1904, news reports circulated nationwide that the magical curative agent in the Hot Springs of Arkansas was radium.[369] Locally, spin masters made the case for the thermal waters being radioactive citing evidence seen in photographs and radiographs, electric emanations from both water and vapor, and

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[366] "An Act to Authorize Exchange of Sites for the Public Buildings of Garland County, Arkansas," 22 March 1904. To increase its value, Eisele recommended block 114 be resurveyed, platted, and subdivided for home sales. See Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 19 July 1904, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

An ungrateful Garland County neglected to inform Interior that it built structures on lots 9 and 10, block 94, at a total cost of $170,950, and a power/heating plant and temporary jail on lots 1 and 2. When Interior inquired, the necessary notification was sent. See Superintendent Smith to Secretary Garfield, letter, 26 March 1908, 1907 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4716.

[367] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 25 February 1905, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1. The fire caused Eisele a delay in responding to Interior's information request on certain unsold lots. With public records destroyed, means of real estate title searches could be conducted only through records maintained by the Garland County Abstract Company.

[368] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 27 February 1905, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

[369] "Experiments on the United States Government Reservation at Hot Springs, Ark., Reveal the Fact that Radium is the Curative Mystery Hidden in the Springs' Water," *New York Journal, American Magazine* supplement 14 February 1904, 10, from the files of Martin A. Eisele, Library Vertical File, M. Eisele Papers, Radium in the Hot Springs Hot Waters. The article described experiments conducted by Dr. J. L. Gebhart of Hot Springs and Professor Larkin of St. Louis (chemist): "It has been found that the waters and the steam and vapors from the hot springs are powerfully charged with radio-activity. It is, in other words, the wonderful new germ-killing metal, radium, which has for centuries been producing the cures which have puzzled physicians and scientists to explain."

slight staining of glass and ceramics. Doctors at the Army and Navy Hospital tested for radioactivity but found none.[370]

The controversy required scientific investigation to solve. Instead of employing Interior's own bureau, the U.S. Geological Survey, upon Eisele's recommendation the department turned to two renowned former Yale University professors. Professors Bertram B. Boltwood and Joseph Hyde Pratt of New Haven, Connecticut, were tagged to make exhaustive tests. Boltwood, known as the foremost U.S. authority on radioactivity, sent Pratt to Hot Springs in the summer of 1904 to collect samples. Water from 44 assorted springs was collected in large glass receptacles, tightly corked, sealed with hot wax, and express shipped by rail to New Haven. The scientists were testing for radio-active gas called emanation (now called radon) and radio-active solids. As the weeks passed and public inquiry increased, the department warned Eisele not to discharge any information, dictating that the report would be released in Washington, D.C., when Interior was satisfied.[371]

> Professor Boltwood's report came to Interior on September 6, 1904. In short, he announced the waters of Hot Springs were found to have some radioactivity.[372] He reached three specific conclusions:
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> 1. *The waters of the springs on the Hot Springs Reservation are all radio-active to a marked degree.*
> 2. *The radio-activity of the waters is due to dissolved radium emanation (a gas) and not to the presence of salts of radium or other radio-active solids.*
> 3. *The tufa deposited by the springs does not contain appreciable traces of radium.*

Eisele added his own thoughts on the matter:

> *"The part that radium is to play as a medicinal agent is now passing through the experimental stage; but the consensus of expert opinion seems to be that there is no doubt of it being an agent for destruction of bacteria; that by its radiations it has positive influence on diseased tissues, and that it may be indicated in certain forms of blood and skin diseases, such as lupus, rodent ulcer, superficial cancer, atrophy of the optic nerve, and through the exercise of its germicidal power over diseased tissue it will be potent in the treatment of tuberculosis of the lungs."*[373]

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[370] Superintendent Eisele to W. B. Acher, 14 April 1904, RG 79, Box 29, Entry 1.
[371] *Annual Report for 1904* and Superintendent Eisele to B. B. Boltwood, letter, 12 September 1904, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.
[372] Betram B. Boltwood, *Report on the Radioactive Properties of the Waters of the Hot Springs on the Hot Springs Reservation, Hot Springs, Arkansas*, report authorized by the Secretary of the Interior, Washington, D.C., RG 79, Box 30, Entry 1.
[373] *Annual Report for 1905.*

Boltwood went on to publish a more specific professional paper in the *American Journal of Science.* He theorized that radium emanation from all the Hot Springs samples was nearly identical and the gas activity "fell to one-half value in about 3-9 days and the active deposit, after two hours from the start, had a half-value period of twenty-eight minutes." An examination of tufa deposits found only a scant trace of radium. Levels of radon in the springs varied greatly, an unexpected result. Curiously, higher levels of radioactivity were found in the cold springs as opposed to thermal springs. The second highest reading of radioactivity came from a cold spring, drawing Boltwood to conclude: "This would seem to indicate that the thermal qualities of the waters and their radio-active properties are due to quite independent causes."[374]

In his annual report for 1905, Eisele continued advocating modernizing bathing techniques—to include the scientific application of hydrotherapy—and bathhouses to better serve the public. He denounced the "same old stereotyped routine" employed and the wealthy non-resident bathhouse men engaged in various pursuits abdicating oversight to young managers only interested in selling tickets. Also criticized were the African American attendants "of average intelligence but with no special training or skill" performing rote tasks "with no knowledge of the physiological action of the waters or their therapeutic effects." Interjecting a racist mentality, the superintendent recommended "a white man and white woman of special educational skill in the administration of the baths be employed as special bath directors, who shall supervise and direct the proper execution of bathing directions when furnished by physicians to their patrons." These trained technicians could also direct bathers not under medical orders with their "knowledge and training comparable to trained nurses who are skilled in the uses of thermometers, temperatures, normal respiration, pulsation, etc." Such expertise would benefit the Government Free Bath House where demand outstripped capacity. Eisele wrote:

> *"Taking into consideration the character of most of the applicants, the operation of the house from a strictly sanitary standpoint is a problem; the majority are from the lower walks of life and present themselves in all conditions of personal attire and physical condition, many of them so revolting and offensive from neglect and lack of treatment as to shock the senses of the observer."*

Bathing 500 to 600 indigent daily took a toll; constant tub scrubbing had worn off the enamel surface, leaving the harsh iron surface. Persistent humidity and vapors left walls and woodwork saturated and decayed, requiring constant patching and painting.[375] Eisele acknowledged the public censure he received for not doing more for the indigent while at the same time fielding criticism from bathhouse lessees who maintained the free service was in unfair competition with their own businesses.[376]

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[374] Bertram B. Boltwood, "On the Radio-active Properties of the Waters of the Springs on the Hot Springs Reservation, Hot Springs, Ark.," *American Journal of Science* vol. 20, series 4 (July-December 1905): 128-132.
[375] *Annual Report for 1905*.
[376] *Annual Report for 1906.*

Thanks to a special congressional appropriation of $8,000, improvements in 1905 provided for guttering of all roads, walks, and footpaths with a combination of cobblestones and cement mortar. It assisted greatly in preventing periodic washouts and extensive repairs and added much to their general appearance. Interior finally approved the sale of boilers, pumps, and other machinery in the old pump station, now serving as the superintendent's office. Park laborers also removed the large brick smokestack from the building and prepared the interior space for finishing which Eisele recommended be done to provide more office space. Unfortunately, due to the February 25 fire, Interior cancelled the sale of government lots scheduled for the third week of March after being petitioned by citizens of the burnt district to do so. Congress also appropriated $6,000 to fill-in the lakes at Whittington Lake Park, providing a solution to eradicate these stagnant, malodorous swamps.[377] In 1906, Eisele recommended consideration be given to sell the lower east end amounting to 43,600 square feet. With the lakes gone and no recreation-based purpose remaining, this tract was isolated, cut-off by a road separating it from the main park. Not suited to park purposes, he believed it should be subdivided and offered for sale.[378]

Congress made a slight adjustment in the park boundary in 1906 to accommodate the alignment of Reserve Avenue.[379]

A heavy rainstorm in January 1907 resulted in severe washouts in the mountain roads and walkways along with a flooded Whittington Park, resulting in several thousand dollars damage. Roads had to be resurfaced with cement gravel and downed trees were removed along with limbs and underbrush burned "so as not to afford a foothold later for forest fires." Park crews took the opportunity to build a protective stone retaining wall on North Mountain's lower loop road which added a degree of safety for travelers. In Whittington Park, to abate future flooding, crews straightened the creek by making a 250-foot-long cut-off creating a straight channel and new creek bed excavated six to eight feet deep and 16 feet wide. Crews poured a concrete wall on each side, one foot wide and five to six and a half feet high. Excess soil was used to fill the old creek bed and one-quarter of the park's creek now was channeled through concrete walls.[380]

MARTIN A. EISELE FIGHTS THE DRUMMING EVIL

The new superintendent eagerly took on the drumming evil. He found that while bathhouses were compliant with Interior's rules and regulations, there persisted an occasional drumming of patrons to particular bathhouses but doctor drumming remained

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[377] *Annual Report for 1905.*
[378] *Annual Report for 1906.* The request was denied.
[379]" An Act to Change the Line of the Reservation at Hot Springs, Arkansas, and of Reserve Avenue," Approved 23 May 1906, No. 174 in *Laws Relating to the Department of the Interior Passed by the Fifty-Ninth Congress, First Session* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1906) 140. The line changed "so as to run from stone monument twenty-six to stone monument twenty-eight on a direct line" instead of to monument 27 "to become a part of Reserve avenue and to be used for street purposes only; to be accepted by the city without change of the opposite southerly boundary line of said avenue."
[380] *Annual Report for 1907.*

endemic at Hot Springs. Designed to protect businesses and the public, the anti-drumming rule, Eisele declared, "is the source of more annoyance and vexation to the superintendent and his subordinates than all other rules and regulations combined." Much of the doctor drumming took place outside the national park and remained legal under state and federal law. He reported, "There is a strong public sentiment against this practice and severe condemnation of it by the citizens of Hot Springs…. They realize that this trafficking with the sick who come here for relief is a serious menace to the good name of the resort." While local ordinances sought to curtail the drumming evil, it endured as the frustrated superintendent observed:

> *"The municipal government has from time to time enacted stringent ordinances against this nefarious practice, and convictions made in police court have followed, only to be reversed either in the circuit or supreme courts, who hold that soliciting or drumming for a doctor is legitimate business under the Arkansas law. The consensus opinion among the legal profession seems to be that the remedy lies in an amendment to the State law regulating the practice of medicine."*

Attempts to change state law were being pursued in Little Rock as public opinion crystallized in support.[381]

Eisele conducted a comprehensive review of Interior rules and regulations. Keeping rules for the Free Bath House intact, he oversaw revision of those pertaining to all bathhouses. Rules 1, 2, 3, and 9 remained unchanged. Rule 4, addressing bath tickets, was amended to provide that such were to be sold "only to such persons as intend to actually use it for bathing" and bathers must provide their full name. Refunds could be issued "provided that when less than seven baths have been taken on any ticket presented for redemption, the bath house may charge the rate for single baths for the number of baths taken on said ticket." In addition, "No bath ticket or parts of tickets shall be reissued after being redeemed. The issue of complimentary bath tickets must not exceed 5 per cent of the number of tickets sold by the bath house during the last fiscal year."[382]

Rule 5, updated to reflect new rates for attendants ($1 per week or $3 per course of 21 baths), included a stipulation the fees had to be collected "by the attendant from the bather"—and not by the bathhouse manager. Further, new stipulations regarding an attendant's services and decorum were as follows: "The services of the attendant shall include all the necessities of the bath except laundrying [sic] bath robes, rubbing mercury, and handling helpless invalids. They shall be required to keep themselves in a neat and cleanly condition both in person and in dress."

Former Rules 7 and 8 were subsumed into a strengthened Rule 6 which received additional caveats to prohibit the drumming evil. It added the category of "public drummers" and "boarding-house proprietors who are drummers, or persons who work

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[381] *Annual Report for 1900.*

[382] "Rules and Regulations for the Government of All the Bath Houses Receiving Hot Water from the United States Reservation at Hot Springs, Ark.," as cited in *Annual Report for 1900.*

with them as inside men." The superintendent's authority was broadened; once identifying violators, "he is authorized to report the facts with his recommendation to the Secretary of the Interior," and in addition to the water shut-off provision, came a more ominous threat: "canceling the lease, as the Department may determine."

Rules 7 and 8 gave new responsibilities to bathhouse management and read as follows:

> *Rule 7.*
>
> *"The manager of each bath house shall keep a full and correct register of each single bath given, the number and kind of bath tickets sold, the number of complimentary tickets issued each day, and make a full and complete written report of the same to the superintendent on the first day of each month, together with any information he may have showing a violation of the bath-house rules and regulations, which may be susceptible of proof.*
>
> *Rule 8.*
>
> *"A neatly framed copy of the rules and regulations now in force, together with the prices of baths and attendants' fees, both separately and combined, printed in large black type on a white cardboard shall be conspicuously posted in the office of each bath house. Each bath-house manager, clerk, and attendant shall be required to have a full and complete understanding of the bath-house rules and regulations before entering upon their duties. The superintendent is authorized to order the discharge of any bath-house manager, clerk, or attendant for bath-house drumming or refusing to carry out the bath-house rules and regulations according to the true intent and meaning thereof, and when so discharged they shall not be employed again by the same or any other bath house without the written consent of the superintendent."*

The revision was approved and issued on July 7, 1900, by Superintendent Martin A. Eisele and Secretary of the Interior Ethan A. Hitchcock. .[383]

Perhaps an indication of what precipitated his predecessor's resignation, upon assuming his position, Martin Eisele was immediately confronted with a dilemma. Instructions from Interior included two letters from Secretary Ethan Hitchcock, dated March 8 and March 9, directing Superintendent Little to give 30-day notices prior to shutting off thermal water to the Waverly (for two days) and Horse Shoe Bathhouses (for ten days), respectively, for drumming. At midnight, on May 8, Eisele executed his orders and closed the gate-valves to both bathhouses, securing them with a lock and chains. Prior to his action, both bathhouse managers appeared in the superintendent's office to ask if the order would be carried out. Eisele noted "They seemed to feel very keenly the humiliation and financial injury to their business, resulting from the Department order, and expressed the hope that I wire the Department for specific orders, as the original

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[383] *Annual Report for 1900.*

order was made to former Supt. Mr. Little."[384] He did so and Hitchcock re-confirmed Interior's orders. Unfortunately, the very public punishment did not have the desired effect. Eisele reported: "I am convinced that some more radical measures must be resorted to. I am reasonably certain of the guilt of several houses in violating Department rules yet, to prove the consideration is almost impossible with the means available and at my disposal. This nefarious practice is now consummated by indirection." He continued, "The Government policemen rarely see any direct evidences of it yet we are satisfied it is being carried on every day. It is essential that we have funds necessary to hire detectives as the evidence is not obtainable by the means in our hands." He recommended sending inspectors or Secret Service men to obtain incriminating evidence against culpable bathhouses.[385]

Suspected of drumming were the Lamar, Magnesia, Palace, and Superior. All were conspicuous "from general observation and from the increasing amount of business done by these houses as compared to others of like equipment." Other bathhouse managers were complaining and appealing to Eisele for relief, i.e., suppress it or rescind the rule. Again, he appealed for funds to hire detectives or that Interior request the U.S. Secret Service to investigate.[386] Hitchcock delayed responding until, on December 22, 1900, Eisele received a telegram stating: "Department has information indicating violation by bath house managers of rule 8 of regulations requiring attendants to surrender portion of fees to pay drummers. Investigate immediately; give names managers guilty; recommend period water should be shut off such house." Eisele investigated and found that the practice of collecting attendant fees occurring at the Rammelsberg. He advised:

> *"The case of the Rammelsberg Bath House was a clear violation of the rules, but there is no charge of drumming against them. This house is the cheapest house on the row; the attendants fare better in this particular house when the manager collects their fees, and petitioned their manager to do this for them, which he did for a few days until our policeman observed it and called his attention to the violation. The manager and attendants promptly referred the matter to me, and when I informed them that no exceptions to the rule could be made in their case, the practice was promptly discontinued."*[387]

Eisele then called a meeting of all bathhouse managers on December 26 and asked each one if they had violated any rule or regulation. Again, all denied having done so, to which Eisele asked them to make sworn affidavits. The men parsed about the wording and suggested changes; most stated a willingness to sign. However, in response

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[384] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 9 May 1900, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.
[385] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 23 July 1900, RG 79, Box 25, Entry 1.
[386] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 7 September 1900, RG 79, Box 25, Entry 1.
[387] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 31 December 1900, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1. He summoned all the Rammelsberg attendants to his office and explained Interior would protect them from recrimination. All the attendants denied any other violation of the rules and agreed to sign affidavits.

to a request to adjourn to an adjoining office to discuss the matter, a spokesman for the group responded that

> *"the request carried a general imputation of guilt, and was a general reflection on them, and was a reversal of the rule of evidence by requiring proof of innocence instead of guilt, and therefore they declined to make it; that if the Department possessed any information of violation of rules against any house, that they must be specific and point it out, together with the proof."*

Eisele argued that the truly innocent should have no objection to swearing an oath and should uphold Interior's effort to protect them and the public. The group adjourned and reconvened on December 28, whereupon only half the managers appeared to affix their signatures. These included the Ozark, Rammelsberg, Maurice, Imperial, Great Northern, Hot Springs, Avenue, and Waverly bathhouses. Eisele did not suspect the Arlington, Eastman, Park, St. Joseph's Infirmary, or Ozark Sanitarium of drumming. The bathhouse refusing to sign were Lamar, Magnesia, Horse Shoe, Palace, Hale, Superior, and Alhambra. "Their refusal to sign," he reported, "is not positive evidence of violation of the rules and I must respectfully report that I have no positive evidence which would warrant me in making any recommendation for punishment."[388]

He continued to gather evidence of drumming. On February 15, 1901, he ordered the manager of Palace Bathhouse to fire two employees for drumming patients to a doctor.[389] He kept Interior intimately informed about local events and suspected instances of drumming. In late 1902, he reported that Hot Springs appeared serious in its attempt to outlaw the drumming evil. Fund-raising and local committees pledged its abolition and pressure was being applied to support the federal government's effort to obtain exclusive legal jurisdiction. Garland County's state assemblyman introduced such a bill that had the mayor's and governor's full support. A companion bill had also been introduced to amend state statutes regulating the practice of medicine providing that those physicians guilty of "dishonorable practices" including drumming would forfeit their right to practice medicine in Arkansas. Citizen and legislative pressure was also being exerted on the railroads to prohibit drumming.[390]

Success came on February 21, 1903, with passage in Little Rock of an act ceding exclusive jurisdiction from the state to federal government over a part of Hot Springs Mountain; however, Arkansas civil and criminal law still applied as did the state's right to tax all structures and other property in private ownership.[391]

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[388] Ibid.
[389] Superintendent Eisele to J. B. Fordyce, Manager, Palace Bathhouse, letter, 15 February 1901, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.
[390] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 8 November 1902, RG 79, Box 27, Entry 1. The most vociferous local committee was known as the Visitors' Protective League which printed and distributed fliers warning of the dangers of drumming. See "Official Information for the Welfare of Visitors to Hot Springs," pamphlet, HOSP 7279, Letter Document Box 7.
[391] General Acts of Arkansas, No. 30, Section 1 (A.C.A. 22-7-214), 21 February 1903.

Lessees, property owners, and business interests of Hot Springs petitioned Interior Secretary Ethan A. Hitchcock to use all power vested in him to eliminate drumming throughout the city, particularly hotel bathhouse drumming. They pointed out the discrepancy of on-reservation bathhouses being compelled to obey Rule 6 while hotels having bathing facilities could "continue their drumming and monopolize the greater part of the business" on the streets and trains arriving in Hot Springs.[392] In forwarding the petition, the superintendent called on Interior to appoint the "Board of Physicians" comprised of the surgeon commanding the Army and Navy Hospital and "two civilian doctors of known character and ability to represent the government." The board would be empowered to "have authority to pass upon the professional ability of every doctor prescribing the baths, and also his moral character" as well as to rule upon any violation of Interior's rules and regulations. Uncertified doctors would not be permitted to prescribe the thermal water. He submitted a special rule to this effect for consideration.[393] Secretary Hitchcock requested that Martin Eisele travel to the department for consultation on those matters and to discuss a contract for remodeling the Free Bath House.[394]

As a result of their meeting in the nation's capital, the men finalized two new anti-drumming rules, numbers 9 and 10, and issued a re-numbered list on June 6, 1903. Text of the new rules was as follows:

> *Rule 9.*
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> *No bath house supplied with hot water from the Hot Springs Reservation shall permit any person to bathe therein who is under medical treatment unless the applicant for baths presents satisfactory evidence that he or she is the patient of a physician duly registered at the office of the superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation as one qualified to prescribe the waters from the Hot Springs and who is known not to engage in drumming for custom.*
>
> *Rule 10.*
>
> *Physicians desiring to prescribe the waters of the hot springs, either internally or through the medium of the baths, must first be registered at the office of the superintendent of the reservation. Registration will only be accorded such physicians as are found by a board of physicians designated by the Secretary of the Interior to have proper professional qualifications and character and who do not engage in drumming for custom. The solicitation of patronage though the medium of drummers by registered physicians is prohibited; failure to observe this requirement will be sufficient cause for cancellation or revocation of registration.*

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[392] Petition to Secretary Hitchcock, undated [circa early 1903], RG 79 Box 28, Entry 1.
[393] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 20 March 1903, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.
[394] Secretary Hitchcock to Superintendent Eisele, letter, 27 March 1903, A18 Federal Registration Board, 1903-10.

A new rule concerning personal property was also added:

> *Rule 8.*
>
> *All bath houses receiving deposits of jewelry, money, or other valuables from bathers must provide means satisfactory to the superintendent of the reservation for the safe-keeping thereof. It is to be understood, however, that the Government assumes no responsibility in the premises. All losses must be promptly reported to the superintendent.*

The existing list was re-numbered to include these 1903 insertions to total twelve official rules and regulations.[395]

ESTABLISHING A FEDERAL MEDICAL REGISTRATION BOARD, 1903

Secretary Hitchcock appointed the first "Board of Medical Commissioners" for Hot Springs Reservation on May 14, 1903, as follows: Lt. Col. Blair D. Taylor, deputy surgeon general U.S. Army, chairman; C. C. Greenway, M.D.; and C. Travis Drennen, M.D., all of Hot Springs.[396] This long-sought entity proved short-lived. After deliberating on applications for registration and reviewing allegations of rule-breaking by certain doctors, the board felt the weight of its sworn oath. On August 28, the superintendent reported "they could not conscientiously certify to the qualifications of all the applicants without an examination, and to be fair to everyone this examination should include every practitioner of medicine in the city, and they so ordered an examination to be held at the office of the Superintendent, Wednesday evening, August 26th." However, a loud protest arose and an official complaint filed by the Hot Springs-Garland County Medical Society. Eisele commented: "[it] was construed by them as an indignity and unnecessary humiliation to old practitioners who felt that it was an injustice to them to subject them to a technical examination." Further, this caused the board "a great embarrassment," but pending instructions from Interior, it recommended proceeding to register all practicing physicians with degrees from medical colleges of good standing and who were licensed by the state medical board. In the future, the board could then decide on rule violations and eliminate offenders from the register. Eisele affirmed the board's plan of action.[397]

Four months later, Interior found itself the subject of a lawsuit. Nine doctors—all lacking diplomas from reputable medical colleges but possessing state licenses—sued in federal court seeking to define their status at Hot Springs Reservation. Superintendent Eisele was subpoenaed to appear before a U.S. circuit court session held on January 4,

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[395] *Annual Report for 1903.*

[396] Federal Registration Board, typewritten summary of file documents, A18 Federal Registration Board 1916-33.

[397] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 28 August 1903, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

1904.[398] This was soon followed by a temporary injunction restraining the superintendent from interfering with the plaintiffs' patients applying for thermal baths under rules 9 and 10 (promulgated on June 6, 1903). The judge intended to make the order permanent with an explanation delivered at trial. Preliminary briefs from both sides and the judge's decision were forwarded to the U.S. attorney general, but not before the judge's ruling had already been printed in local newspapers. The judge held that congressional authority in various acts did not explicitly confer power to the secretary to create a board of medical commissioners and that its authority and actions to date were illegal and void as were Rules 9 and 10. Eisele called on Interior to seek a swift remedy from Congress: "The result of this decision is unfortunate coming as it does at a time when this nefarious drumming evil had been practically controlled through the rules and regulations adopted, and a consequent demoralization will naturally ensue restoring the old order of things."[399]

Eisele renewed his call for Congress to act following the court's official ruling and permanent injunction. Publication of the government's setback caused delight among drummers in Hot Springs and left the superintendent wondering if enforcing anti-drumming rules would find him in contempt of court. He declared the situation an emergency, saying Interior required full authority to operate Hot Springs Reservation "for the protection and benefit of the great mass of patrons who visit this famous health resort for health and recreation; that the strong arm of the National Government administer its rules and regulations with reason but firmness that will compel compliance without regard to local conditions of individual interests." Enforcing regulations and prosecuting misdemeanors did not have the full force of federal law until Congress accepted cession of jurisdiction from Arkansas.

While Interior was drafting appropriate legislation, Eisele advised the secretary to seek authority for additional revenue as public demand for services and developments had consumed water and ground rent income. "I am fully persuaded," he argued, "that the Government is not receiving its just proportion of the revenues accruing from sale of baths, and from ground rents, and that there should be additional authority granted whereby there can be some conservative increase in revenues to keep pace with the demands made upon us." Eisele believed congressional action on these issues was vital during the current session.[400]

Interior heeded the advice and Congress subsequently accepted exclusive jurisdiction on April 20, 1904, empowering U.S. commissioners to prosecute offenses committed on government property or in utilizing the government's thermal water. The act placed Hot Springs Reservation within the eastern U.S. judicial district of Arkansas,

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[398] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 14 December 1903, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1. He asked for legal representation by the U.S. district attorney.

[399] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 29 December 1903, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

[400] Quotations in Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 7 January 1904; 26 January and 13 April 1904; and Superintendent Eisele to U.S. District Attorney William G. Whipple, letter, 9 April 1904, Letter Books and Journal, April 1900 to August 1901, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

subject to federal district and circuit court purview. Anyone found guilty of causing damage to government property became subject to $100 misdemeanor fines plus court costs. In the same act, Congress granted the secretary of the Interior full authority to make rules and regulations regarding use of the thermal waters including setting higher prices, to register physicians prescribing baths, and to require that bathers certify they were patients of registered physicians prior to being permitted to bathe. Again, penalty for violating this provision was a misdemeanor with $100 fine plus court costs. Congress prohibited the practice of drumming for physicians and those doctors found guilty of drumming faced their thermal water registration forfeiture. Finally, in the absence of any specific federal law, U.S. commissioners could use city or state law to punish offenders; provisions for penalties, arrests, bail, and trial were also specified.[401]

Eisele set about trying to reconfigure the original board of physicians, but all original members except one had resigned and refused reappointment. The remaining member, C. Travis Drennen, M.D., had "borne the blunt of all the hard work" and "withstood the storm of battle which raged so fiercely around him during the trying ordeal of the first registration," the superintendent recommended be made chairman. Revisiting the previous board's turmoil, Eisele wrote: "I have believed that there would not have been a legal contest and adverse decision if the original board had exercised good judgement [sic] and avoided arbitrary methods; that while they were men of ability and high standing they exhibited no diplomacy in inaugurating such a new a[nd] radical measure, as was possible under our rules and regulations." To avoid this, as Drennen first recommended and was over-ruled by his two fellow board members, Interior should issue a general order initially registering every physician licensed by the state to practice medicine and who was practicing at the time Rules 9 and 10 were inaugurated. That way, everyone would be treated fairly and rules would be enforced as violations were discovered, prosecuted, and convicted thereby eliminating them from the official registered list. This would admit eight to ten non-graduate physicians, many of whom were elderly and experienced who never finished their medical training but who had joined the Confederate army to serve as doctors. Depriving them of the right to practice when they had achieved a lifetime of success as physicians and who had followed the rules and regulations would be an injustice. This recommendation not only had Dr. Drennen's endorsement, but the backing of the Hot Springs-Garland County Medical Society as well.[402]

While Interior debated on the makeup of a new board, it issued the following policy statement to be circulated at Hot Springs:

> *"... physicians engaged in drumming for custom in violation of the provisions of the Act of April 24, 1904, conferring jurisdiction upon the United States Commissioners over offenses committed in a portion of the*

[401] *Act of Congress, 20 April 1904*, (33 Stat. 187). The latter portion of this act was found unconstitutional and subsequently repealed.

[402] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 29 April 1904, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1. Eisele also recommended local physicians Howard P. Collins and Gaston A. Hebert to serve on the reconfigured board.

> *permanent Hot Springs Mountain Reservation, will under no circumstances be accorded registration at your office as qualified physicians for purposes of prescribing the waters."*[403]

The department deliberated on the appointments and ultimately rejected those offered by Martin Eisele. Instead appointments to the Federal Registration Board went to the following: William H. Barry, M.D., chairman; Capt. Samuel L. Steer, U.S. Army; and Charles D. Greaves. Secretary Hitchcock adopted the recommendation on how to proceed concerning registration:

> *"I have to advise you that those physicians who were registered by the Board appointed May 14, 1903, will be permitted to prescribe the waters of the Hot Springs Reservation, in connection with their medical practice, and recognized as qualified under the new regulations unless it be shown by evidence that they have been engaged in drumming for patients since their original registration, in which event, they will not be registered by this Board. Physicians whose applications were rejected by the Board appointed May 14, 1903, will be entitled to renew their applications before the present Board, who will consider the same, according in each instance such action as in their judgment the facts appear to warrant."*[404]

The secretary approved re-issued rules and regulations on October 31, 1904, and blessed the actions of the previous medical board which had determined 77 physicians were certified as qualified and 39 were rejected. Of those rejected, 14 were subsequently registered along with three others who were out of town at the time applications were filed. This brought to 94 the total number of registered physicians in late 1904.[405]

More than a dozen doctors were added to a new list of 123 physicians certified by the board. The list went forward for Interior's approval which was granted on January 24, 1905. Seven of those names were under investigation but listed temporarily and another seven were unlisted because the Federal Registration Board found them guilty of drumming since June 15, 1904.[406] The board recommended assignment of a special officer to detect violations of the rules and regulations to aid the fight against the drumming evil.[407] Superintendent Eisele immediately posted the list of approved registered physicians.

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[403] Thomas Ryan, Acting Secretary of the Interior, to Superintendent Eisele, letter 3 June 1904, A18 Federal Registration Board 1903-1910.

[404] Secretary Hitchcock to Superintendent Eisele, letter, 31 October 1904, A18 Federal Registration Board 1903-1910.

[405] *Annual Report for 1904.* A change to Rule 6 allowed the bathhouse manager to collect attendant fees and account for them for payment to attendants after a course of tickets was purchased.

[406] An early name for this group was "Federal Board of Medical Commissioners," which commonly was called "Federal Registration Board." The latter name is hereafter used. William H. Barry, Samuel L. Steer, and Charles D. Greaves to Secretary Ethan A. Hitchcock, letter, 17 January 1905, RG 79, Entry 6, Box 336. The seven found guilty and not listed were: J. W. Dennis, W. T. Milstead, T. B. Ryder, S. C. Van Leer, R. O. Williams, W. J. McDonald, and George Fulton.

[407] Ibid.

With Interior's power over Hot Springs affairs solidified, the department weighed in on the issue of physicians sending their patients to specific bathhouse attendants, giving those attendants an increase in patronage over other similarly qualified attendants. Acknowledging that past superintendents had tried to abolish this practice with its similarities to drumming, Eisele reported that the problem persisted but had improved. While new bathers were more pliant, "old patrons of Hot Springs are clannish and partisan advocates of good bath attendants" and insist their choices be honored. He added, "A majority of the best doctors now make no recommendation on this score. Bath attendants, who complain to this office on the score of poor patronage are generally poor attendants; shiftless or inefficient, and are not of cheerful disposition. Analysis of their complaints generally discloses that the real fault is with themselves." In order to eliminate the issue, Eisele circulated a letter urging registered physicians' cooperation to help spread the workload for bathhouse attendants evenly.[408]

Ever vigilant to collect proof of bathhouse drumming, Eisele presented evidence to the New Hot Springs Bath House manager concerning its clerk, caught in the act of doctor drumming. The superintendent demanded his employment be terminated.[409] He secured affidavits from attendants and from other testimony delivered before the medical board. The manager complied and promised no more such incidents would occur, but drumming continued with more incriminating evidence being secured. In reporting the matter to Interior, Eisele declared: "I am convinced that this house has been a willful, defiant violator of the rules and regulations and unless proper punishment is meted out to them and an example set before the public and other bath houses, our supervision and enforcement of the rules and regulations will come to naught." He continued: "If bath houses are permitted to enter into collusion with non-registered physicians to circumvent the objects of the Government without punishment, the effect of our rules will be of no avail in the protection of visitors or the elevation of the practice of medicine here." He recommended shutting off thermal water for 90 days.[410] Hitchcock, seizing an opportunity to ensure strict adherence and deliver swift punishment, doubled the penalty and ordered an immediate six-month shut-off.[411]

The Federal Registration Board continued hearing drumming allegations and eliciting proof, allowing violators to see and hear evidence against them and to respond. Issuing its report to the secretary with Eisele's endorsement, the board also submitted a list of physician violators to be struck from the registered list.[412] When the secretary

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[408] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 7 November 1904, and Eisele to "Dear Doctor," letter, 7 November 1904, both in Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.
[409] Superintendent Eisele to George M. Smith, Manager, New Hot Springs Bath House, letter, 16 December 1904, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.
[410] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 23 March 1905, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.
[411] Superintendent Eisele to George M. Smith, Manager, New Hot Springs Bath House, letter, 28 March 1905, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.
[412] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 18 January 1905, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

approved it, an attorney's petition asking for a 10-day suspension of the rules against his clients was served on Eisele. The delay gave added time in order to file the issue before federal court.[413] Interior denied the petition and, true to their promise, the non-registered physicians filed for an injunction to be heard in U.S. district court.[414] The judge dismissed the case immediately and denied a temporary restraining order with a strong rebuke of the plaintiff's attorneys, declaring they were merely playing for the Hot Springs newspapers. The local medical association hired its own counsel to assist the U.S. district attorney in defending any future case.[415] Refiling the case, a trial resulted in a conviction for unauthorized prescribing of the thermal waters with a $50 fine and court costs imposed. That decision was appealed in U.S. Circuit Court, Eastern District of Arkansas. Sworn testimony provided by two witnesses stated Dr. Van Leer gave them bathing directions on Palace Bath House blanks, signed with a phony name, and directed them to the Palace manager. The evidence indicated collusion between the non-registered doctor and Palace Bath House, and with the medical registration board's approval, Eisele demanded and secured the manager's termination.[416]

In June 1905, Secretary Hitchcock wanted an independent evaluation of Hot Springs Reservation and he turned to Dr. William A. White, superintendent of the Government Hospital for the Insane in Washington, D.C. for the task. White, leader of the nation's mental health institution which was organized in 1852 and placed under Interior's oversight, was a nationally recognized authority and leading psychiatrist. Hitchcock charged White to advise him "as to the exact conditions existing in these bath houses so that such reforms therein may be inaugurated as will lead to a more efficient and satisfactory service in every respect." White accepted the charge with zest and exercised wide latitude in expressing his professional opinions. He teamed up with Superintendent Eisele and inspected twenty-one bathhouses. With the exception of the Army and Navy Hospital and Arlington Hotel bathhouses, the bathhouses all followed the same basic floor plan:

> *"one or two rows of tubs, each separated from the other by a partition. There is usually at one end of the bath room a hot room, and sometime in connection with the construction of the tubs and sometimes separately located, is a vapor bath. In separate compartments there is usually a shower which is accessible from the general bath room, a closet and urinal. In the several instances where circumstances permitted our inspecting the female side of the bath house we found it in each instance considerably smaller owing to the necessity of catering to a less numerous*

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[413] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 31 January 1905, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.
[414] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 4 February 1905, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.
[415] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 11 February 1905, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.
[416] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 3 April 1905, Letter Books and Journal, April 1904 to August 1905, HOSP 4713 to 4720, Box 1.

> *patronage, and in every instance the general appearance as to neatness, cleanliness and order was materially better."*[417]

None of the bathhouses were owned and operated by medical men, and all were built as a financial investment and as cheaply as possible. "It is also apparent that they are operated solely from the same mercantile standpoint, and that no expense is incurred which can by any possible means be avoided," he wrote.

> *"The construction in many of the bath houses is very poor indeed. The walls which are plastered and painted being in a very poor state of repair, the paint and plaster falling off in large blocks and in many instances considerable of the flooring in the bath houses proper being of wood. The water closets and urinals while in many instances of modern design, show also in a number of instances absolute neglect, and the rooms where they are installed are dirty and foul smelling."*

He found most of the cooling rooms were carpeted and "positively filthy." Sanitary and sterilization systems in laundry areas were primitive and dirty. He found "a notable lack throughout all the bath houses of any of the modern accessories of hydrotherapy, the various forms of sprays and douches being only found at the Army and Navy Hospital Bath." White believed the cleanest facility was the St. Joseph's Infirmary Bath, adding "it seems that there is but one idea of the method of giving a bath which prevails throughout all of these institutions in spite of the many improved methods of hydrotherapy known." Collectively, the establishments lacked any element of "progressiveness" and only provided minimal service to customers. "The great majority of these baths are conducted in a careless manner so that the general impression one gets in visiting them is one of indifference, lack of neatness, and general confusion without head or discipline. All degrees of these defects are common."[418]

As a government owned and regulated area, White advised that "there can be no question but that the United States has certain duties and responsibilities in connection with seeing that the waters are put to the proper use." Further, he declared:

> *"Hot Springs is the Mecca for diseased humanity of the world, who have been going there in great numbers for many years past and will continue to do so for many years to come. People are attracted to this resort very largely because the waters are under Government control and their use sanctioned by the United States. Practically every bath house keeper makes the point in his advertisements that his bath house is under Federal inspection, and they exploit the scientific work that has been done in the analysis of the waters by the Government as showing medicinal properties and as being a guarantee of their reliability."*

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[417] William A. White, M.D., to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 29 June 1905, RG 79, Box 31, Entry 1
[418] Ibid.

The difference between this place and ordinary Turkish baths available in Washington, New York, or other large cities was that the clientele elsewhere were largely men of means and good health, taking the baths as a luxury, not for medical reasons. Hot Springs presented a distinctive challenge as many visitors were sick or invalid. "They flock there in great numbers suffering from all sorts of diseases, many of them too poor to employ the services of a physician. Irrespective of whether or not the waters have medicinal properties many of these causes out not to be subjected to the depressing and debilitating effects of hot baths, prolonged perhaps to the danger point." These people needed protection, even from their own ignorance, White argued.

> *"The whole problem of the application of the waters of the Hot Springs to diseased humanity is a therapeutic problem, and hence absolutely a question within the domain of medicine and I cannot be too emphatic in my recommendation that the entire plant should be under medical supervision and subject to medical inspection. As it is at present any one going to any of the bath houses will be given a bath if he has the money to buy a ticket, irrespective of his condition, and many of them are debilitated to such an extent as not to warrant it."*[419]

Establishing the Federal Registration Board was the first step in ensuring qualified physicians prescribed the waters and to defeat the drumming system. To win against the drumming evil, it was necessary to take strict measures but a fundamental environmental change must first accompany it. White linked the criminal drumming system to its companion evil: gambling and prostitution. To defeat these evils, Interior needed to lead the charge to clean up Hot Springs:

> *"The whole atmosphere of Hot Springs is that of a 'wide open' town: gambling is carried on openly, and with open disregard of the State laws; the most expensive race track in the United States has been built there and the entire atmosphere is vitiated by people who are engaged in gambling pursuits and the like. While I appreciate that the Federal Government has no jurisdiction over these matters, that they are solely questions for municipal and State control, yet the 'drumming system forms a connecting link between Hot Springs as a health resort and Hot Springs as a 'gambling and sporting' center. The 'drummer' not only preys upon the invalid who goes to take treatment by directing him to this or that hotel, or this or that doctor, but he is also hand and glove with the gambling element in the community, and if he succeeds in getting him into a gambling house or a bawdy house he also gets his percentage for doing so. I therefore think that any action which the Federal Government can properly take toward suppressing this atrocious practice should be taken at once and most vigorously, especially as by its advertised control of the situation it practically invites the invalid to visit Hot Springs."*[420]

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[419] Ibid.
[420] Ibid.

In terms of ulcerated patients or those with infectious disease, White advocated separating them from other bathers in order to prevent infection. He denounced the practice of attendants giving female bathers prolonged douches of hot water declaring "These practices to all intents and purposes convert the tubs which are used for bathing into slop pails and to my mind are disgusting in the extreme, and inasmuch as there is no benefit to be derived from them I believe their use should be stopped." Medical supervision would ensure such practices did cease.

White joined with Superintendent Eisele in recommending full government control, declaring

> *"After having given a great deal of thought to all of the problems connected with Hot Springs I am of the opinion that the Government's interests there never will be properly safe-guarded until the Government itself takes full charge, and until all of the present bath house construction on the Reservation is torn down and a properly constructed bath house or bath houses capable of giving from five to ten thousand baths per diem is built in accordance with modern methods of construction and operated by a resident medical officer in the employ of the Government."*

He envisioned utilizing the total thermal output within one large bathhouse separating races and classes of patients. It would be serviced by a central laundry plant providing sterile linens and towels. While that vision was for the distant future, the immediate requirement was for a physician to take charge of two duties: to lead a dispensary clinic at the Government Free Bath House where he would prescribe the waters and to champion medical inspection and supervision of all bathhouses.[421]

A *New York Times* reporter, observing Dr. White's mission to Hot Springs, investigated further and filed a report on June 30, 1905, indicating Secretary Hitchcock was going after Hot Springs' gamblers. White's secret assignment, according to the *Times*, was to find a means to abolish gaming and the only way to achieve it was to shut-off the water to every bathhouse except the Army and Navy Hospital. A water cut-off would kill Hot Springs' economy, halt the flow of visitors, and deprive gamblers their means of making a living. Recognizing that scenario as too drastic and unrealistic, the newspaper reported Hitchcock had referred the matter to U.S. Attorney General William Moody with instructions to pressure the governor and state authorities to invoke Arkansas statutes to prosecute gaming at Hot Springs.[422]

Encouraged by any government effort to clean-up their city, the "Ministers Alliance of Hot Springs" petitioned the secretary on July 3, 1905 to act. Five Protestant ministers stated Hot Springs was in "a state of moral degradation in the form of gambling, wide openness and general sporting, to the extent of twenty seven regular gambling houses from which fines are regularly collected by the city authorities; six pool

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[421] Ibid.
[422] "Hitchcock After Gamblers: Secretary Seeks to Clean Out Resort at Hot Springs, Ark.," *New York Times* 1 July 1905, 4.

rooms; two race tracks; non-Sunday observance, and from 300 to 1500 scarlet women" infested the lawless town with little protection afforded to visitors. Because the economic benefit of this vice outweighed the municipal will to remedy it, they called on Interior to act. They endorsed the radical call to shut-off the hot water supply until Hot Springs took effective measures to eliminate "these demoralizing institutions and influences."[423]

Emboldened by recent developments, Martin Eisele recommended in his 1905 annual report to the secretary: "Experience has demonstrated that the present system of operating the baths through the medium of private lessees is in conflict with public opinion and incompatible with local conditions, and the Government should, as soon as practicable, consistent with local conditions, assume absolute and complete control of this reservation." The news-making statement made the pages of the *New York Times.*[424] Eisele believed Hot Springs had passed through its experimental stage and now, with experience gained, the government needed to act in the best interest of the American people and guarantee their welfare. "The present system," he wrote,

> *"if it ever had any meritorious features worthy of consideration, has outlived its usefulness and should be supplanted by full Government control in the management, operation, and supervision of the baths. The present bath houses should be replaced with substantial, extensive houses, built upon approved plans with perfected detail as regards system of bathing under proper medical direction, trained service, with modern equipment and furnishings, preserving all sanitary and hygienic features of light and ventilation."*[425]

E. C. Carter Investigates Hot Springs Reservation, 1905

Confronted with such revolutionary ideas, Hitchcock sought yet another qualified opinion concerning Hot Springs. He asked the War Department to detail U.S. Army Major and Surgeon Edward Champe (E. C.) Carter, former Commissioner of Public Health in the Philippines, to confirm White's findings and file a confidential report. Carter arrived on October 31 and met with Lt. Col. Blair D. Taylor, Army and Navy Hospital, before inspecting local conditions—roads, police, practices in regard to garbage and refuse, and overall cleanliness. He inspected hotels and bathhouses. Next, Carter interviewed citizens, physicians, the mayor, reservation superintendent, and leading businessmen. He affirmed the statements made by Eisele and White. The city's existence depended on the thermal waters which drew thousands of visitors each year on the promise implied by government ownership and control. "The invalids who assemble there," Carter wrote, "look to the federal government to furnish guaranty of good service, scientific treatment, and fair protection in their legal rights. All jurisdiction of the federal

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[423] Ministers Alliance of Hot Springs to Secretary Hitchcock, petition, 3 July 1905, RG 79, Box 31, Entry 1. Rev. J. A. Rader signed on behalf of Reverends Lewis Powell, W. T. Amis, J. L. Leonard, and T. N. Kincaid.

[424] "Wants Government Control: Arkansas Hot Springs Superintendent's Plan," *New York Times* 23 October 1905: 11.

[425] *Annual Report for 1905.*

government ceases at the reservation lines. However stringent and wholesome the regulations of the Department of the Interior may be, they have force on the reservation only, and are powerless elsewhere."[426]

Carter found the drumming system deeply entrenched with "the physician and his pimp usually dividing the profits." The hotels were also complicit. Unless conditions changed, "they will greatly impair the usefulness of the place as a health resort." Local efforts to battle drumming by the Hot Springs Protective League and Business Men's League in conjunction with Interior's rules and regulations and the federal board's registering physicians were making some progress. Four convictions in U.S. court announced during his investigation dealt another blow. "It is believed that this evil is diminishing," Carter affirmed, "though it will be some time before its results can be removed, and time, patience, and persistence will be required to remedy the present unsatisfactory conditions." The federal government's name, Carter observed, was regularly used as an advertisement to draw people in and make them believe everything at Hot Springs had to be "honest, fair, and just." Unfortunately, "When these poor persons find themselves deceived and fleeced by unscrupulous men, solicitors, doctors, landlords, etc., they usually appeal to the representative of the federal government—namely, the superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation for redress, and are often surprised and disappointed when they find he is unable to aid them."

Carter found no modern or scientific hydrotherapy in practice at Hot Springs. Bathhouses were poorly suited to such modern methods and were cramped, crowded, dirty, and poorly ventilated. A hodge-podge of buildings on Bathhouse Row were "of the most various and incongruous designs and kinds of architecture." Bathing methods were obsolete and unscientific, a disservice to the public. He was equally unimpressed with the national park, reporting "The general aspect of the reservation may be considered picturesque, but the soil is thin, poor, and stony. Vegetation is scanty, uncared for, and unlovely. Roads have been laid out and constructed along good gradients on Hot Springs and other mountains, but the general effect is primitive and squalid, as well as wild and natural. The drainage generally is good and sufficient. Some of the refuse is burned, and some is hauled to a point at some distance from the reservation. All should be burned in a crematory."[427]

Recommended solutions on the table were the city and environs be ceded to the federal government or that all bathhouses be acquired by Interior. On the first, Carter remarked "If that could be accomplished, the conditions would be ideal for the establishment of a health resort which could then be conducted as such places are conducted in Germany or France." On the second, he opined: "If this can be done with justice to the lessees or owners, it would make the problem at Hot Springs much easier of solution; and that measure is recommended, if practicable." Carter, however, predicted it would be met with fierce opposition but it would solve many problems. A federal takeover would result in a grand bathhouse with highly trained assistants employed that

[426] Major and Surgeon E. C. Carter, U.S. Army, (through the U.S. Army Surgeon General) to Secretary Hitchcock, 15 November 1905, RG 79, Box 31, Entry 1.
[427] Ibid.

could be placed under the civil service system. Should it not happen, he recommended "at least one bath house be replaced by a thoroughly modern, scientific, hydriatric [sic] establishment, properly equipped and arranged, in order to serve as an object-lesson to bath lessees, and in order to accommodate that class of patrons who desire such an establishment." He recommended three divisions for bathing: the first for rheumatic, nervous, or functional diseases; the second for coetaneous diseases; and the third for specific diseases. Each division would then be subdivided according to gender and managed by a skilled supervisor with properly trained bath attendants, all of whom would be federally licensed. To assist in recreation or amusement, Carter advocated a casino or social establishment "in which the waters could be drunk, music heard, and promenades taken under cover, and where light refreshment might be obtained." Any developments should be carefully planned by "a skilled landscape gardener and architect." He offered the secretary nine specific recommendations, as follows:

1. *That the maximum number of bathers for a given number of tubs in a given time be fixed.*
2. *That the rubbers and bathing attendants be licensed by the federal government through the superintendent of the reservation, and receive a regular salary, so that their incomes may not be dependent on the number of persons bathed.*
3. *That no one be permitted to use the baths without a permit from a registered physician or from the superintendent of the reservation.*
4. *That a definite floor and air space be fixed for each tub, and for each person in the drying, resting, warm, or cool room.*
5. *That no leases be granted or renewed unless the lessee agrees to construct and equip a bath house in accordance with specifications to be furnished by the Department of the Interior.*
6. *It is possible that some friction might be removed if the Secretary of the Interior were to appoint on the federal medical board non-resident physicians.*
7. *The work of the superintendent of the reservation should be divided, so that one man should have charge of the police, construction, and general management of matters pertaining to the reservation, while another, preferably a physician, should have control of the bathing establishments.*
8. *The question of establishing a sur-tax, or contribution from visitors, for the purpose of raising funds to meet the expenses of keeping up the reservation, is advanced for consideration.*
9. *A proper crematory should be constructed so that all refuse from the reservation might be destroyed by fire.*

In conclusion, Carter declared, "While it is true that conditions are not satisfactory at Hot Springs, and that commercialism, fraud, and ignorance have impaired the good repute of the place, there is reason to hope that conditions will improve."[428]

[428] Ibid. On point 5, Carter consulted with an unnamed capitalist interested in Hot Springs pursuits who held that a state of the art bathhouse would not be remunerative, and that he thought there was not a demand for such, nor would there be for many years.

The result of White and Carter's reports had a profound impact at Interior. Clearly, a change of policy and direction was in order. A higher standard of bathhouse construction and improved sanitation and ventilation was mandatory. Management of the national park had to be augmented with professional medical expertise. Interior's policymakers set about devising the necessary change of course.

Meanwhile, the Federal Registration Board, seeing a loophole in the anti-drumming rules, recommended a means of closing it. A pattern developed whereby bathers who had already purchased tickets for a course of twenty-one baths were subsequently drummed to a non-registered physician. The board recommended each person sign a statement stating he or she was not under medical treatment and put them on notice not to participate in any drumming scheme.[429] Even with these signed statements, Eisele acknowledged that large numbers of patients of non-registered doctors were bathing, that bathhouse managers simply used them as a means to protect themselves and enhance their business. This "passive and indifferent support permitted successful evasion of the rules and regulations" and allowed drumming doctors to do a "flourishing business." Eisele again called on Interior to employ a full-time detective to ferret out the drumming evil, particularly in the hotels and bathhouses off the reservation.[430]

One of Eisele's last acts as superintendent was to recommend new rules for accommodating automobiles and public conveyances. More affluent citizens who owned their own automobiles began asking for the right to drive them over park roads. Permission was denied on federally-owned roads because of public safety—the appearance and noise of the gasoline-powered machines frightened horses causing them to bolt or rear up in defense resulting in possible injury to visitors. Eisele informed the secretary that regulations to permit automobile use needed to be considered as more citizens purchased their own cars. He suggested permitting their use on certain days of the week with appropriate signage posted at entrances, including speed limits, along with setting permissible rates charged for hauling sight-seers.[431] He noted a tremendous increase in public vehicles, mostly horse-driven carryalls and carriages, charging visitors to haul them over the scenic drives with the "competition, contention, extortion and abuses" also growing. Eisele compared the situation with that of Niagara Falls and the

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[429] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 5 August 1905, RG 79, Box 31, Entry 1.
[430] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 22 January 1907, 1907 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4716.
[431] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 5 February 1907, 1907 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4716. Automobiles were banned until 1916 when they were permitted only on West Mountain. An erroneous interpretation of Hot Springs being the first national park to allow automobile traffic is found in Laura Soulliere's *Historic Roads in the National Park System: Special History Study* (Denver, Colorado: Denver Service Center, National Park Service, 1995), chapter 1, found at http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/roads/shs2.htm The penciled note "7/11 Letter to Superintendent, denying" was misinterpreted to mean Interior denied Smith's recommendation to ban automobiles when, in reality, the secretary denied the "application of the Hot Springs Automobile Co., … for permission to run Automobiles over the Mountain roads on the reservation." See Superintendent W. Scott Smith to Secretary of the Interior James Garfield, letter, 1 July 1907, Photocopies of Archival Documents (Letters, Articles, Etc.), HSNP Archives.

extortion rates charged by their cab men. The matter called for government regulation of this commercial practice.[432]

With the resignation of Ethan A. Hitchcock as President Theodore Roosevelt's secretary of the Interior on March 4, 1907, Martin A. Eisele dutifully submitted his resignation to incoming Secretary James Rudolph Garfield, effective March 31, 1907. He did so as a political appointee subject to the patronage system. With Eisele's departure, another era in park history came to an end. Martin Eisele had completed the road and footpath system on Hot Springs Mountain and built the West Mountain road system. He put in place the apparatus to fight the drumming evil, including creation of the federal medical board and honed the rules and regulations enforcing Interior's policies. He succeeded in winning from a parsimonious Congress appropriations for park improvements. Under Eisele's watch, the thermal waters received scientific study, including confirmation of their radioactivity. Thanks to Martin A. Eisele's[433] service, Hot Springs had come into its own in popularity as America's destination national park.

[432] Superintendent Eisele to Secretary Hitchcock, letter, 18 February 1907, 1907 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4716.

[433] Eisele continued living in Hot Springs and became active in Republican politics, serving as Garland County alternate delegate to the Republican National Convention from Arkansas in 1912 and again in 1924.; as a delegate from Hot Springs in 1936 and 1940; and an unsuccessful candidate for U.S. Representative from Arkansas, 6th District, in 1924. See http://politicalgraveyard.com/bio/eichelroth-elcan.html

CHAPTER SIX

Superintendencies of W. Scott Smith and Harry H. Myers

SUPERINTENDENCY OF W. SCOTT SMITH, 1907-1909

Before relinquishing his office to James R. Garfield, son of the late president, Interior Secretary Ethan A. Hitchcock appointed his private secretary to the post of superintendent at Hot Springs Reservation. W. Scott Smith of Washington, D.C., thus became the sixth man to hold the post entering on duty April 1, 1907. Smith, who suffered from an aggravated type of arthritis, asked for the job in order that he might improve his health by taking the healing waters.[434]

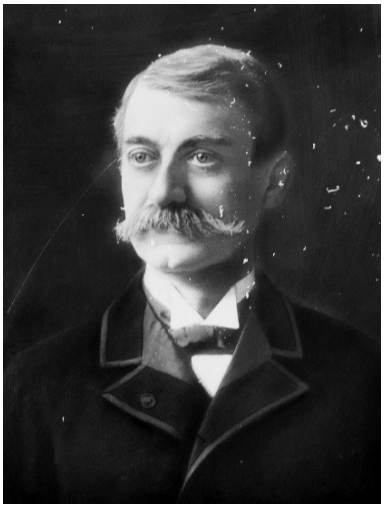

Figure 70. W. Scott Smith (National Park Service)

Settling in at Hot Springs, the new superintendent reversed his predecessor's decision not to use the office in the official residence building. Smith asked for authority to purchase furnishings, have the walls repapered, and telephone service installed. He justified it as follows: "the most important part of my work can be more satisfactorily performed at this office than at the one in the old pumping station at the other end of the Reservation, and it will also enable me to keep in closer touch with the employees and improvements going on in various parts of the Reservation." He noted that the residence office was within thirty feet of the brick maintenance barn with its plumbing and repair shops, storerooms, and stables. It was where employees gathered every morning to meet their foreman and Smith wanted to have daily interaction with his staff. Alarmed that official papers, records, leases, drawings, and maps were unprotected at the pump station, exposed to fire and theft, he immediately had them moved to the eight by five foot brick protective vault at the residence. Telephone service at the office there would afford him the opportunity to communicate after-hours with the waterman in case of leaks or breaks in hot water pipes or mains. According to Smith, "Such emergencies frequently arise and are at once reported, and it is necessary that I promptly issue instructions to the waterman to have repairs made at once." The service would also permit communicating with the lower office during the day when the superintendent was in the upper part of the park.[435]

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[434] Martin A. Eisele, "History of the Government Supervisors in Hot Springs," *Hot Springs New Era* (April 1930), HOSP 8548-49 Newsclippings Scrapbooks 1924-1945.

[435] Superintendent W. Scott Smith to Secretary of the Interior James R. Garfield, letter, 8 April 1907, 1907 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4718.

Superintendent Smith's first visitor service recommendation to Interior fell on deaf ears. Commenting that two separate excursion parties of nearly a thousand people each over the course of a two week period had" thronged" the roads and footpaths and "mingling with them I found a very general feeling of surprise as well as keen disappointment that no view could be obtained of the hot water as it came from the ground." This dissatisfaction was verified by bathhouse managers who reported the common request to be "shown the boiler room where the hot water is heated—thereby indicating their disbelief as to the hot water coming direct from the ground." Smith proposed re-opening at least four thermal springs for public view by installing iron bar grates and wire mesh instead of the solid wood doors sealing off the stone-arched spring enclosures. The new iron doors would remain padlocked thus ensuring security and protection. At a minimal cost, he held that visitors could only then be satisfied concerning origin of the hot springs. Interior, probably fearing that pollution could still be a problem, did not approve the idea.[436]

Secretary Garfield approved Smith's recommendation—in stark opposition to Superintendent Martin A. Eisele's last recommendation to Interior—to keep automobiles off Hot Springs Reservation's scenic road system "in the interest of the protection of human life." Because there were few in local ownership and only one powerful enough to climb the mountain drives, allowing the noisy, smelly machines, Smith argued, would ruin the spa experience for the more numerous hikers or for visitors in carriages or on horseback. The secretary pondered the request. Interior's firm policy was to exclude automobiles from the national parks, but Hot Springs was a national park surrounded by a growing urban area. Nonetheless, Garfield upheld the ban. He denied the application from the Hot Springs Automobile Company to operate automobiles within the national park.[437]

The Hot Springs Mountain observation tower, which opened to the public in May 1906, caused embarrassment to Smith's predecessor a year later. Interior granted a lease to John W. Howell, a former Hot Springs postmaster and current U.S. commissioner, and Charles N. Rix Handed a ten-year lease, the men formed the Hot Springs Mountain Observatory Company. Comparing provisions of the 1903 lease to what existed on the ground in June 1907, Smith notified Interior that a private residence sat adjacent to the concrete one-story base and 100-foot-tall metal tower. Further, the occupants were in the

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[436]Superintendent Smith to Secretary Garfield, letter, 28 May 1907, 1907-09 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4717. He observed, "My information is that they were closed up during a time when it was impossible to control tramps, vagabonds, and the rougher element who took a malicious pleasure in throwing their cast off diseased clothes in the springs and in other ways polluting them. This period has now passed and the reservation is now well controlled." In response to a recommendation to allow the Rock Island Railroad permission to use thermal water on its trains from Chicago, Cincinnati, Louisville, and Memphis, Garfield also said "no" in keeping with Interior policy disallowing shipment of Hot Springs water away from the city. See Superintendent Smith to Secretary Garfield, letter, 19 July 1907, 1907-09 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4717.

[437] Superintendent Smith to Secretary Garfield, letter, 1 July 1907, RG 79, Entry 6, Box 66. See also, Laura Soulliere, *Historic Roads in the National Park System: Special History Study* (Denver: Denver Service Center, National Park Service, 1995). Viewed at http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/roads/shs2.htm

process of drilling a well. Interior telegrammed that no authority had been granted and to halt the drilling. Taking the waterman with him to the summit, Smith ordered the drilling stopped and observed particles of sulphur and tufa brought to the surface of a drill hole which had reached 175 feet. Judge Howell informed Smith that he had Superintendent Eisele's permission, both for the house and the well.[438] Garfield put his foot down and stuck to the provisions of the lease. Smith notified Judge Howell of four lease violations as follows:

1. *By the construction of a dwelling house, stable, etc., upon the leased land.*
2. *By the drilling of a well.*
3. *By the failure to lay off walks, grass plots and flower beds on all ground not required for the tower.*
4. *By the failure to place at the top of the tower a high power telescope, and to furnish the second floor with settees, magazines, newspapers, etc.*

Secretary Garfield gave the company three months to remove the intrusions and fulfill the lease provisions or face lease termination.[439] Howell appealed the decision but Garfield did not demur ordering the private residence removed "at the earliest practicable date."[440] Judge Howell stalled for time, appealing again to the secretary and suggesting the living quarters be built atop the second floor of the tower base to accommodate the caretaker. Garfield refused a third time, stating that there were already two rooms for the caretaker inside the tower base. He gave Howell sixty days to comply.[441] Reluctantly, a week prior to the deadline, the buildings were removed, the old material being used to construct a house on a city lot. Interior won the dispute.[442]

Smith resumed the war on drumming. When handed evidence that an attendant employed at Superior Bathhouse had engaged in drumming, Smith demanded he be fired. The owners refused, declaring the attendant be convicted in court first. Secretary Garfield ordered his superintendent to shut-off the Superior's thermal water on October 3, 1907. Two months without thermal water, the Superior capitulated, fired the offending attendant, and the water flow resumed.[443] Smith also kept track of bathers who filed false certificates and were drummed to unregistered doctors by revoking their bathing

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[438] Superintendent Smith to Secretary Garfield, letter, 12 June 1907, 1907-09 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4717. Howell had a keg of spring water hauled to the observatory for drinking and other purposes each day. Because the road did not pass near the tower, the superintendent estimated visitation there was low as "not one in twenty of the carriages passing over Hot Springs Mountain go up to the observatory." See Superintendent Smith to Secretary Garfield, letter, 17 June 1907, 1907-09 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4717

[439] Superintendent Smith to Secretary Garfield, letter, 25 June 1907, 1907-09 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4717.

[440] Superintendent Smith to Secretary Garfield, letter, 16 November 1907, 1907-09 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4717.

[441] Superintendent Smith to John W. Howell, President, Hot Springs Observatory Company, letter, 25 May 1908, 1907-09 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4717.

[442] Superintendent Smith to Secretary Garfield, letter, 24 July 1908, 1907-09 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4717.

[443] Superintendent Smith to Secretary Garfield, telegram, 1 October and 11 December 1907;and Superintendent Smith to Robert Proctor and R. A. Simpson, Superior Bath House, letter, 3 October 1907, 1907-09 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4717.

privileges. In late December 1908, he demanded the manager of the Alhambra Bath House be fired for allowing drummers to show bathers through that establishment as well as neglect of duty under Rule 14.[444]

It seemed the city fathers were finally taking the war on drumming seriously once public sentiment had aroused them to do so. Not only did Hot Springs clamp down on gambling and close the pool halls, but it passed an ordinance placing heavy fines on anyone who took or recommended a patient to a non-registered physician or who told a bather to misrepresent the fact that he had no physician simply in order to take the baths. The law resulted in many convictions and drove away offenders for long periods until such time that those visitors willing to testify against them returned to their own homes and could no longer appear in court. State officials also passed legislation to suppress drumming and soliciting on all trains and stations, placing fines on conductors if they permitted such illegal acts in and around their trains. Locally, the Garland County Medical Society paid for a detective, credentialed by police, to investigate all drumming cases. Smith made it clear to everyone that he would rigidly enforce the rules and regulations without exception. To ensure the public was made aware of all registered physicians who were permitted to prescribe the waters, Smith had lists prepared, framed, and posted periodically all along the Bathhouse Row promenade.[445]

Congress did its part to wage war against drumming. In order to clarify the authority of U.S. commissioners, it amended the language of the 1904 jurisdiction law so that commissioners were fully empowered to hear and act on any and all violations of Interior's regulations at Hot Springs.[446]

The new superintendent found the Government Free Bath House appalling. Humidity, combined with shoddy construction, overcrowding, poor light and ventilation resulted in abysmal conditions. The facilities were such that if they existed at one of the Row bathhouses, he would order the water shut off until improvements were made. The individual tubs installed in the 1903-05 re-design proved a failure. Scrubbing to keep them clean had eliminated the enamel coating, leaving only the iron shell which was impossible to keep sanitary. In consulting area doctors familiar with indigent bathers he discovered a near unanimous opinion that better results were obtained under the pool system and the percentage of cures were much higher. Smith recommended a return to the former system which would result in nearly doubling the capacity for bathing. More attentive attendants detected six cases of smallpox during May, June, and July. City health inspectors were notified and the affected individuals whisked away to quarantine. After each case, the Government Free Bath House closed, the facility and its exposed bathers were disinfected, all the while keeping it from the public to avoid panic.[447]

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[444] Superintendent Smith to E. H. Bancroft, Alhambra Bath House, letter, 22 December 1908, 1907-09 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4717.
[445] *Annual Report for 1907.*
[446] *Act of Congress*, 2 March 1907 (34 Stat. 1218)(U.S.C. 16, Sec. 376).
[447] *Annual Report for 1907.* Smith submitted a plan to replace 35 tubs, leaving 24 in place, and adding eleven additional pools to supplement three existing ones.

After studying the income of bathhouses, their repairs, and growing patronage over the previous ten year period, Smith came to the conclusion that water rates were too low and the government should at least double them. He advised the secretary to use his authority granted under the 1891 act to raise water rates, arguing "Many of the bath houses have been making enormous profits under their leases—profits that are out of all proportion to the amount of capital invested—and that the time has arrived when the Government should at least receive a fair amount for the water supplied, which furnishes the basis for the large profits realized by the bath-house lessees. An advance of the water rate from $30 to $60 a tub per annum when it can be applied to all bath houses as provided in the leases would increase the revenues of the reservation from this source alone to $36,600 on the present tubbage basis." He pointed out the Arlington Hotel had never had an increase in ground rate since it was fixed at $2,500 per annum under the same 1891 law. Now that it was prosperous and paying its investors a fifteen percent dividend, he recommended the Arlington's rate be doubled as well. The Secretary concurred and the new rates went into effect in 1908.[448]

Ground rent, while charged to the Arlington Hotel, was not charged to any of the eleven commercial establishments along Bathhouse Row and Smith believed this disparity needed to be remedied. In surveying commercial property on the opposite side of Central Avenue he found rates from $500 to $1,000 a foot and estimated a conservative $600 a foot rate should be charged on the reservation side of the street. If applied uniformly, the 1,600-foot frontage should yield the government a whopping $960,000 annual ground rent. Bathhouses were given leases without provision for ground rent in an era when Hot Springs was in its infancy as a health resort and cultivating a national reputation for wonderful curative abilities. Now that it had proven itself and the city was prospering from the government's investment and operation, it was time to reassess this policy and require the payment of ground rent. Congress needed to recognize this and amend the act of 1891 to allow for it.[449]

When Central Avenue was paved in 1906, the wooden poles carrying electricity were removed from the street right of way onto parkland temporarily. While the poles were out of the street's gutter, the agreement was that the poles would be replaced with iron poles to improve their appearance. When Smith notified the Hot Springs Street Railway Company, owner of the poles, to honor the agreement, its president refused stating that they would merely move them back into the gutter. Appealing to the mayor, the city forbade the safety intrusion and insisted that the company honor its agreement to have iron poles to carry electric lines inside of the curbing along Bathhouse Row.[450] While the city mandated the company to maintain pavement in good repair, it also

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[448] *Annual Report for 1907*, and Superintendent Smith to Secretary Garfield, letter, 31 December 1907, 1907-09 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4717. Smith brought the bathhouse owners one by one to his office and explained the increase. Two objected but "fell into line when they ascertained that the others acquiesced."

[449] *Annual Report for 1907.*

[450] Superintendent Smith to Secretary Garfield, letter, 6 July 1908, 1907-09 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4717. At one point, the city attempted unsuccessfully to convince Congress to pave Central Avenue. See "Memorial to Congress," 1 December 1904, Box 65, Folder 65-2: City Council Records, Minutes 1891-1927, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

ordered it to enforce Jim Crow laws on its rails. In 1907, the city council ordered racially segregated passenger cars, and should it be necessary for the races to share the same car, certain seats were designated for white and colored passengers.[451]

Ever conscience of his budget, Smith examined the quarterly bills from the Hot Springs Water Company and the half-million gallons of thermal water remaining each day which could be utilized after cooling. City water was in use at the Free Bath House, official residence, superintendent's office, greenhouse, and to sprinkle the lawns on Fountain Street and a portion of Bathhouse Row. In short order, pipes were run to the cooling tanks and city water was shut-off. In the rear of the residence, a 6,500 gallon concrete cooling tank was built and connected to a hot water reservoir to obtain water. Pipes were laid to the residence, barns, greenhouse, and park lawn areas before city water was discontinued. All of this was performed by reservation crews and cost less than a six-month city water bill.[452]

Smith's friends in Washington sent him gratis plantings to beautify the grounds at his new post. Shortly after his arrival, "a very liberal supply of assorted shrubbery, roses, and bedding plants were set out on the reservation and have added much to its attractiveness." Included were an assortment of flower seeds and bulbs. Smith thanked the donors to conclude his first annual report to the secretary.[453]

Smith put his own imprint on the official Rules and Regulations when amendments and additions were approved on February 1, 1908. Rule 4 concerning bath rates and refunds added the provision that "The renting and selling of bath robes, towels, soap, toilet articles, or articles of merchandise in bath houses is prohibited." Any commercial benefit derived from claiming superiority of thermal water from one facility to the other was hereafter outlawed by the following new Rule 5:

> *The owners or managers of bath houses receiving water from the Hot Springs Reservation, and the employees of any such bath house are absolutely prohibited from either directly or indirectly reflecting on or questioning the integrity of the hot water supply of any other bath house, or of claiming superiority of its own supply of hot water over that furnished from the springs on the Reservation to other bath houses. Upon evidence of violation of this rule, the Superintendent shall report the facts, with his recommendation, to the Secretary of the Interior, looking to the*

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[451] Jim Hale, "The Hot Springs Street Railway, 1874-1938, *The Record* Vol. 19 (Hot Springs, Ark.: Garland County Historical Society, 1978): 47; and Ordinance, City of Hot Springs, 11 February 1907, Box 65, Folder 65-2: City Council Records, Minutes 1891-1927, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

[452] *Annual Report for 1907.*

[453] *Annual Report for 1907.* The donations came from U.S. Army, Superintendent of Public Buildings and Grounds, Col. Bromwell; Chief of Bureau of Plant Industry, U.S. Department of Agriculture Dr. B. T. Galloway; Superintendent of the Capitol Building and Grounds Elliott Woods; and Superintendent, National Botanic Garden William R. Smith.

> *shutting off of the water from any bath house or cancelling the lease as the Department may determine.*[454]

And a revised Rule 12 spelled out Interior's authority granted by Congress and the penalties for violations as follows:

> *Persons violating any of the foregoing regulations within the purview of the act of April 20, 1904, entitled "An Act conferring jurisdiction upon United States commissioners over offenses committed in a portion of the permanent Hot Springs Mountain Reservation, Arkansas," and the act of March 2, 1907, amendatory thereof, will be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and be subjected on conviction to the payment of a fine, as provided in said act of April 20, 1904, of not exceeding $100, and be adjudged to pay all costs of the proceeding.*

The final rule, 14, gave the Superintendent explicit authority to fire any person breaking rules or for drumming and to make it impossible for any unauthorized re-employment. It read as follows:

> *The Superintendent is authorized to require the discharge of any bath house manager, clerk, attendant, mercury rubber, or masseur, for bath house drumming or refusing or neglecting to carry out the Bath House Rules and Regulations according to the true intent and meaning thereof. Any person discharged for cause from a bath house, or removed at the request of the Superintendent, shall not be again employed by the same or any other bath house, or permitted to render service in any bath house, without the written consent of the Superintendent. Managers must promptly report to the Superintendent the name of any person so removed.*[455]

Employment of a mercury rubber or masseur in any bathhouse now had to have the superintendent's approval. Bathhouse capitalists were becoming innovative in hiking their profits as Smith observed: "One bath house has developed quite a business which, strictly speaking, is not connected with the bathing system for which its lease was granted. It has a masseur for the massage department, a mercury rubbing department, a chiropodist (podiatrist) and manicurist, a bootblack department, and an arrangement with an outside tailor for pressing clothes while the patient is taking his bath." The revenue brought in by these sideline endeavors were in the thousands of dollars annually. Because their profit margins were escalating, Smith recommended a new rule whereby bathhouses were compelled to report these extra revenue sources as they did monthly and annual bath ticket sales. It should factor into any decision on raising lease rents. He also

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[454] "Regulations Approved February 1, 1908, for the Government of All Bath Houses," printed in *Laws and Regulations Relating to the Hot Springs Reservation, Hot Springs, Ark., Compiled in the Office of the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1908): 33-34.
[455] Ibid., 35.

cautioned about complaints received that masseurs were recommending specific bath prescriptions as if they themselves were physicians.[456]

Unlike his predecessors, W. Scott Smith did not recommend proceeding with sale of excess government-owned lots. He believed it had been a mistake for the Hot Springs Commission to deed the street rights of way to the city while retaining possession of government lots. City officials subsequently had permitted whetstone quarrying in the roadway corridors leaving many of the lots valueless, fronting on a street that was excavated 20 to 30 feet below grade. With access impossible, residential use was made impractical. He criticized past superintendents for not alerting the department to this practice. Remaining unsold were 169 lots, some of them valuable but not in the present market. Smith concluded, "In my judgment no further sale of lots ought to be made for several years, nor until practically all of the vacant private lots in the vicinity are built upon and property gets a fixed value."[457]

Congress donated five lots to the local school district in April 1908. They were as follows: Lot 2, Block 72; Lot 10, Block 48; Lot 8, Block 146; Lot 18, Block 135; and Lot 21, Block 138.[458]

Reservation crews were busy with road repairs in 1908. Following heavy rainfall, landslides typically occurred filling the gutters and roadbeds with rocks and soil. An area prone to landslides behind the Arlington Hotel became an issue in February 1908. Slides were threatening to bring down trees and to solve the problem, Smith determined that he must erect a stone retaining wall laid in cement mortar from four to five feet tall, and fill in with stone and dirt before planting honeysuckle vines to hold the earth in place and prevent future slides. He believed a 600-foot-long retaining wall would arrest the landslide problem in addition to repairing the roadway guttering behind the hotel. He expanded this principle on a long stretch of Hot Springs Mountain road by constructing a stone retaining wall 1676 feet long by 4½ feet high and 2 feet thick. The bulk of that, 1,322 feet, was on the lower main road between the entrance on Happy Hollow to the intersecting road leading to the Army and Navy Hospital. Similar walls were erected on the third loop (64 feet) and fifth loop (292 feet) roads. The walls were placed in areas where the side banks were known to collapse. His strategy proved genius when, on May 4, tornadic winds and rains pummeled the area bringing down numerous trees and causing washouts. The road system on Hot Springs Mountain was relatively unscathed, thanks to the retaining walls and guttering. Landslides and washouts on North and West Mountains, however, caused considerable damage. Making the necessary repairs, crews also cut into firewood 100 cords of wood, stacked neatly beside the Government Free Bath House for winter use, and cleared away and burned underbrush to prevent future forest fires.[459]

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[456] *Annual Report for 1908.*
[457] Ibid.
[458] *Act of Congress*, *30 April 1908* (35 Stat. 98). They were as follows: Lot 2, Block 72; Lot 10, Block 48; Lot 8, Block 146; Lot 18, Block 135; and Lot 21, Block 138.
[459] Superintendent Smith to Secretary Garfield, letters, 29 February and 5 May 1908, D22, Construction/Preservation 1900-16.

Smith put his own imprint on thermal water use and utility bill parsimony by discontinuing pumping at the Government Free Bath House. Determining the intent of Congress was to supply by gravity water to the indigent facility first, he disconnected a thousand-dollar system of pump and motor, at an annual expense of $200 to operate, and rearranged thermal water piping. While the Free Bath House no longer needed to pump water, a hotel off the reservation and two bathhouses on the Row had to begin pumping water to their cooling tanks. He added a new 14,600-gallon cooling tank at the Free Bath House and connected piping to the superintendent's office and along the water main fronting Bathhouse Row to provide cold water and make the entire reservation self-sufficient. He boasted:

> *All the cold water now used on the reservation, in the official residence and grounds, the office building, the free bath house, the government barns, and for watering the lawns, shrubbery, and flower beds is drawn from the cooling tanks constructed during the past year. With nearly 500,000 gallons of hot water running to waste daily it was not deemed good administration for the Government to pay a local water company 30 cents a thousand gallons for cold water, when by the construction of two cooling tanks at a cost not exceeding $300, an unlimited supply of cold water would be available at all times for use on the reservation.*[460]

Cold water for the public remained an issue and its availability improved in 1908. The Fountain Street cold spring, heavily used in summer months with people toting off thousands of gallons in bottles and pails, could hardly meet the demand. Smith had the walls in the spring pavilion extended and concreted and the well deepened resulting in a doubling of its flow. He had the footpaths leading to it improved, including those from the mountainside with 30 dressed stone steps and the trail protected by cement gutters and catch basins with piping to carry away surface water. In back of the residence on one path, a substantial retaining wall measuring 50 feet long by 4½ feet high, was built to augment a trail leading to the cold spring where the grade was steep.[461] At the observation tower, Interior authorized construction of a cement tank to hold a supply of cold water for use by visitors. This would end complaints received about lack of cold drinking water on Hot Springs Mountain.[462]

In January 1909, Assistant Engineer Horatio N. Parker was detailed to Hot Springs from the U.S. Geological Survey to evaluate all bathhouses supplied with thermal water as well as the intricate distribution system. His six-week intensive evaluation

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[460] *Annual Report for 1908.*
[461] Ibid.
[462] Superintendent Smith to Secretary Garfield, letter, 25 November 1908, D22 Construction/Preservation 1900-16. The tower was struggling financially. With a 25-cent admission, there were 14,418 people who enjoyed the 30 to 40 mile radius view at the tower's top during the 1908 fiscal year. See *Annual Report for 1908.* Interior authorized use of the well bored by Judge Howell. See Superintendent Myers to Secretary Ballinger, letter, 4 November 1909, 1909-10 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4719.

detailed innumerable deficiencies with an eye toward correction or improvement whenever leases came up for renewal.[463]

SUPERINTENDENCY OF HARRY H. MYERS, 1909-1913

On March 5, 1909, having served exactly two years in office, Interior Secretary James R. Garfield's appointment expired at the end of President Theodore Roosevelt's presidency. Superintendent W. Scott Smith's service continued until his resignation was accepted May 19, 1909. President William Howard Taft's incoming Interior Secretary Richard A. Ballinger appointed Little Rock Registrar, U.S. Land Office, Harry H. Myers to the post of superintendent, Hot Springs Reservation. Myers entered on duty July 1, it being a certainty that his Republican Party candidacy for governor of Arkansas was doomed later that same month.[464] In accepting the appointment, Myers also received a pay hike, from $2,500 to $3,000 a year. As Myers got up to speed in his new position, Interior officials compiled the superintendent's annual report for the previous fiscal year utilizing letters and documents in department files.[465]

Figure 71. Harry H. Myers (National Park Service)

Myers proved equally vigilant as his predecessor against the drumming evil and insisted upon strict adherence to the department's

[463] *Annual Report for 1909.* Harry H. Myers used the Parker report when evaluating a lease renewal request for the Rammelsberg to build a "modern, pressed brick, steel, reinforced concrete, fireproof structure" of not less than $40,000. Myers recommended a $5,000 indemnity bond with strict lease provisions. The lessee and all employees would follow all Interior rules shifting the burden of proof from the Government to the lessee, particularly in regard to drumming allegations. If bathhouses were found guilty, they would face bond forfeiture—a death blow to bathhouse drumming. See Superintendent Harry H. Myers to Secretary Richard A. Ballinger, letter, 13 August 1909, 1909-10 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4719.

[464] *Annual Report for 1909.* Myers lost the governor's race July 23, 1913, to Joseph T. Robinson by a wide margin of 20.41% to 64.25% of the vote. He also lost the governorship in the 1902 and 1904 elections. See: http://www.ourcampaigns.com/CandidateDetail.html?CandidateID=102702 . This earned him the nickname "Nix" for his three unsuccessful GOP bids. He was also hailed as "Our Arkansas Harry…. Superintendent Myers was a popular, handsome, and eloquent, a gifted orator, whose powers of speech were often evoked for many public functions…. Mr. Myers had the distinction of being provided with a pair of high-stepping horses, a carriage, and a driver in livery, which he utilized to the best advantage in entertaining the dignitaries who visited Hot Springs." See Martin A. Eisele, "History of the Government Supervisors in Hot Springs," *Hot Springs New Era* (April 1930), HOSP 8548-49 Newsclippings Scrapbooks 1924-1945.

[465] Myers first superintendent's annual report came in 1911. Scholars should note that he adopted the baffling habit of referring to Hot Springs Mountain as "East Mountain," presumably because it faced West Mountain from his downtown Hot Springs perspective.

rules and regulations. On August 20, several dozen doctors found guilty of drumming were dropped from the list of registered physicians.[466] He canvassed the bathhouses, informing each one to send bathing applicants without a physician or uncertainty about the matter to his office. In this way, he effectively banned those found to be treated by non-registered physicians from taking the waters. He instituted a required daily register showing the names of each bather, his home residence as well as local address, doctor's and attendant's names, and date of arrival—each day delivered to his office so that he could keep track of all business transactions and identify abuses should allegation be made.[467] He also instituted a uniform bath direction form which was used by all registered physicians and signed by both the doctor and patient, thereby eliminating non-registered doctors prescribing the waters.

To crush the most egregious form of drumming, Myers placed government policemen on the incoming trains from Benton, Arkansas, to warn the public about the illegal activity and explain Interior rules. On October 15, Policeman Miles F. Davis was the first to perform train duty. The prepared script read on trains was follows:

> *You are about to enter Hot Springs, the world's greatest Health Sanatorium, and as an officer of the Government I wish to make some suggestions which it is hoped may add to your profit and pleasure during your stay.*
>
> *The Hot Springs are owned and controlled by the United States Government and the water in all the bath houses is the same. Do not take the advice of any hotel man, or stranger who offers to take you to his doctor, or persons employed in and about hotels, as to whether you employ a physician, or who to get. Years of experience have proven that better results follow by bathing under a physician's directions.*
>
> *The baths are open to everyone. If you have a physician be sure he is registered by the Government and permitted and authorized to prescribe the baths. A physician who is not registered can not prescribe the baths and he violates the rules if he treats you and attempts to give the baths, and it is a violation of the law for anyone treating with a physician who is not registered to bathe or attempt to bathe.. A list of registered physicians can be found in every bath house, posted up and down Bath House Row, and at the Superintendent's office.*
>
> *It is a violation of the rules for any hotel proprietor or employee to solicit business for doctors or bath houses, and any person who stops at a hotel or boarding house, where the proprietor or any employee solicits business for doctors or bath houses, can not bathe.*

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[466] Letters in the files—dozens similar to one from Myers to O.S. Burrows, letter, 20 August 1909, 1909-10 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4719.

[467] Superintendent Myers to Secretary Ballinger, letter, 26 August 1909, 1909-10 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4719. The daily bathhouse register also proved popular with visitors seeking the location of relatives or friends.

> *All information regarding Government rules, physicians and bath houses, or anything which may add to your comfort, will be cheerfully given at the Superintendent's office, the first office on Bath House Row.*[468]

An exuberant superintendent reported his success and requested authority to hire two more inspectors for the heavy three-month season to provide coverage to all six daily trains entering Hot Springs.[469] Ballinger granted permission and Myers began dealing with the U.S. Civil Service Commission for three eligible candidates. Train duty for regular reservation policemen entailed being in uniform along with a promotion from $780 to $840 per annum. He wanted to hire three seasonal train inspectors or detectives, but two of the men on the civil service register were African American and Myers declined to hire either man based on their race.[470] Three white seasonal detectives were hired and on the job by early November 1909.[471] Their train duty had Myers soon crowing that he had conquered train drumming. He asked permission to retain two of the detectives to work in the city, something his predecessors had requested many times in the past. The men wore smart Prince Albert uniforms with brass buttons and matching caps with "U.S. Inspector" printed on them. Their outfits featured patent leather belts with large brass buckles inscribed "U.S." It left a lasting impression on visitors. They responded to the government train inspectors in increasing numbers with visitation figures up by twenty-five percent the first heavy visitor season.[472]

Figure 72. Distant view of a lamp pole on Hot Springs Mountain Drive, at right, and unidentified man (HSNP 3284, National Park Service)

Myers tackled poor lighting on parkland by recommending a more comprehensive system to replace the ineffective and

[468] Superintendent Myers to Secretary Ballinger, letter, 6 December 1911, A54 Inspections, Etc.—Train Inspectors, 1911-1918. The first version appeared in the 1910 annual report but proved too legalistic. This script was approved by the department, printed on Interior letterhead, and handed out to passengers.
[469] Superintendent Myers to W. M. Whittenden, letter, 13 October 1909 and Superintendent Myers to Secretary Ballinger, letter, 16 October 1909, 1909-10 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4719.
[470] Superintendent Myers to Secretary Ballinger, letters, 18 October, 26 October, and 28 October 1909, 1909-10 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4719.
[471] Superintendent Myers to Secretary Ballinger, letter, 6 November 1909, 1909-10 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4719. Their pay rate was $90 a month, not to exceed three months. The men were Henry F. Howell, Lee P. Gillenwater, and William H. Casey.
[472] Superintendent Myers to Secretary Ballinger, letter, 6 January 1910, 1909-10 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4719. The new anti-drumming measures were enshrined in the official rules and regulations promulgated on December 29, 1909, and amended on February 18, 1910. See Appendix in *Annual Report for 1910.*

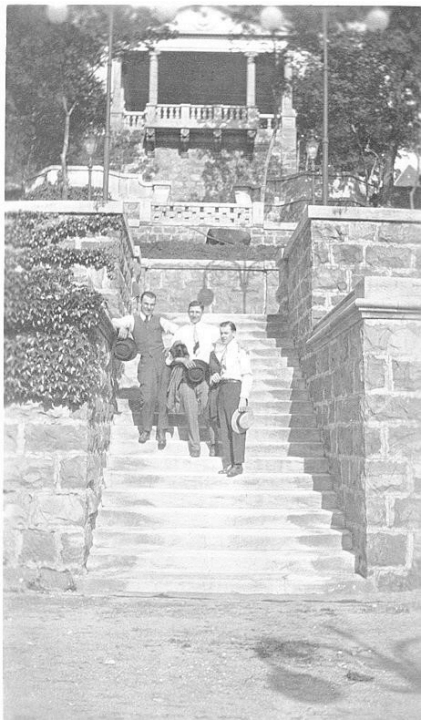

Figure 73. Three men standing below the bandstand at the formal entrance well-lit with electric lamp posts, c. 1910 (HSNP 3285, National Park Service)

more expensive one in place. At a monthly charge of $71.40 there were eight arc lights along Bathhouse Row, one arc light and two gas lights at the grand entrance, and two gas lights illuminating the superintendent's official residence. In their place, Myers planned to install 100 60-watt Tungsten lights, doubling the number fronting Bathhouse Row and at the grand entrance with twelve new lights clustered around the band stand. On the Hot Springs Mountain road at 100 foot intervals, the same lights would illuminate the drive up to the observation tower. The lights, complete with reflectors and lamps, were to be mounted on galvanized metal posts buried three feet in concrete and protruding 14½ feet high. At a total cost for installation of $1,400, the monthly discounted rate for operation would be $90, a better deal in the long term for the government while providing better coverage.[473] It proved so popular that he installed 15 similar lights at Whittington Park.[474]

Improvements in 1910 included more road retaining walls and replacement of six wooden bridges with concrete structures in Whittington Park along with a new brick house for the groundskeeper. The park also received a public comfort station. To accommodate the Hot Springs Street Railway Company, Congress authorized a right of way for the electric railroad next to the park not to exceed 800 feet long by twenty feet wide, with a reversion clause. The mountain retaining walls, measuring 2,179 linear feet and 3½ feet tall by eighteen inches thick, had their tops graded and covered with Bermuda grass over red clay soil. Several hundred flowering trees and shrubs were also planted along the route including several flower beds.[475] Later in the year, authorization was received to erect a stone-columned pavilion over the public drinking fountain at the observation tower on Hot Springs Mountain, an area being referred to as "Point Lookout." Its prominent location presented a "very pleasing appearance to passengers on

[473] Superintendent Myers to Secretary Ballinger, letter, 4 November 1909, 1909-10 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4719. W. Scott Smith, irritated by the poor service and times lights failed to light, threatened to discontinue service. See Superintendent Smith to Hot Springs Water Company, letter, 1 March 1909, 1909-10 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4719.

[474] Superintendent Myers to Secretary Ballinger, letter, 6 June 1910, 1909-10 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4719.

[475] *Act of Congress*, *12 March 1910*, (36Stat. 235); and *Annual Report for 1910.* Another piece of legislation the same year ceded land in Block 114 for public streets (Interior, Court, Granite, and Prospect). *Act of Congress, 25 June 1910* (36 Stat. 844).

all incoming trains, also to afford the visitors a most magnificent view point in all directions."[476]

Superintendent Myers raised the subject of employee compensation with the parsimonious department. He flatly stated the $540 per annum salary for his eight foresters and gardeners was inadequate and the long hours expected of the six bath attendants at the Free Bath House, $480 for the four males and $420 for the two females, was far too little compensation. He recommended a $5 per month raise for everyone. Surprisingly, Ballinger concurred. Seizing the opportunity, he spoke up for annual salary increases for the supervisory positions as follows: Manager of Free Bath House (from $1,020 to $1,080); Head Male Attendant (from $780 to $900); and Waterman, who supervised the foresters and gardeners (from $900 to $1,020). He also neglected to mention raises for two African American laborers who were in the same classification as the foresters and gardeners, an oversight he corrected. Everyone received raises except the Head Male Attendant's salary was set at $840, not $900 per annum. Even Myers saw his annual salary increased from $3,000 to $3,600.[477]

A request from the War Department to expand operations at the Army and Navy Hospital met with firm opposition in early 1910. The land necessary for expansion roughly measured 300 by 400 feet and would have taken in part of the grand entrance and band stand as well as several loops off the Hot Springs Mountain road. Myers ruled the loss of these areas unacceptable. Hospital officials had already acquired five acres fronting Reserve Avenue and more land was not really essential to its operations. For these reasons, Myers recommended Interior deny the War Department's application.[478]

Interior rejected another application, this time to permit a bathhouse in conjunction with the Hotel Pullman, a three-story establishment with 65 guest rooms. Myers objected because it sat directly opposite Bathhouse Row on Central Avenue, arguing "If it is desired to establish baths in all the smaller hotels, then it stands to reason we cannot expect to have elaborate houses constructed on bath house row, as in that even they would have no hotels from which to draw business enough to justify a large expenditure." Secretary Ballinger concurred.

On the question of investing more to maintain the superintendent's office or build a modern administration building, Myers referred it to the secretary. The old retrofitted pump station, located on the "most valuable [lot] in the city," required a new tile roof as well as heating and plumbing systems at a cost of around $3,500. Abandoning the site in favor of a $100,000 bathhouse would bring more revenue and a relocated administrative

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[476] Superintendent Myers to Secretary Ballinger, letter, 13 October 1910, D46 Pavilions. Unfortunately, the well there was dry and required additional drilling. See *Annual Report for 1911*.
[477] Superintendent Myers to Secretary Ballinger, letters, 14 April and 28 April 1910, 1909-10 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4719; and *Annual Report for 1910*.
[478] Superintendent Myers to Secretary Ballinger, letter, 18 January 1910, 1909-10 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4719.

office building could be sandwiched next to Hale Bath House on site number 9. The secretary opted to make repairs to the existing building.[479]

In anticipation of finally selling off excess government-owned lots, Interior directed its superintendent to serve legal notice to all squatters occupying those lots in April 1910. They subsequently conferred on the best time to schedule the sale and when to give a ninety day advance legal notice.[480] Sale of the excess lots finally occurred at public auction held in March 1911. Chief Clerk Clement S. Ucker of the Interior Department supervised the sale where all but six of the 169 lots were sold, most at prices considerably above appraised value. The auction yielded $82,518 for deposit to the reservation operation and improvement fund.[481]

THE O'REILLY INSPECTION, 1910

Secretary Ballinger succeeded in obtaining the services of retired 20th Surgeon General of the U.S. Army Robert Maitland O'Reilly to make a full inspection of facilities at Hot Springs Reservation. Superintendent Myers fully cooperated with and coordinated General O'Reilly's investigation. During O'Reilly's visit, Myers provided a new perspective on a number of issues of interest to Ballinger. Foremost was his recommendation that the inadequate Government Free Bath House be demolished and rebuilt. While there were other spots to be considered, Myers believed its present location to be the best. "I prefer the present site," he wrote, "because it sets back off the main avenue, and saves the classes from too much contact with the general public, which in many instances would be undesirable for both." As for totally segregated facilities, he firmly rejected the suggestion, stating "I do not think it advisable to erect separate bath houses for the two races for the reason it would double the expense of operation and as at present both are handled very satisfactory." He favored holding the sale of lots in November and utilizing the proceeds to build a new free bathhouse. He rejected the idea of building it on the Big Iron Spring site as well as behind the Arlington Hotel, stating that those sites were not suited to bathhouse purposes but should remain open parkland.[482]

General O'Reilly concurred with the findings of past Interior inspectors but he stressed the fact that all buildings had "an utter absence of ventilation." He made observations designed to "eventually make Hot Springs a respectable and decent resort, one which will not be, as it is at present, a disgrace to the United States." He described conditions as "wretched." He praised Harry Myers' order to place a bath thermometer and clock in all bathhouses, stating, "By this wise, yet simple, measure, the patient can see for himself that the bath is at the temperature prescribed by his physician, and that the

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[479] Superintendent Myers to Secretary Ballinger, letter, 3 May 1910, 1909-10 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4719.
[480] Superintendent Myers to Secretary Ballinger, letters, 18 April and 3 May 1910, 1909-10 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4719.
[481] *Annual Report for 1911.* Assisting him were Interior Inspectors E. B. Linnen, Joe H. Norris, and William R. Logan.
[482] Superintendent Myers to Secretary Ballinger, letter, 17 May 1910, 1909-10 Letter Press Book, HOSP 4719.

actual duration is that directed." O'Reilly complimented Myers' efforts to ensure cleanliness by conducting semi-monthly inspections. He called attention to the public's perception that the government controlled affairs in Hot Springs. The reality, however, was that Interior only controlled its own holdings, not those across Central Avenue. To deal with the multitude of urban issues, he advocated pursuit of a Federal District, modeled on that found in the District of Columbia in the nation's capital. Barring that, the general gave his unvarnished impression of Hot Springs:

> "*On one side of Central Avenue, which is the principal street of Hot Springs, there are shops, offices, 'club houses' (euphemism for gambling halls), theatres, moving picture shows, etc., etc., which are unlovely to look at. On the other side of the Avenue, on the property of the United States, are a lot of bath houses, the office of the superintendent of the Reservation, and a hotel (The Arlington). With the exception of the hotel, all the others are mean and sordid looking. They fulfill their object more or less well, but they are not pleasant to look at, possess no architectural advantages and in appearance are totally incongruous. They might, as the present leases expire, be rebuilt on some thoroughly digested plan, which would prevent the erection of inartistic monstrosities. None of the present bath houses is more than tolerable on the inside…. On the outside they are ugly. But such as they are, they are palaces and models compared with the government bath house."*[483]

Turning his attention to the Government Free Bath House, Gen. O'Reilly found it to be "in bad repair, dingy and uninviting" with cracked walls and impossibly overcrowded. Continuing, he wrote:

Figure 74. Whittington Park entrance arch, c. 1910s, with man standing by open automobile. (HSNP 3282, National Park Service)

> *"The dressing and cooling rooms are foul, infested with vermin and crowded with a horde of people, black and white, some with open ulcers. The attendants are ignorant of their duties, some are illiterate. The atmosphere is indescribable. Filthy rags, soaked with pus from syphilitic ulcers, are found on the floors. No*

[483] Gen. R. M. O'Reilly to Secretary Ballinger, letter, 3 June 1910, RG 79, Entry 6, Box 322.

> *criticism attaches to the management. No one could do better under the present system. The building is too small for the purpose, and is not properly arranged…. The provision for bathing [the indigent] is shamefully inadequate. There is no provision for any other relief. It is probably inadvisable for the Government to undertake to clothe, feed and lodge them, but certainly there should be some means of caring for them when sick. These clients are growing in numbers."*[484]

Fulfilling the government's promise to bathe indigent citizens required a proper facility with enough space and O'Reilly said it should be built as soon as possible. Further, it should be located prominently at the corner of Central and Reserve Avenue and planned by a competent architect under Interior's direction. The same architect should also design and plan all future bath houses upon expiration of present leases. He added:

> "*To my mind, it is incompatible with the dignity of the United States to permit the erection on its property of buildings which are shabby and sordid, are lacking in architectural harmony with their neighbors, and, in fact, are eyesores. The present United States bath house would, with the expenditure of a reasonable sum, serve very well as an office building for the Superintendent, the Medical Board, and such other officials as may from time to time be added to the administrative force."*[485]

By mandating an architecturally unified plan, Interior could provide a blueprint for the city to emulate on its side of Central Avenue. It was incumbent on the U.S. to "set an example by providing a proper, decent and creditable bath house of its own."[486]

APPOINTMENT OF MEDICAL DIRECTOR HARRY M. HALLOCK, 1910

Alarmed by the severity of the O'Reilly comments, Secretary Ballinger decided to address the serious public health issues at Hot Springs by appointing a medical director. Recommended from the War Department was Harry M. Hallock, M.D. Hallock was an 1880 graduate of the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York City. Hallock served as a U.S. Army major in the Medical Corps but was forced to resign early due to a disability received in the line of duty.[487]

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[484] Ibid.

[485] Ibid. In his annual report, Myers mentioned O'Reilly's inspection along with one by Chief Clerk of the Interior Department Clement S. Ucker and his assistant, W. B. Acker. He wrote: "These gentlemen were all sent here at the instance of the Secretary of the Interior for the purpose of planning extensive improvements and a progressive administration for the Hot Springs Reservation. Their coming has stimulated the bath-house lessees to furnish the very best bathing facilities, and in the near future several magnificent new bath houses will be constructed on the reservation." See *Annual Report for 1910.*

[486] Ibid.

[487] "Deaths: Harry M. Hallock, M.D.," *Journal of the American Medical Association,* Vol. 60, No. 23, 7 June 1913: 1808. Hallock was a victim of President Theodore Roosevelt's order directing a test in horsemanship for every U.S. Army field officer in order to continue active military service. Hallock, 24 years from retirement eligibility, was one of six Army majors identified as being unfit to undertake a 15-mile horseback ride, thus leading to his mandatory retirement due to disability. See "Twelve Officers May Be Retired; Colonels and Majors Unable to Take Test Ride Ordered by President," 1 November 1907, and

The talented Army surgeon entered on duty at Hot Springs in September 1910 and took charge at the Government Free Bath House. Hallock's annual salary came to $4,400. Ballinger ordered both the superintendent and medical director to review and comment on thermal water leases, and to ensure all repairs and improvements be spelled out in every new lease. Only then should leases be forwarded to Washington bearing both men's endorsement signatures requesting Interior's review and approval. The policy statement declared: "Upon presentation here, the above requirements having been complied with, the Department will give it administrative examination and arrive at a conclusion with respect to it. If favorable determination is reached, the Department will enter into a tentative contract or grant a lease for a certain, fixed time to begin at a certain period when the applicant shall have in good faith and to the complete satisfaction of the Superintendent of the Reservation and the Medical Director effected the required improvements; otherwise, the lease will not be granted."[488]

Figure 75. Harry M. Hallock (National Park Service)

Hallock's position as defined by Interior had four goals listed as follows:

1. *Full supervision of sanitation, hygiene, and hydrotherapy—in short, all that pertains to the bathing of patients in the leased bathhouses, both on and off the reservation.*
2. *Full charge of the Government bathhouse and the employees therein.*
3. *Maintenance of a clinic for the education of bathhouse operators and their attendants.*
4. *Determination of the fitness of all attendants, physically and otherwise, for the employment in bathhouses, both those operated by lessees and the Government bathhouse.*

Hallock set to work instructing the first class of forty bathing attendants on October 17, 1910. His goal was to create a corps of trained attendants to give improved service to visitors. Additional classes for the remaining 178 attendants resulted in 119 certified and licensed individuals for one year. Those rejected, numbering fifty-nine, were as result of "varying degrees of illiteracy, alcoholism, lack of attention to duty, and persistence in wearing old, unsightly, and dirty clothes."[489] There were official rules to follow. Hallock drew up a list of rules that were sanctioned by Interior:

"Troops Ready for Work: Said that Roosevelt Horsemanship Test May Be Held at Pine Plains," 28 June 1908, both in *New York Times.* The latter article stated the field test for athletic abilities would be held on July 15, 1908.

[488] Extract from letter dated November 2, 1910 from the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, C3823. See also *Annual Report for 1911*. Hallock, a native of New Jersey, was listed as transferring from Vermont.

[489] *Report of the Medical Director of the Hot Springs Reservation to the Secretary of the Interior, 1911* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1911), 15.

RULES FOR BATH ATTENDANTS IN THE PAY BATHHOUSES RECEIVING HOT WATER FROM THE SPRINGS ON THE HOT SPRINGS RESERVATION

1. *Bath attendants shall be required to attend such courses of instruction as may be ordered by the medical director, and upon completion thereof to take a written examination, after which successful candidates will be granted certificates as qualified attendants for such time as may be determined by the Secretary of the Interior.*

2. *Two consecutive failures to qualify as an attendant shall debar the applicant from further instruction, and the medical director shall order his or her discharge.*

3. *To entitle an applicant to a certificate as a qualified attendant a total mark of not less than 200 points shall be required, to be awarded as follows: A perfect written examination after the course of instruction shall entitle the candidate to 100 points. The medical director will award not to exceed 100 points as expressing the applicant's efficiency as noted at his inspections, and the manager of the bathhouse in which the applicant is employed at the time of examination shall award not to exceed 100 points for general aptitude.*

4. *Whenever the number of qualified attendants is in excess of the requirements of the service those not employed shall be entitled to have their names enrolled on a waiting list in the office of the medical director.*

5. *Managers are prohibited from employing an attendant any person not holding a certificate of qualification as such whenever there are five or more qualified attendants registered on the waiting list in the office of the medical director.*

6. *Instruction will be given from time to time to such persons as declare their intentions to qualify as attendants and who in the opinion of the medical director display an aptitude for the service; and upon satisfactory completion of the course they will be granted certificates as attendants.*

7. *Managers may suspend or discharge attendants employed by them, but shall not have authority to revoke their licenses or to prohibit their employment in other houses.*

8. *An attendant suspended by the medical director shall not be employed in any capacity in any bathhouse during the period of suspension.*

9. *An attendant discharged by the medical director shall have his or her certificate of qualification revoked and shall not again be employed in any capacity in any bathhouse for a period of six months.*

10. *Managers are required to report immediately by letter to the medical director the employment, suspension, resignation, or discharge of attendants.*

Harry M. Hallock,
Medical Director Hot Springs Reservation

Department of the Interior, Washington D.C.
Approved: June 11, 1912
Clement S. Ucker
Chief Clerk and Chief Executive Officer[490]

Finding suitable housing for Hallock proved problematic. Because the superintendent had official housing supplied, so, too, would the new medical director. A suitable site was soon located. Building the medical director's house at Spring and Reserve Avenue was fraught with controversy. A critical news article pointed to the large sum Interior was expending on it and cited its owner as being irked that his requests in his home's construction were being scrutinized.[491] Designed by Washington, D.C., architect Erskine M. Sunderland, it became necessary to substitute brick for wood framing with stucco in order to fall close to the allotment, initially $16,500. With contract award at $22,601, cost overruns prompted an exasperated Interior Chief Clerk Clement S. Ucker to write: "the cost of this residence from its inception to date has been much beyond the anticipated figure, and the entire matter has been fraught with vexation and disappointment." Ucker was not pleased by Hallock's list of demands, including a stove in the laundry room, a furnace powered by natural gas, and picture moldings on the walls.[492] The Hallock family finally moved into their house in February 1913.[493]

Hallock began issuing orders to bathhouse lessees for improvements and policies on sanitation in public areas. Col. Samuel W. Fordyce, writing to Palace Bathhouse manager John F. Manier, commented on Hallock's new directions approved by Superintendent Myers. "It seems to me," he wrote dryly, "that they are getting this Bath House business down to an extremely fine point, especially so when they direct that a certain kind of thermometer shall be used."[494]

As Interior contemplated Hot Springs' future development, perhaps the most famous to-date visitor arrived to take the waters. Theodore Roosevelt, former president of the United States (1901-1909), and his entourage arrived by train at eight o'clock on the morning of October 10, 1910. Roosevelt had broken with President William Howard Taft over the president's conservation policies and was considering launching his own presidential bid in 1912. With him were Arkansas Governor George W. Donaghey and

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[490] These rules were chosen in lieu of those issued April 10, 1911 (from his 1911 report). *Report of the Medical Director of the Hot Springs Reservation to the Secretary of the Interior, 1912* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1912), 69-70.
[491] *Annual Report for 1911* and "About a House," *The Crystal* (16 October 1911).
[492] Chief Clerk Ucker to Medical Director Hallock, letter 14 December 1912, D34 Medical Director's Residence 1912-1933.
[493] Sharon Shugart, *The House on the Hill: The Medical Director's Residence* (Hot Springs, Ark.: National Park Service, Hot Springs National Park, 1996), 2.
[494] Col. S. W. Fordyce to John F. Manier, letter, 26 August 1911, HOSP 3415 Letter Document Box 2, Folder 1. The same letter reported Fordyce planned on attending a superintendent's conference at Yellowstone National Park to meet with the secretary, assistant secretary, and Superintendent Myers. He wanted to persuade them to "waive their instructions which you have sent me until we tear down the Palace." He wished to delay that, however, until at least two other bathhouses had been built "because I want my architect to have the benefit of examining these houses and then we want to see if we can make some improvements over them." In the meantime, he authorized making only "minimal repairs."

U.S. Senator James Paul Clarke. Roosevelt was on the final leg of his southern tour which had originated in Atlanta.

Meeting the former president at the depot was a delegation of leading citizens headed by Superintendent Harry H. Myers. Myers escorted Roosevelt to the Arlington Hotel where he enjoyed a thermal bath and attended a reception. At eleven o'clock, the former president's motorcade proceeded to Oaklawn Park racetrack where he participated in the opening ceremony for the Fifth Annual Arkansas State Fair. He gave two separate speeches; the first on a flag platform where he addressed "New Nationalism," supporting the military, and the importance of children and education, and the second, in the grandstand, where he spoke about the federal government reclaiming swamplands along the Mississippi River, self-help for farmers, and promoting conservation. After a luncheon at the home of a fellow Rough-Rider lieutenant, he toured the Hot Springs Reservation mountain drives, including the observation tower. The governor, who accompanied Roosevelt to the tower's top, later recalled the former president was impressed by the area's beauty and "burst into an enthusiastic discussion of the carpet of trees below, their value to future civilization if protected, lack of their appreciation by the present generation, the wanton waste of timber by mill men, and the importance of fire protection to forests."

Leaving the national park, Roosevelt returned to enjoy the state fair, and subsequently departed on an afternoon train. He made a brief speech at the depot praising the citizens of Arkansas and discussing again "New Nationalism." The former president remained on the railcar's rear platform waving to the crowd as it pulled out of the city.[495]

A matter for both Myers and Hallock to collaborate on came from Interior in December 1910, resurrecting the "hot cave" issue from 1896. A lawyer representing various bathhouse lessees petitioned Ballinger protesting the Hale Bath House's use of its "hot cave." At that time Interior permitted continued use "with the understanding that it should not be advertised in any special way or assertions be made… as to any alleged peculiar properties of the hot air in such cave." Ballinger wanted to know if the Hale had sufficient space for a hot room and to advise him on the continued use of the hot cave.[496] Hallock determined that while the cave was not strictly sanitary, it would be difficult to argue it was a greater menace to public health than many of the bathhouses themselves where ventilation was lacking and more over crowded than the Hale. Hallock recommended it be closed "if it be considered a part of the equipment of the house for the

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[495] Quotation from Calvin R. Ledbetter, Jr., "Presidential Politics in Arkansas from 1909-1912: The Visits of Taft, Roosevelt, and Wilson," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 53, No. 2, Summer 1994, pp. 200-201. Roosevelt was quoted the following day in St. Louis concerning his Hot Springs experience: "It was great! First class!" and that he was "dee-lighted." See William Ernst Ott II, "Theodore Roosevelt at the Fifth Annual Arkansas State Fair," *The Record,* Vol. 19 (Hot Springs, Ark.: Garland County Historical Society, 1978): 54-56. Roosevelt had lunch at the home of Dr. Gilbert C. Greenway, whose father, John Greenway, served with Roosevelt in the Spanish-American War. Greenway was instrumental in arranging Roosevelt's Hot Springs visit. Roosevelt challenged Taft in the 1912 election as a Bull Moose Party candidate, splitting the Republican Party vote and handing the election to Democrat Woodrow Wilson.
[496] Secretary Ballinger to Superintendent Myers, letter, 8 December 1910, C3823.

treatment of patients, it is undesirable for use in connection with all houses, and its authorization as a unique feature of one may reasonably be considered to be an act of discrimination."[497] Myers opined that he found it to be clean, well kept, and the air "decidedly more wholesome than in a hot room" and a quarter of the Hale's patrons were enthusiastic about it. Regular hot rooms at the Hale were very small. He believed the protest was grounded in "competitive jealousy" than anything else but thought it should be permitted to continue until the lease was up and the bathhouse rebuilt. At that time the "hot cave" should be closed to public use.[498]

Congress continued to demonstrate its interest in its Arkansas national park through six pieces of legislation during 1911-1912. On February 14, 1911, it granted Lots 1 and 2 of Block 114 to Hot Springs Lodge # 62 of the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons to build within five years a "suitable and sightly building" with a thermal water lease for not more than five bathtubs and for drinking purposes, with a reversion clause for non-compliance.[499] On March 2, 1911, Congress specified that Government Free Bathhouse indigents were allowed free baths only upon making a sworn oath concerning their status and imposed a penalty for any false oath at $25 and/or thirty days in prison (U.S.C. 16, sec. 371).[500] (This caused a precipitous drop of 63,000 fewer indigent baths in 1912, thus alleviating some of the overcrowded condition there.)[501] The next day, it clarified its 1907 act stating that any U.S. commissioner had authority to hear and act upon violations of the 1904 act (U.S.C., sec. 376).[502] It repeated the same deal given the year before to the Masons to Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital on June 3, 1912.[503] In a generous mood, on August 21, 1912, it gave Hot Springs Lot 3 of Block 115 to build a new fire department building within five years, with a reversion clause for non-compliance.[504] And finally, because the Arlington Hotel lease was stipulated in previous legislation, Congress authorized Interior on August 24, 1912, to again lease the hotel/bathhouse land at Central Avenue and Fountain Street for a maximum of twenty years.[505]

Secretary Ballinger's days in office were numbered. His authority was crippled when Gifford Pinchot, chief of the Department of Agriculture's U.S. Forest Service, accused him of corruption by interfering in an investigation of Alaska coal interests and tarnishing President's Roosevelt's conservation legacy by restoring three million acres to private use. Pinchot was fired and Ballinger, although cleared of wrongdoing, submitted his resignation on March 12, 1911. Known as the "Ballinger-Pinchot Affair," it damaged President William Howard Taft's reputation among conservation-minded Americans, split the Republican Party, and contributed to Woodrow Wilson's election in 1912. Taft replaced Ballinger with Walter L. Fisher, founder of the National Conservation

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[497] Medical Director Harry M. Hallock to Secretary Ballinger, letter, 19 December 1910, C3823.
[498] Superintendent Myers to Secretary Ballinger, letter, 21 December 1910, C3823.
[499] *Act of Congress*, *14 February 1911*, (36 Stat. 906).
[500] *Act of Congress*, *2 March 1911*, (36 Stat. 1015).
[501] *Annual Report for 1912.*
[502] *Act of Congress*, *3 March 1911*, (36 Stat. 1086).
[503] *Act of Congress*, *3 June 1912*, (37 Stat. 121).
[504] *Act of Congress*, *21 August 1912*, (37 Stat. 322).
[505] *Act of Congress*, 24 August 1912, (37 Stat. 459).

Association. At Hot Springs, Harry H. Myers was secure in his position as was Major Hallock. The latter made headlines when he outlawed use of public drinking cups in the city's bathhouses and fountains effective September 1, 1911. He argued the prohibition on public drinking cups would help prevent the spread of disease.[506]

With a nod to the national park's heritage, two cold water springs in Happy Hollow east of the superintendent's official residence were rechristened by the department to honor "General Kelley" and "Colonel Hamblen," first and second superintendents. Water from the Col. Hamblen Spring was piped to the pavilion on Fountain Street where Gen. Kelley Spring provided fresh cold water to visitors from a new stone fountain.[507]

Myers argued against Smith's recommendation to levy ground rents along Bathhouse Row in favor of requiring lessees to build and maintain "the very best, high-class bathhouses." This became department policy in 1911 and, as leases expired, would transform the Row. The first two leases subject to the new policy were the Rammelsberg (to be renamed Buckstaff) and Maurice. They were demolished and their replacements, following Interior-approved plans for modern, fireproof bathhouses, cost of $125,000 each. Unsuccessful negotiations with the Superior resulted in closure of that business on March 31, 1911. Failure to provide the required improvements kept it closed and it languished until 1915. Under a new lease, the old Superior was demolished, a modern new bathhouse constructed, and it re-opened in early 1916. The Imperial, already one of the "newest and best bathhouses," also underwent closing and reconstruction at a cost of $50,000.[508] Construction of the new facilities saw Harry Myers wax eloquent to the secretary:

> *"I can not paint in too optimistic colors the many improvements which have and are constantly taking place, and as the curtain which separates the months from the years and the years from the centuries is shifted the past year will be memorable for many years to come to this resort, for the reason that it saw the beginning of a new era in the administration under government control of these waters by the opening for service of three as magnificent modern and palatial bathhouses as are in all the world."*[509]

The new bathhouses featured a "blast system of ventilation" which exchanged the air in every room five times an hour. Interior spaces were finished in tile and marble, "equipped with vapors, hot-air and electric-light cabinets, hydrotherapeutic rooms and massage departments, and … the old wooden furniture has been replaced with modern

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[506] "Major Hallock Puts Kabosh on Public Drinking Cups in Bath Houses and Fountains," *Hot Springs Daily News* (9 August 1911).
[507] *Annual Report for 1911.*
[508] *Annual Report for 1911.*
[509] *Annual Report for 1912.*

white enameled steel, carpets by tile floors, and draperies by plain sheets that can readily be laundered." Renovations for other bathhouses were also being planned.[510]

Beautification of the Row brought a stated desire to displace the indigent elsewhere. Superintendent Myers declared that while repairs had been made to the Government Free Bathhouse, it remained far too small and advocated a new one be built away from Bathhouse Row. He recommended a congressional appropriation of at least $250,000 for this purpose.[511]

The requirement that anyone not under the care of a registered physician had to secure first from the superintendent's office a permit to bathe had immediate results. First, it necessitated hiring an additional clerk to handle the flow of people and paper. This increase in administrative staff helped launch a new filing system, greatly facilitating the office's effectiveness. Second, after the requirement went into effect on December 1, 1910, it crippled the business of non-registered physicians, pounding yet another nail in the evil drumming system's coffin.

Reservation workforce expanded to thirty employees in 1911. New positions included a mounted policeman to patrol mountain roads and the first full-time detective on the payroll.[512]

THE YELLOWSTONE CONFERENCE, 1911

Both Superintendent Myers and Medical Director Hallock attended the national park conference at Yellowstone National Park on September 11 and 12, 1911. Hosted by Interior Secretary Walter L. Fisher, in attendance were a long list of department officers who handled national park matters, all the park superintendents, park concessioners, and park advocates. Other Hot Springs attendees were Charles Drake, M.D., president of the Federal Registration Board; L. T. Hay, manager of the Arlington Hotel Company; and William T. S. Curtis, Washington lawyer representing various Hot Springs concessioners. W. G. Maurice, owner of the Maurice Bathhouse, was scheduled to present a paper entitled "Bathhouses on the Hot Springs, Ark., Reservation: Their Problems from the Standpoint of Practical Administration," but was unable to attend and William T. S. Curtis stepped in to read Maurice's paper. Maurice wrote about the early days of Bathhouse Row when the "department paid very little attention to the hot springs, and the superintendents of the reservation paid less up until within the last 10 years." He attributed abysmal conditions to the drumming system which deprived capital from necessary improvements until introduction of the one-year cancellation clause "which placed the lessee in the position of a tenant at the will and mercy of the department." The

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[510] *Report of the Medical Director of the Hot Springs Reservation to the Secretary of the Interior, 1912* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1912), 9. Masseurs and mercury rubbers came under the medical director's supervision and were required to register their qualifications.

[511] *Annual Report for 1911.* As part of its transformation, the Buckstaff Bath House Company requested permission to employ only white attendants. See G. E. Hogaboom, Secretary, Buckstaff Bath House Company to Superintendent Myers, letter, 3 October 1911.

[512] *Annual Report for 1911.* Mounted Policeman for evening duty was Richard L. Gaffney who was paid $960 per annum. Detective Montgomery Prichard was paid $1,080 per annum.

bathhouses subsequently made minimal changes in order to keep their leases. When Interior issued leases to hotels off the reservation, the dynamic changed.

> *"In consequence all hotels of the first class, and many of the second class enjoy this great privilege of using the hot waters. This placed the reservation bathhouses in a position where they can only expect the patronage of the cheaper hotels, rooming and boarding houses. This class naturally seek the cheaper houses on the reservation. Instead of this condition, the reservation should be the main attraction for all visitors to Hot Springs, and should rival the beauties of the great European 'spas.'"*[513]

Maurice blamed both the department and lessee "for the condition that existed until recently." He continued writing, "To offset the very great advantage enjoyed by the hotel bathhouses, we must offer to the visitor bathhouse accommodations superior to the hotels with comforts and conveniences. We must give that which will appeal to the better class, with a view of putting our beautiful reservation upon a higher and better plane; with a view of making it what it should be—the most beautiful in the world." Maurice then praised Myers' efforts to stamp out the drumming evil and Hallock's efforts at regular bathhouse inspections for sanitation and ventilation. He described the "palatial bathhouses" under construction and a near-future vision of a "magnificent" Bathhouse Row.[514] Completing Maurice's paper, William T. S. Curtis subsequently made a pitch for a higher profile for Hot Springs in the department and advocated establishment of a "bureau of parks and reservations" to handle the crush of business. Curtis extended an invitation to Secretary Fisher to visit and see for himself prevailing conditions.[515]

Each superintendent at the Yellowstone conference was given an opportunity to present a paper on his park. Harry Myers gave a lengthy presentation, including a policy statement concerning the cures. He stated:

> *"The department does not undertake to give a complete list of the cures that have been effected by the use of these waters, or to say what diseases or ills they will cure, but a course taken by a person in normal health results in a rejuvenation and vast reinvigoration. The use of the waters opens the pores and channels for the expulsion of matters injurious to health, arouses torpid and sluggish secretions, stimulates the circulation, the muscles, the skin, and the internal organs, and thus purifies the blood*

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[513] Remarks of W. G. Maurice as read by William T. S. Curtis, *Proceedings of the National Park Conference Held at the Yellowstone National Park, September 11 and 12, 1911,* as seen at: http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/nps/proceedings-npc1/intro.htm

[514] Ibid. The paper closed with several recommendations and the hope that Interior would adopt "an entirely new system of bathing… following as closely as possible the system in vogue in Carlsbad, Germany."

[515] Ibid, remarks of William T. S. Curtis. Interior Inspector E. B. Linnen presented the next session and mentioned Hot Springs briefly and its struggle to stamp out the drumming evil.

> *and removes aches and pains, restores the weary and exhausted, and revives the debilitated, and helps build up the entire system."*[516]

Myers continued, declaring "In the administration of the affairs at Hot Springs this department has but one object, to see that everyone who is entitled to them may avail themselves of these wonderful waters, surrounded by every protection possible." He described the favorable climate, and average annual visitation around 150,000, with "All sorts of healthful outdoor amusements are provided and indulged in, such as golf, tennis, baseball, horseback riding, and mountain driving." Following his description of the drumming evil, he shared a persistent management problem: "Another thing which has agitated us is that the city of Hot Springs, normally about 15,000, has to provide facilities for a city of 50,000, and the revenues are insufficient to do this, so the question is, could a small tax, a cure tax, be levied on the visitors to be used in support of the city and the construction of streets, boulevards, etc. If such could be done it would result in vastly improved facilities and add much to the pleasure and benefit of each citizen and visitor." Next, Myers addressed the issue of automobiles in his park: "Some of the matters discussed here appear to me to depend altogether on local conditions, so that a general rule is impossible, for instance, the permission of automobiles in national parks. Now take our reservation; very few there are who would even advocate the use of machines here, while perhaps there are other parks where no harm could follow their use, so that the result brings us back to the matter of a [national] park bureau where its head could after personal acquaintance determine which was best." He completed his speech with an impassioned plea to Secretary Fisher:

> *"Mr. Secretary, I want on behalf of the citizens of the greatest health resort in the world to ask you now to come and see us, let us demonstrate to you that we all feel grateful for your efforts in our behalf, that we appreciate your interest in us, and your efforts to ameliorate in every possible way conditions which will insure to every citizen and visitor the best possible results. The Government has no asset nearly so valuable as these hot waters—forests may be replenished, roads may be built and restored, water may be conserved, all things material may be increased, but health when lost can not be bought, the nearest approach is to come and bathe in these wonderful waters and obtain rejuvenation; to the sick they bring health, to the afflicted they bring relief, to the well they bring brightness of eye and alertness of step, rest from fatigue and happiness to all."*[517]

In papers prepared for the Yellowstone conference but not presented was one by Medical Director Harry M. Hallock. Hallock's paper listed the medicinal attributes of the thermal water as follows:

> *"The baths produce a reaction accompanied by an elevation of body temperature, accelerated heart action, with diminished blood*

[516] Ibid., H. H. Myers, "The Past, Present, and Future of Hot Springs, Ark."
[517] Ibid.

> *pressure in the arteries, and a stimulation of the nutritive changes in the tissue cells, especially those composing the organs of elimination and those concerned in the formation of the blood. Combined with the internal administration of the water, they may reasonably be expected to afford relief in gout or rheumatism after the acute or inflammatory stage; in neuralgia when dependent upon gout, rheumatism, malaria, or metallic poisoning; in the early stages of chronic Bright's disease, in catarrhal conditions of the gall bladder, in certain forms of disease of the pelvic organs, and in sterility in women, in chronic malaria, alcoholism, and drug addictions; in many chronic skin diseases; in some forms of anemia; in syphilis; in gonorrheal rheumatism, intoxemias and conditions of defective elimination; and in some forms of cardio-vascular disease with increased tension in the blood vessels. The baths are contra-indicated in tuberculosis of the throat and lungs and in all forms of cancer."*[518]

He ended his paper by suggesting seven issues Interior should explore to improve administration of the park.

> *As an invitation has been extended to present the more difficult problems of administration for consideration at this conference, it is suggested that the following subjects might be discussed in connection with the affairs of Hot Springs, all of which are necessarily closely related to and vitally involved in the proper treatment of the sick. (1) Federal jurisdiction over the city of Hot Springs. (2) Government ownership and operation of the baths. (3) The extinction or effective control of drumming. (4) The procuring of funds for the development in the city of Hot Springs of the usual adjuncts to treatment at a spa. (5) The elimination of gambling and objectionable resorts. (6) The appointment of a health officer whose whole time may be given to the work of his office, and of a sanitary squad for the city of Hot Springs. (7) The establishment of an emergency hospital service.*[519]

Back in Hot Springs, Hallock continued his effort to improve conditions and service in all bathhouses. Classes for bath attendants continued for a second year with 331 in attendance. Strict standards were enforced for only 206 passed examinations and were licensed. Some who failed the written test went to night school and learned to read and write sufficiently to pass it. All attendants were required to display their framed certificates at their duty stations and wear a badge with the inscription "Licensed Bath Attendant, Department of the Interior, Hot Springs Reservation," each one serially-numbered. In this manner, bathers could report the number of the attendant who failed to deliver satisfactory service. Attendants were mandated to supply certification by a registered physician proving smallpox inoculation. All pertinent employment files were maintained in the medical director's office. Further, "Misconduct or lack of attention to duty has been corrected by verbal warning, by official reprimand, or by suspension. In

[518] Ibid., Maj. Harry M. Hallock, "The Medical Side of the Hot Springs Reservation."
[519] Ibid.

each instance copies of the order issued have been furnished the managers of all bathhouses." Under Hallock's rules, suspension for ten days could be the penalty for failure to use a thermometer in administering the baths, read the bathing directions, or personal untidiness.

Attendants at the Government Free Bathhouse enjoyed the benefits of federal employees—no required duty on Sundays or legal holidays. Hiring an additional attendant permitted instituting an eight-hour workday. Substitutes were hired to cover during an employee's fifteen combined days of annual and sick leave.[520]

In large part due to the Hot Springs superintendent's annual reports, three bills were introduced in Congress during 1912: to provide an adequate sewerage system, a new Government Free Bathhouse for the indigent, and for the investigation of the physiological and therapeutic effects of the thermal water. On the latter, as part of Hallock's 1912 report, he attached a lengthy appendix containing an exchange of correspondence with leading medical authorities on the subject. Interestingly, the same material was presented to Congress, published for distribution to the public, and resulted in no further action being taken.[521]

In response to periodic urban flooding, the sundry civil act of August 24, 1912, authorized Interior to survey Hot Springs' sewer system and prepare plans and estimates for increasing storm water drainage there, all at a cost of $10,000, half of which came from the Hot Springs Reservation Improvement Fund. USGS geographer Sledge Tatum and consulting engineer J. W. Barnett subsequently prepared the report with an estimate of $26,595 for a sanitary sewer system and purification plant. Alternate plans for purification plants ranging from $70,000 to $20,000 were also provided, in addition to a $327,540 comprehensive plan to drain storm waters from the national park's mountains. The latter plan would obviate the need to extend the Hot Springs Creek Arch from its terminus at Church Street to South Water Street at a cost of $89,700.[522]

1912: VICTORY OVER DRUMMING?

Visitation during fiscal 1912 approached 135,000 with the "highest class of visitors ever seen here." Myers reported that "Men of national and international reputation came here for the first time, because they believed that the Government was

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[520] *Annual Report for 1911*. The pay of male attendants was increased from $45 to $50 per month. Salary for females remained at $40 per month.

[521] Ibid. See *The Waters of the Hot Springs of Arkansas in Relation to the Alleviation and Cure of Diseases; A Report of the Secretary of the Interior on H.R. 24737 (62nd Congress, 2nd Session), "A Bill to Authorize the Investigation of the Physiological and Therapeutical Effects of the Waters of the Hot Springs of Arkansas and to Report Upon the Application of These Waters to the Alleviation and Cure of Diseases"* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1912). Five hundred copies were ordered printed.

[522] *Sanitary and Storm Water Sewerage and Drainage Systems in the City of Hot Springs, Arkansas with Plans and Estimates for Extension, Submitted by the Secretary of the Interior* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1913) 3. The report features a photograph of a young boy standing knee deep in a flooded downtown street with the caption: "Hot Springs Taking a Bath, Hot Springs, Ark., June 24, 1910." The report recognized the city's need to have purification plants on both Hot Springs and Gulpha Creeks.

doing things to improve conditions, and no stronger argument can be advanced than that the Government insures to every visitor here fair and honest treatment and the use of waters unequalled in curative qualities of any in the world." Myers believed that visitors came to enjoy the climate and scenic attractions and that the "recreation and pleasure side of the resort is being recognized as well as the rejuvenating waters."[523]

Improvements during the year further augmented park operations. Most notably, four frame comfort stations were built—two on Hot Springs Mountain and one each on North and West Mountains. One hundred sixty freshly painted park benches were distributed throughout the national park. Crews built a "substantial and slightly" concrete walkway between the Ozark and Buckstaff bathhouses, linking the roadway in back of the bathhouses to the front promenade on Bathhouse Row and making an attractive entrance for pedestrians to Reserve Park. More retaining walls were built on Hot Springs Mountain (2,430 linear feet) and West Mountain (2,782 linear feet). On the latter road, 77 panels of galvanized pipe set in concrete footings for fencing was installed along the serpentine road leading up from Central Avenue. In Whittington Park, 112 feet of creek walls (1¼ feet high and a foot thick) and 2,066 feet of walls (4 feet high and a foot thick) were built of concrete to control the waterway. To fill in behind the walls required 265 loads of dirt and helped improve the park's appearance.[524]

Myers wished to construct a public comfort station for Bathhouse Row. In July 1912, he submitted drawings for a fourteen by fourteen foot square structure to be built on the rear of bathhouse site No. 9 between the Maurice and Hale Bathhouses. He proposed vitrified brick, concrete floor and walls to a height of five feet, tile roof, and partitioned for both sexes. Interior, however, was dubious about providing such a facility in downtown Hot Springs and wanted a justification. Myers responded that it was urgently needed as the city lacked any such facility and the park promenade along Bathhouse Row was in continual use by thousands of visitors, many of whom were taking medicine. He argued, "ones inclination under such circumstances can not be judged by time nor place, but immediate relief must be had, its necessity is obvious." While restroom facilities were available to bathhouse patrons, the public's only option was to request use of facilities in the superintendent's office building, resulting in "a constant demand on it." As for Interior's suggestion of placing it "on the brow of the hill in the rear of the Buckstaff," Myers stated that would place it in the path "coming and going of a majority of the patrons of the public bath house and would unquestionably be extensively used by them." That, he posited, "would preclude its use by the better class of the public." Further, its placement on the hill would prevent the aged, infirmed, or crippled from using it.[525] Stymied by the dilemma, Interior opted for the status quo. Soon came Chief Clerk and Chief Executive Officer Clement S. Ucker's curt reply: "... upon consideration of the entire subject, the Department deems it inadvisable at this time to take any steps toward construction of a comfort station upon the site in question."[526]

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[523] *Annual Report for 1912.*
[524] *Annual Report for 1912.*
[525] Superintendent Myers to Secretary Fisher, letters, 5 July and 18 July 1912, D22 Construction/ Preservation 1900-13.
[526] Chief Clerk Ucker to Superintendent Myers, letter, 22 July 1912, D22 Construction/Preservation 1900-13.

Keeping the reservation front clean and tidy was the job of an employee hired for that purpose and dubbed "White Wings" because of his white linen suit, cap, and a smart two-wheel handcart inscribed "U.S." on each side. White Wings placed all trash and sweepings from the sidewalks in the cart which was wheeled away and emptied elsewhere, ensuring the Bathhouse Row promenade and Reserve Park remained pristine.[527]

A Growing Rift Between Myers and Hallock

Ucker's periodic visits to Hot Springs demonstrated Interior's keen interest in national park affairs but also exhibited the department's tendency to micro-manage. In response to Ucker's report that the new pavilion atop Hot Springs Mountain was being vandalized by individuals carving names and other words on the columns and fountain surfaces, Interior mandated a sign be posted quoting the 1904 act conferring jurisdiction upon U.S. Commissioners and warning those disregarding it would be prosecuted.[528] In an attempt to obtain fresh drinking water at the pavilion because attempts to bore a producing well were unsuccessful, Interior sought a supply from the Army and Navy Hospital cooling tank. When the War Department offered to sell the water, Interior reminded its fellow cabinet agency about who supplied its hospital with thermal water, and to reconsider. War officials demurred and offered the water at no cost. However, Interior pondered the possibility of pumping water from a cold spring between Cypress and Leeds streets.[529] It even specified removing the gooseneck water spouts from public fountains and replacing them with another more hygienic type.[530]

As for the war on drumming, Superintendent Harry Myers declared victory in his 1912 annual report. He wrote:

> *"The situation regarding what was once the worst evil existing here, that of drumming on trains to hotels, boarding houses, rooming houses, and physicians, is a thing of the past. The system of train inspection has completely eliminated the evil on the trains. Drummers never work the trains now, and since the most rigid rules affecting the registration of*

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[527] Not mentioned in any annual report, this aspect was included in an undated, typewritten summary of "Improvements" covering the term of Superintendent Myers, "On File, AO Office, HOSP."

[528] Assistant Secretary Camri Thompson to Superintendent Myers, letter, 1 February 1912, D46 Pavilions. Studying the matter further, Interior ordered the triangular basin of the stone fountain removed and stored to protect it from vandalism. See Ucker to Superintendent Myers, letter 16 December 1912, D46 Other Structures.

[529] Chief Clerk Ucker to Superintendent Myers, letter, 22 July 1912, D46 Other Structures.

[530] The fountains at the Arlington Hotel and in front of the superintendent's office were under scrutiny. Interior wanted the goosenecks replaced with fountains like plate R735 from J. B. Clow & Sons catalogue. Myers wrote that the goosenecks were preferable from a sanitary aspect because water flowed directly into buckets, bottles, cans, etc. as it did at the Noble and Smith fountains. To use bubbling fountains for drinking only "would consume too much time to satisfy each individual and would doubtless result in a congested condition." Washing of vessels at the gooseneck next to the Arlington Hotel and elsewhere had already been banned. See Superintendent Myers to Secretary Fisher, letter, 30 August 1912, D46 Other Structures.

> *physicians are enforced the physicians registered are extremely cautious not to violate the Government rules because they know that any infraction now which might result in the removal of their names from the registered list means a long, tedious wait, and perhaps never being restored to the list or permitted to ever prescribe the waters. I believe doctor drumming has been effectively stopped."*[531]

The evil, however, continued unabated at the railroad stations and on the streets, despite state and city laws against it. Myers admitted the city did not enforce the prohibition and recommended Interior consider amending Rule 5:

> *"The way travelers are harassed and worried on the streets is the worst class of drumming; and unless the city will enforce its laws the department should amend rule 5 so as to include street, station, or any other place where such drumming is in violation of existing laws, either State or municipal. Sick visitors should in all cases be protected and not be forced to suffer such annoyances."*[532]

Chief Clerk Ucker shared with the secretary and his staff the "considerable agitation" in Hot Springs for Interior to change its approach to train drumming. Instead of having government inspectors make an oral announcement, the uniformed man should merely answer questions and handout printed flyers warning visitors against drumming. Ucker also passed along Dr. Hallock's suggestion of including a list of names and addresses of hotels and boarding houses on the opposite side of the proposed flyer, but consider only those who had signed an anti-drumming agreement. Interior requested that both Myers and Hallock "consult the representative citizens of Hot Springs, officials of the city government, the Garland County Medical Society, and the managers and proprietors of the various bath houses in regard to this matter" and submit a joint report.[533]

Hallock, delighted his idea had the department's attention, responded that the leaflet should also contain a list of registered physicians and that the agreement with hotels and boarding houses not to engage in drumming or permit drummers on their property be further expanded. In exchange for being government-recommended in the train leaflet, those establishments also should agree to post in each room a card showing the maximum charge per day, week, and month and to maintain their properties in a sanitary condition, subject to regular inspection by Interior.[534]

Myers responded that it "would be futile to attempt" discussions locally because "opinion is so radical here on any and every subject that we could arrive at no definite conclusions as to what the parties conferred with really thought or felt." Further, visitors

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[531] *Annual Report for 1912*.
[532] Ibid.
[533] Assistant Secretary Camri Thompson to Medical Director Hallock, letter, 2 February 1912, A54 Inspections, Etc. Train Inspectors, 1911-1918.
[534] Medical Director Hallock to Secretary Fisher, letter, 7 February 1912, A54 Inspections, Etc. Train Inspectors, 1911-1918.

appreciated and commended the oral announcements. He vetoed Hallock's idea because of its "vast amount of detail" and "considerable litigation." With over 600 hotels and boarding houses, getting them to comply with the rules and maintaining a current list would be nearly impossible. Myers declared, "it would occasion the constant making of new lists and the offender could very readily go into court and charge a conspiracy… which might result in innumerable injunctions and endless litigation." He continued, "I have made it a point to ask the incoming visitors for the past two weeks relative to the impression the present announcement makes and it appears to be so clearly understood and to give information which proves so beneficial that I can see no particular necessity of the printed announcement as I think the system in force is proving thoroughly adequate."[535]

The professional disagreement pointed to a growing rift between the two men. Already there was a disparity in salary in favor of the medical director who was also in the process of acquiring more responsibilities and authority. It soon erupted into a battle over turf. In a letter to Interior dated February 9, 1912, Hallock wrote:

> *"I consider it reasonable to request that there be an equitable readjustment (of office accommodations between the Superintendent and the Medical Director) by dividing the office building into two suites: the north suite to consist of the north large room and the small room back of it, both now occupied by Mr. Wilt and Mr. Bayley, and the south suite to consist of the room now occupied by Mr. Myers with the two small rooms in the rear, the inside one of which is now my office while that fronting the street is the Federal Board room. I can see no reason for retaining a room exclusively for the use of the Federal Board which only meets twice a month, more particularly as since last summer all meetings have been held in my office because there was no fan supplied for the Board room. It would seem appropriate that Mr. Myers, as the senior officer by appointment, be given his choice of these two suites and that the other be assigned for the use of the Medical Director."*

Interior denied the request, but when Hallock renewed it in late July, it acquiesced, granting him the north suite to be shared by Bayley and Wilt as a general reception room along with the Federal Registration Board. The arrangement went into effect September 5 and the board held its meetings in Hallock's expanded office. On December 5, Myers put his foot down and declined to attend any further board meetings unless they took place in the superintendent's office. Hallock, elected secretary of the board in June, was merely following Interior's instructions that the official meetings take place in his office.[536] As board secretary, Hallock reported separately to Interior "The Superintendent of the Reservation refuses to attend meetings of the Board when held in the office of the

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[535] Superintendent Myers to Secretary Fisher, letter, 6 February 1912, A54 Inspections, Etc. Train Inspectors, 1911-1918.

[536] Quotation is cited in Medical Director Hallock to Secretary Fisher, letter, 6 December 1912, A18 Federal Registration Board 1911-15. Noble J. Wilt, clerk-stenographer, and B. Frank Bayley, chief clerk and assistant to the superintendent, had salaries of were paid $1,200 and $1,680 per annum, respectively.

Medical Director and insists that they should properly be held in his office." He concluded by reporting: "It is the unanimous opinion of the Board that the Superintendent of the Reservation should be instructed to attend all meetings of the Board as all information regarding infringements of the rules are brought to the attention of the Board by him."[537] Deferring to the authority of his local superintendent, the secretary authorized future meetings occur in Myers' office.[538]

Friction between the two men was undoubtedly subdued when both attended the follow up to the Berkeley national park conference at Yosemite National Park, October 14-16, 1912. Myers again spoke at length about Hot Springs and extended an invitation to Secretary Fisher to visit. He advocated for a national park service as follows:

> *"As an American citizen, I think the foremost want, Mr. Secretary, for the proper administration of these parks, a rational administration, is an intimate acquaintance upon the part of the heads of the department with the immediate conditions in each particular park. From my observation last year and this year, and having visited other parks during other years, I am firmly convinced that no particular rule or fixed policy will avail at all the different parks. In other words, that the Mesa Verde must have special legislation or a special rule. What would apply to this park would have no application to Hot Springs, and vice versa. In other words, the Secretary or the Interior Department has heretofore, it seems to me, been sort of scattered. There should be a concentration of effort and a concentration of the management of these parks, all of which would bring about a condition of much improvement."*[539]

On the last day of the Yosemite conference, Myers engaged in a debate about the use of horses verses automobiles in the parks. Myers stated his belief to Secretary Fisher that "there was a greater percentage of accidents by horse vehicle than by automobiles" but then added "I am not very much interested in the automobile case; I had a horse run away with me the other day." Fisher concluded by stating he did not believe automobiles increased the danger to those still employing horse-powered vehicles, but wanted to evaluate the matter in more depth.[540]

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[537] Medical Director and Secretary of the Federal Registration Board Hallock to Secretary Fisher, letter, 6 December 1912, A18 Federal Registration Board 1911-1915.

[538] Conclusion of the author as there is no evidence in the files to indicate a response from Interior. However, a letter in late December 1912, from Chief Clerk Ucker on another matter, indicated Myers was not sharing department correspondence with Hallock. Ucker supplied a copy of a September letter clarifying the issue in question to him—a letter already in Myer's possession, but not shared with Hallock. See Chief Clerk Ucker to Medical Director Hallock, letter, 24 December 1912, A18 Federal Registration Board 1911-1915.

[539] Remarks of Harry Myers, Superintendent, Hot Springs Reservation, in *Proceedings of the National Park Conference Held at Yosemite National Park, October 14, 15, and 16, 1912* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government printing Office, 1913), as seen at http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/npc/proceedings-npc2/index.htm

[540] Ibid. Other Hot Springs attendees included W. T. S. Curtis, representing certain Hot Springs lessees, and Dr. L. R. Ellis, member, Federal Registration Board.

DEATH OF MEDICAL DIRECTOR HARRY M. HALLOCK, 1913

The interpersonal and professional friction continued unresolved into 1913 until Maj. Harry Hallock's abrupt suicide on May 19. Reporting for duty at the Government Free Bathhouse in the morning, Hallock failed to return to his office at noon. His absence was noted at two o'clock and a search of his desk revealed a brief note: "Have been fighting melancholia for weeks, and can no longer resist impulse to destroy my family and myself." Alarmed, Superintendent Myers mobilized the reservation workforce and commenced a search. It was soon learned Hallock had been seen on a street rail car and was last seen walking into the woods at Whittington Park. A search of the area revealed the medical director's body, dressed in his military uniform, with a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head. Suffering in silent pain from the effects of eleven different operations, the most recent at Johns Hopkins for a kidney ailment, his agony was compounded by mounting work-related issues, speculation of which in the local newspaper was as follows:

> *"...the government seems to have increased the duties and the authority of this office, and with that to have ordered the construction here of the magnificent home on Reserve avenue occupied now by the family of the dead man as the official home of the medical director.*
>
> *"Criticism soon began to spring up when it was learned how much this department was costing the government, and the criticism was strong and coarse at times, and while many stipulations were made in it that it was not of a personal nature as addressed to Major Hallock, yet its embarrassment was no doubt felt keenly by him.*
>
> *"His actions were taken by some to mean a selfish furtherance of his personal interests. It was charged that Major Hallock was trying to start a long drawn out work which would necessitate the maintenance of his official position here, when there was already undertaken a movement for the abolishment of the office."*[541]

Maj. Harry Hallock's sudden death came at a pivotal time. In the fall 1912 election, Republicans lost control of the White House to Woodrow Wilson, a Democrat, who replaced Fisher with Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane. Under the political patronage system, the termination of Harry Myers' tenure as superintendent was imminent as the department searched for a replacement. Secretary Lane had to decide whether or not to continue the dual roles of medical director and superintendent at Hot Springs.

In his final annual report, Myers mentioned Hallock's death with a single sentence, but presented a lengthy resume of his own four-year term. In the report dated July 26, 1913, four days before his own resignation took effect, Myers recommended the

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[541] "Medical Director H. M. Hallock Kills Himself on the Mountain Side," *Sentinel Record* 20 May 1913, 1. Hallock, age 45, left a wife, a son, and a daughter. He was buried with military honors at Arlington National Cemetery. See: "Deaths: Harry M. Hallock, M.D.," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, vol. 60, 7 June 1913, p. 1808.

Government Free Bathhouse be demolished and a new one in the price range of $200,000 rebuilt on Reserve Avenue, east of the medical director's residence. He complained about law enforcement officers and policemen coming under the classified civil service.

> *"I have been forced to employ men," he wrote, "that have obtained a higher rating in the examination provided for them, instead of those specially adapted to the work. I am opposed to classifying these positions. What is required more particularly is men in whom the superintendent has implicit confidence and who are honest. Detectives should be known only to this office, but as they are required to pass an examination the public immediately know who they are, and this seriously militates against effective work."*

He recommended Whittington Park be disposed of to the city as a municipal park and envisioned a "peristyle or colonnade be built" along Bathhouse Row. Salaries of the seven foresters and gardeners should be elevated, particularly since they were actually jacks of all trades including "pipe fitting, blacksmithing, masonry, painting, carpentering, cement work; in fact everything there is to be done of work of this character is done by these men. They are hard-working, conscientious, faithful employees, and are entitled to better wages than they are now receiving." The press of duties assigned to the superintendent should also merit a pay increase to "at least $6,000" per annum.[542]

[542] *Annual Report for 1913.*

CHAPTER SEVEN

Hot Springs in the World War I Era

SUPERINTENDENCY OF CHARLES R. TROWBRIDGE, 1913-1914

Secretary Lane designated Charles R. Trowbridge to the post in an acting capacity on August 4, 1913. Trowbridge, from St. Paul, Minnesota, had recently retired from the U.S. Army, having served in the Philippines in Manila as head of that city's secret service. Following Trowbridge's military retirement, Secretary Franklin K. Lane named him Interior's field representative available for duty at the department's pleasure.[543]

Figure 76. Charles R. Trowbridge (National Park Service)

Charles Trowbridge served as acting superintendent until September 23, when his appointment became a temporary assignment as superintendent and Lane declined to name a new medical director. Seventeen days earlier, another catastrophic fire swept through Hot Springs consuming thirty-two blocks and leaving 2,500 people homeless. The fire began in the African American community on the east side of the city. Little Rock firefighters arrived by train to assist in battling the day-long blaze until it burned itself out at the foot of West Mountain, sparing the downtown business district and Bathhouse Row. The fire claimed the Moody and Park hotels, Ozark Sanatorium, and Crystal Bathhouse, all under thermal water contracts.[544]

Secretary Lane wished to honor the late medical director and solve an issue at the same time. Interior directed that the Alum Spring, popularly used for bathing the eyes, be re-designated "Major Harry M. Hallock Spring." The spring did not contain alum as discovered from Haywood's analysis and had no more

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[543] "Charles R. Trowbridge Dies," *The Reclamation Era*, publication of the Department of the Interior, vol. 27, February 1937, p. 44. While Trowbridge's obituary (1865-1937) does not mention his service at Hot Springs, it does state he began working for Interior in 1913 and was sent to Estes Park in 1915 "to organize the administration of Rocky Mountain National Park" by serving as its first superintendent. From there he served as a field inspector until 1933 when he retired. At his passing, he lived in Denver, Colorado. Secretary Lane apparently offered the combined position of superintendent and medical director to L. R. Ellis, Hot Springs physician and member of the Federal Registration Board "but with such restrictions that Dr. Ellis has declined to accept." See J. F. Manier to Col. S. W. Fordyce, letter, 4 August 1913, Papers of J.R. Fordyce III, Hot Springs National Park Archives. Trowbridge specified that his appointment was only temporary in *Annual Report for 1914*. He also stated the medical director position was "discontinued by the department."

[544] "6,000,000 Damage in Hot Springs Fire," 6 September 1913, 1, and "Hot Springs Loss $2,250,000," 10 September 1913, 4, both in *New York Times*. The insurance report blamed the rapid spread of fire on "poor building construction, inefficient water system, and poor fire fighting equipment."

Figure 77. September 5, 1913 fire spares Bathhouse Row as hoses and bystanders fill Central Avenue (HSNP 10388, National Park Service)

cleansing and soothing effects on the eyes than any other thermal spring. Because it sat prominently along Central Avenue, the pavilion and pump were repainted with proper signage for Hallock Spring.[545]

One of Trowbridge's first orders involved instructions to the train inspector. He ordered him to continue warning passengers about the evils of drumming by standing in the front of each car facing the passengers. This was to be done not only in every observation and passenger car, but to passengers riding in the baggage car as well. He advised, "Unless there are good reasons therefor [sic], you will hold no private conversations with passengers on trains."[546] He subsequently ordered the inspector to deliver the prepared speech twice in each car and, to ensure everyone understood, distribute printed instructions.[547]

Supervision of the national parks had become a heavy workload and much of it was handled by the Chief Clerk in the Interior Department. Following the "Rape of Hetch Hetchy" sanctioned by Congress in 1914, by carving that scenic valley out of Yosemite National Park for a dam and reservoir, Interior began pressing for the creation of a national parks bureau. Until that occurred, Secretary Lane appointed a general superintendent and landscape engineer for all the national parks. On June 4, 1914, Lane appointed Mark Daniels of Yosemite National Park to the position. With a general superintendent, the plan was to downgrade the existing superintendents in all the other reservations to that of supervisors at lower salaries. General Superintendent Daniels began a nationwide tour, inspecting Yosemite, Sequoia, General Grant, Mount Rainier, Glacier, Crater Lake, and Yellowstone, making recommendations for improvements there. By year's end, he would complete his tour of Mesa Verde, Platt, Hot Springs, Wind Cave, and Sullys Hill.[548]

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[545] Assistant to the Secretary Alfred C. Miller to Superintendent Trowbridge, letter 11 November 1913, and Superintendent Trowbridge to Secretary Lane, letter, 17 November 1913, both in D46 Other Structures.
[546] Inspector, Interior Department and Acting Superintendent C. R. Trowbridge to Train Inspector Hiram N. Anderson, letter 7 August 1913, A54 Inspections, Etc.—Train Inspections 1911-1918.
[547] "Will Give Printed Instructions on Incoming Trains; Superintendent Believes Passengers Will Comprehend Advice Better," *Hot Springs New Era*, 26 September 1913, A54 Inspections, Etc.—Train Inspections 1911-1918.
[548] *Reports of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1914, Volume 1* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1915), 26, 88-89.

Supervisor Trowbridge continued close supervision of bath attendants, suspending or firing those who merited such treatment. As he could no longer train them, the department authorized him to issue permanent licenses to all attendants who had passed two successive examinations which resulted in 200 licenses being issued, along with 40 temporary ones to those who passed a single examination. During 1914, the Palace closed, was razed, and a new $200,000 house to be called the Fordyce Bathhouse began construction. Those casualties of the September 5 fire were also being rebuilt following plans approved by Interior, including the African American Crystal, renamed as the New Phythian Sanitarium and Bathhouse. Trowbridge recommended the Horse Shoe and Magnesia Bathhouses be condemned and ordered closed because of their deteriorated and unsanitary conditions. Both wooden structures were near the Government Free Bathhouse and presented a fire danger to it. The old Superior, closed since 1911 under a lease which had expired in 1906, remained an "eyesore" and also deserved to be demolished. He reported, "Too much stress can not be laid upon the desirability of razing this bathhouse and the two bathhouses above mentioned, and I earnestly recommend that some action to that end be taken in the near future. In addition to being unsightly and unsafe, the reservation is also deprived of the revenues from a bathhouse on that site, as long as the Superior is allowed to stand as it is at present."[549]

Figure 78. New lighting system installed along Bathhouse Row, July 1914 (HSNP 1954, Hot Springs National Park)

Trowbridge solved the long-standing issue of supplying water to the Point Lookout pavilion atop Hot Springs Mountain and adjacent to the observation tower. Water for sprinkling, public drinking, and watering horses came by means of a small pump house from a waterline connected to the Army and Navy Hospital cooling tank. A 500-gallon tank stood atop a 12-foot steel tower supplying cold fresh water by gravity to the fountain inside the pavilion as well as a nearby watering trough for horses.

Improved lighting along Bathhouse Row appeared in 1914 with fifteen new ornamental electric-light standards stretching from the Imperial Bathhouse on Reserve Avenue to the Arlington Hotel and Bathhouse on Central Avenue. Each standard stood thirteen feet tall and supported one sixteen inch round white globe and four twelve inch white globes containing 100-watt and sixty-watt lamps respectively. The new lights, which emitted eight times greater lighting than the previous single lamps, were installed on the inside line of the promenade, not along the curb as the old lights, and presented a more pleasing

[549] *Annual Report for 1914.*

appearance. The superintendent hoped that the new ornamental lights would inspire the city to do likewise along its side of Central Avenue.

In June 1914, the department decided that the superintendent's official residence would change from the house on Fountain Street in Happy Hollow to the more modern residence built for the late Maj. Hallock on Reserve Avenue. The former building, badly in need of repairs, was vacated on June 15. New furniture was purchased for the first floor of the new Reserve Avenue house and crews built a 580-foot walkway connecting it to the east line of the Army and Navy Hospital grounds to improve accessibility. New fencing also graced the boundary line of that part of Hot Springs Mountain over which exclusive jurisdiction had been granted by the state.[550]

An update of the official rules and regulations came on June 30, 1914. For the first time it addressed the ban on automobiles on park roads. Rule 16 read as follows: "Automobiles will not be permitted on the roads in the Hot Springs Reservation without the consent of the Secretary of the Interior first had and obtained."[551]

SUPERINTENDENCY OF WILLIAM P. PARKS, M.D., 1914-1922

Charles R. Trowbridge, the dutiful Interior field representative, resigned his position on August 2, 1914, to make way for Secretary Lane's selection as the next Hot Springs Reservation "supervisor." Lane effectively resolved the Myers/Hallock issue by combining an administrator manager and medical professional into a single entity. William P. Parks, M.D., a native of Arkansas, assumed the office the following day. Parks, recommended for the position by Governor-turned-Senator Joe T. Robinson, was a physician, former mayor of Mena, Arkansas, and a member of the Arkansas State Board of Health.[552]

Figure 79. Dr. William P. Parks (National Park Service)

Dr. Parks assumed his role as the European powers were embarking on the disastrous "Great War" which came to be called World War I. As the famous European baths were closing during the conflict, the hardship offered American spas like Hot Springs the opportunity to herald native resorts to "take the cure."[553]

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[550] *Annual Report for 1914.* The new lighting became known as "the White Way."
[551] Ibid.
[552] Maurice Moore, "Life Sketch of Dr. W. P. Parks," *The Record* , Vol. 8 (Hot Springs, Ark.: Garland County Historical Society, 1967) 39-43. Dr. Parks practiced medicine for thirty-five years, twelve years on the Federal Pension Board, and served a short time as Polk County Coroner.

Dr. Parks took charge of oversight on various bathhouses under construction on Bathhouse Row. The Fordyce, next to the grand entrance, was a world-class bathhouse being constructed by the Little Rock firm of Mann and Stern Architects. Following plans approved by the department, Mann and Stern nonetheless found it necessary to make an assortment of changes as construction progressed. Presenting a floor by floor list to Dr. Parks, they asked Interior to approve their alterations.[554] Other requests came from owner capitalist Col. S. W. Fordyce who set about devising means to augment profits.

Figure 80. New Maurice and Fordyce bathhouses grace the formal entrance to Hot Springs Reservation, 1915 (HSNP 1882, National Park Service)

First came a request to install a third floor barber shop. Fearing it would set an unwelcome precedent and compete with other shops in the city, Dr. Parks recommended against it. Interior agreed, stating "for administrative reasons, the Department considers it inadvisable to grant the permission requested and the application is therefore denied."[555] Next came a request to establish a physical education class in the Fordyce gymnasium at a cost of ten cents per lesson and could include those not registered as bathers. Pondering the proposition, Parks responded, "it is my opinion that under the existing rules and regulations governing the bathhouses it would be impracticable to grant this request." He did not deny the request, however, deferring to a new departmental adviser. He wrote: "It is the intention of this office at all times to promote as far as consistent any accessories that might add to the comfort and convenience and benefit of the patrons, but I do not see my way clear to grant this request. However, the matter may be taken up at a

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[553] "Discusses Closed Spas: Uneasiness is Uncalled for, Says Public Health Officer, 7 September 1914, 8, and "America, Too, Offers Its Springs," editorial, 8 September 1914, 10, both in *New York Times*. U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Rupert Blue urged the American public to take advantage of the curative properties found at domestic spas.

[554] George R. Mann and Eugene J. Stern to Superintendent Parks, letter, 10 February 1915, C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse 1914-23. These included changes in room uses, finishes, and sizing--such as making the gymnasium wider.

[555] Assistant Secretary Bo Sweeney to Superintendent Parks, letter, 28 December 1914, and Superintendent Parks to Secretary Lane, letter, 22 December 1914, C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse 1914-23.

later date with the Assistant to the Secretary, Mr. Mather, whom I am informed intends visiting Hot Springs within the next thirty days."[556]

THE BERKELEY NATIONAL PARKS CONFERENCE, 1915

Dr. Parks referred to Stephen Tyng Mather, Secretary Lane's special assistant who had a profound interest in the many challenges facing the national parks. Mather, a Chicago millionaire and president of Thorkildsen-Mather Borax Company, came to Washington at Lane's request to help run the fledgling park system. Stephen Mather soon realized that what was needed was a unified federal agency—a national park service—to administer them. He joined forces with his friend and journalist Robert Sterling Yard to publicize this effort to the American people and Congress. Mather's interest in Hot Springs was immediate and intense, but he did not visit Hot Springs until late November that year. Arriving in Washington in early 1915, Mather, and his young assistant/secretary, Horace M. Albright, attended the conference of national park superintendents and Interior officials at Berkeley, California. Also present were Mark Daniels, park concessioners, and railroad and other transportation interests. W. T. S. Curtis also attended, representing various Hot Springs interests. Hot Springs Reservation figured prominently on the agenda. T. Warren Allen, from the Department of Agriculture's Office of the Public Roads, reported on his survey. As for the Arkansas national park, Allen reported:

Figure 81. Dr. William P. Parks, last Hot Springs Reservation superintendent and first Hot Springs National Park superintendent (National Park Service)

"The road problem at Hot Springs is quite different from that in the other parks. It is subsidiary to the real problem, which is one of landscape engineering. There is at Hot Springs an excellent opportunity to produce extraordinary results. The bathhouses there are very fine with few exceptions, and there seems to be little doubt of the benefit derived from the use of the spring water, but people wish for more than to be cured of their ailments. They wish to

[556] Superintendent Parks to Manager, Fordyce Bathhouse, letter, 10 November 1915, C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse 1914-23. Another request—to use the music room for a local music teacher's recital session, was granted. See John F. Manier to Superintendent Parks, letter, 6 December, same file.

> *enjoy life while they are being cured, which is one of the reasons why they swarm to Europe and to the watering places there. There must be at Hot Springs the opportunity for a pleasurable existence out of doors. The material is at hand—the topography of the reservation renders it peculiarly suitable to treatment by the landscape gardener, and the system of roads will depend upon the demands of the gardening scheme. The out-of-door aspect to-day is quite dreary and the business of getting well is not aided as it should be by life in the open."*[557]

Dr. Parks subsequently took the podium and read a lengthy paper describing conditions at Hot Springs and discussing the drumming evil as well as the various improvements made in recent years. Upon concluding, General Superintendent and Landscape Engineer of National Parks Mark Daniels commented:

> *"I was rather skeptical of Arkansas Hot Springs until I visited there. I have seen people who have gone to Arkansas in wheeled chairs, crippled and distorted with rheumatism, and I have seen them shortly afterwards, after taking the treatment of the baths, run at a pretty good speed and catch a train. Hundreds of people who have taken the course of baths at Arkansas Hot Springs annually have been greatly benefited, and there is absolutely no question of the efficacy of these waters in certain cases. I believe that Dr. Parks's paper brings out a point that is very, very important, that of classifying the diseases and illnesses that would be remedied by the waters of the Arkansas Hot Springs."*

Daniels concluded by saying that "If we ever hope to get any appropriation necessary to defray such expense we can only do it by the backing of a sufficient number of people who will urge the matter before the Committee on Appropriations in Washington."[558]

Later in the agenda, Stephen Mather returned the focus to Hot Springs saying it had "not been thoroughly appreciated" and discussed an effort made by former Secretary Ethan Hitchcock to develop it further. Hitchcock had hired New York architect Howard Greenley to devise a development scheme. According to Mather, "Mr. Hitchcock thought there were great possibilities in the Hot Springs and that they could be made to line up along with the great baths or spas of Europe if they were properly presented to the people and if it were possible for the people to have an opportunity of enjoying themselves there as they do at the spas abroad." He instructed Greenley to put his landscape designs on several topographical maps. According to Mather, Greenley had just toured Hot Springs Reservation:

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[557] T. Warren Allen, Office of the Public Roads, Department of Agriculture, remarks at *Proceedings of the National Park Conference Held at Berkeley, California, March 11, 12, and 13, 1915* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1915).
[558] Ibid., remarks of Mark Daniels.

"I was very fortunate in having an opportunity of meeting Mr. Greenley a few weeks ago in Washington, when he revived this scheme, Mr. Greenley consented to come out here to San Francisco and attend this conference, and also agreed on the way to stop at Hot Springs and study the matter thoroughly and then give us the ideas that occurred to him, visualizing the possibilities of the park along the lines suggested. Here were these plans originally made lying away in the department, as many a good scheme has been treated before. I do not know whether this one can be resurrected or not, but we are going to try it. Mr. Greenley is very much alive to it. He will do his part toward resurrecting that scheme he put before Secretary Hitchcock several years ago."

Greenley explained that his idea was based on those espoused at Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris but having seen existing conditions at Hot Springs, he doubted it was feasible to carry it out at present. Unfortunately, the Hot Springs Commission had failed to retain a sufficient land base and he also explained his scheme was predicated on the ambition of a more formal, government presence in the area. Greenley proceeded to show a series of lantern slides of Hot Springs' amenities during which he advised the Government Free Bathhouse should be separated from the commercial establishments on Bathhouse Row, perhaps beyond the official residence on Fountain Street. He advocated acquiring the "inferior" buildings opposite the park boundary in order to construct more aesthetically pleasing architecture for the valley skyline. He then declared:

"There is only one thing that I regret that was done back in 1888 or 1889, and that was the covering up of Hot Springs Creek, which ran directly through the main street, and which was simply used for surface water drainage. One of the features of the baths at Carlsbad is that through the central street runs a very beautiful stream, with bridges and various landscape effects, making a very attractive view. At the Hot Springs this was covered up with a solid concrete tunnel, and I have no doubt that stream is going to be buried in that tunnel permanently, because it is a very substantial piece of work."

Assistant to the Secretary Stephen Mather turned to Mark Daniels and asked him to give his impressions. Daniels responded:

"I do not believe there is a place in the United States which the Federal Government has anything to do with that cries out so much for remodeling as Arkansas Hot Springs. We hear a great deal about the planning of the landscape architecture in Europe, with the idea of developing the picturesque there. Absolutely the reverse has been done in Arkansas. I think the place has been allowed to grow up much like Topsy. If there is anyone who is interested or who has a sincere regard for the holdings of the Federal Government throughout the country, and especially at Arkansas Hot Springs, I am sure that he will go back with the firm

determination to do all that he possibly can to bring about the execution of such plans as Mr. Greenley has presented to us here to-day.

"It struck me while I was on the ground that almost the exact plan that he has presented here to-day is the only thing that would fit the conditions there. I do not wish to claim the honor of having thought of the same thing that he has thought of, but in sketching out some of the possible arrangements at Arkansas Hot Springs I drew almost the same diagrammatic plan that he has here. I do not believe that there is any other plan that could be successfully worked out. As to the details, of course, I know nothing; but it is hoped that some such plan as has been shown here will be adopted by the Federal Government. One hundred and forty-five thousand people annually go to that place, and each one goes away with a very depressed feeling and a great deal of disgust instead of admiration for our Federal Government."[559]

Figure 82. Stephen T. Mather, seen here in 1926, had a close personal affinity to Hot Springs National Park. (Historic Photograph Collection, Harpers Ferry Center, National Park Service)

Mather thanked Howard Greenley for his vision and assistance to Interior and concluded by stating, "You have been very valuable to us, and I hope it will be possible for us to develop something from this later on. If we can not reach this particular problem right now, I hope we shall be able to get to it before very long."[560]

STEPHEN MATHER'S LOVE AFFAIR WITH HOT SPRINGS BEGINS

After the Berkeley conference, Mather continued to think about Hot Springs. On April 12, 1915, he asked Dr. Parks to submit estimates for certain improvements. These included a modern greenhouse; paving with concrete the grand entrance from Central Avenue to the Government Free Bathhouse; West Mountain concrete bridges; and a retaining wall from the Army and Navy Hospital to the new official residence on Reserve Avenue. Mather also asked for a report on required repairs for the Government Free

[559] Ibid., remarks of Stephen Mather, Howard Greenley, and Mark Daniels.
[560] Ibid., remarks of Stephen Mather.

Bathhouse sufficient to hold it over until a new one could be built. He also asked for information on the proposed new location verses any other Parks could suggest.[561]

Agitation in the business community against the U.S. train inspector's announcements each day on in-coming trains came to a boil in June 1915. The city council passed a resolution calling on Interior to discontinue the hated "Spiel." The council said that the "Spiel," warning visitors against "crooks; thieves; hold up men and confidence men" was actually a "warning against the Citizens of Hot Springs" and city government wanted it discontinued.[562] Secretary Lane asked Parks for his input. Parks noted that since October 15, 1909, when government inspectors were placed on incoming passenger trains, train drumming ceased to exist, but drumming activities at depots and on the streets intensified to the great annoyance of visitors. Local ordinances against the practice were not enforced and the mayor pointed an accusing finger at the police court judge. First-time visitors arriving at the superintendent's office universally praised the onboard announcements. He added, "Within the past few days I have had several visitors come to this office direct from the trains who were so nervous and excited by reason of drummers having followed them and insisting that they go to this or that hotel, that it would be some minutes before they were able to determine what they wanted to know or do." Parks urged the department to stand firm and rebuke the council's request—which it did.[563]

Figure 83. Work on building the Fordyce Bathhouse continues with construction headquarters building in front, c. late 1914 (HSNP 10174, National Park Service)

[561] Assistant to the Secretary Mather to Superintendent Parks, letter, 12 April 1915, D22 Construction/Preservation 1900-1917.
[562] *Resolution, City Council of Hot Springs, Arkansas,* passed 3 June 1915, copy in file A54 Inspections, Etc.—Train Inspectors, 1911-1918.
[563] Superintendent Parks to Secretary Lane, letter, 17 June 1915 (quotation); and Assistant Secretary Bo Sweeney to Mayor J. W. McClendon, letter, 23 June 1915, both in A54 Inspections, Etc.—Train Inspectors, 1911-1918.

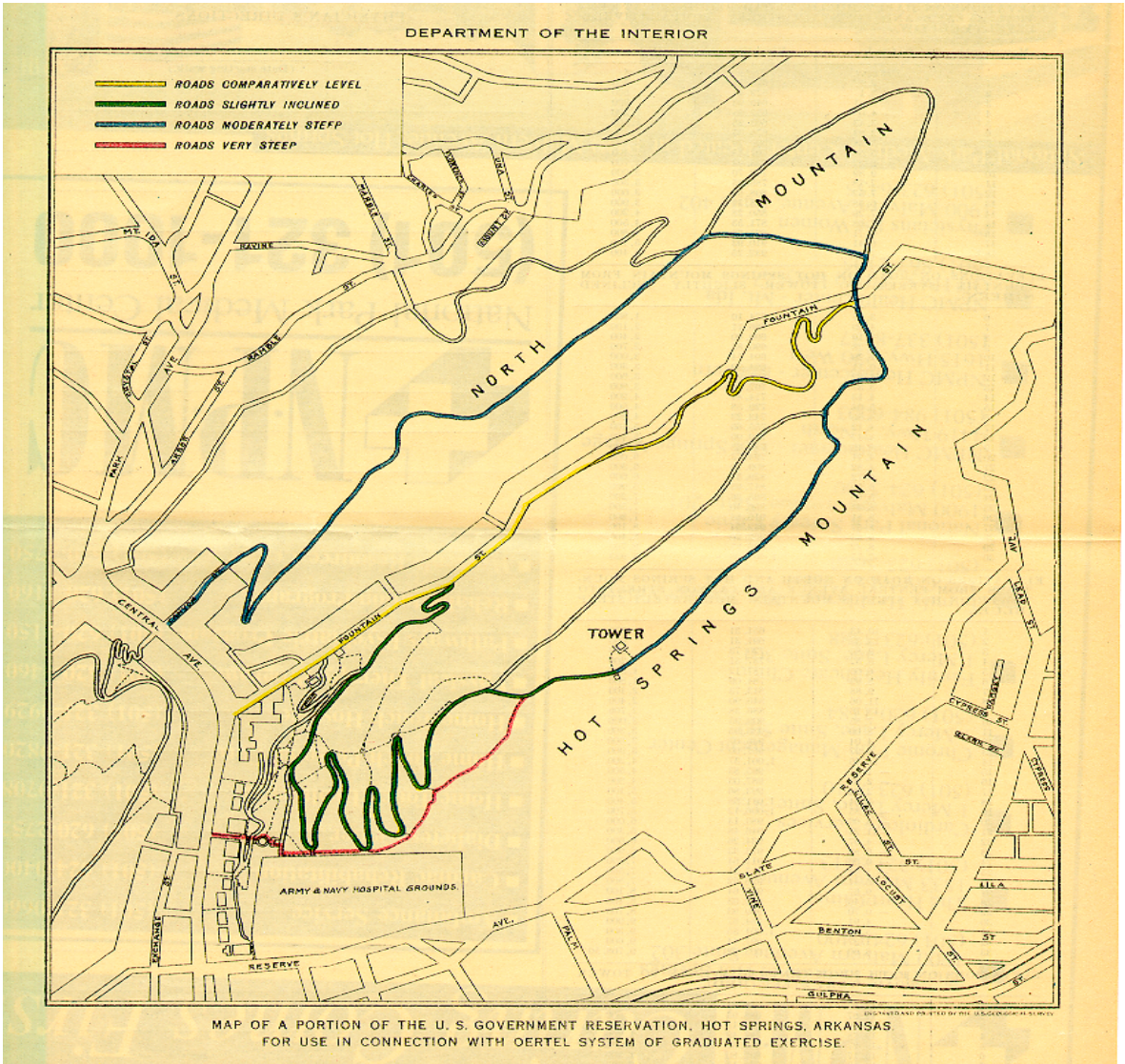

Figure 84. Oertel System of Graduated Exercise Trail Map, North and Hot Springs Mountains, 1915 (National Park Service)

Parks took advice from the Berkeley conference to heart—to utilize the topography in order to promote good health. In the summer of 1915, he adopted the recommendation of the Hot Springs-Garland County Medical Society and authorized the roads on North and Hot Springs Mountain to be laid out in courses for a scientific system of mountain climbing known as the Oertel system of graduated exercise. Designed by German physician Max Joseph Oertel, Oertel's writings focused on cardiac, circulatory, and obesity disorders and he advocated the "terrain cure," a set of therapeutic exercises of graduated hiking and climbing. It was popular at European spas and was the first of its kind in the United States.

Four courses were set up and stone markers were installed every 100 yards to be reached within a specific time. Each route had a different color. The easiest was yellow,

followed by green and blue. The most strenuous was red. All were designed to make the cardio-vascular system stronger through exercise. Maps of the color-coordinated routes were supplied to physicians at a nominal fee; on the back was a form upon which the physician could prescribe the specific distance and course according to the patient's condition. The aim was to promote heart health. Dr. Parks noted in his annual report "This system of exercise is applicable to patients whose heart action is impeded by deposits of fat and is effective in preventing fatty infiltration from becoming localized in the heart. It is, first of all, a preventive measure and can be employed with advantage to improve the general nutrition of the heart." He continued, "So far known this is the only system of this kind in the United States. In connection with the baths it should be a great boon to patients suffering from such ailments as will be benefited by this method of treatment."[564]

Parks took special care to acknowledge official visitors in his annual report for fiscal year 1915. In September 1914, Agriculture's T. Warren Allen came to inspect the mountain roads and reported favorably on their condition. In November, Assistant Interior Secretary Bo Sweeney and Assistant Attorney W. B. Acker arrived and met with a large delegation of local business and professional men, each presenting their views and discussing issues at length. Coinciding with the Arkansas State Fair, the Interior officials met with the governor and his staff, "all of whom were delighted with the interest the department was taking in this resort." On Thanksgiving Day, General Superintendent and Landscape Engineer of National Parks Mark Daniels came for a two-day inspection during which it rained continuously. Parks reported Daniels "expressed himself as highly pleased, and prophesied a great future for this resort." During the Fourth of July celebration, Vice President of the United States Thomas R. Marshall and Second Lady Lois Marshall visited. The vice president delivered a speech at the state fairgrounds after which he visited Hot Springs Reservation, including the superintendent's office, bathhouses, and Army and Navy Hospital. Parks mentioned that Assistant to the Secretary Stephen T. Mather would be visiting sometime in the approaching fall.[565]

General improvements in 1915 were numerous. Beneath the new Fordyce was a 70,000 gallon reinforced concrete reservoir to augment storage of thermal water. The old iron light pole standards from the "White Way" fronting Bathhouse Row were relocated to Reserve Avenue between the Army and Navy Hospital and the superintendent's official residence. That area also saw erection of a 290-foot-long rubble stone retaining wall topped with Alabama limestone coping. Extensive repairs were made to the concrete promenade in front of the Row. Burning of underbrush and cleaning of Hot Springs Mountain's west slope occurred in the springtime. Work began on a connecting road on top of North Mountain to the junction of Craig and Ramble Streets, thus giving an outlet from the mountain roads to northern Hot Springs.[566]

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[564] *Annual Report for 1915* (quotations); William H. Deaderick, M.D., "Oertel System of Graduated Exercises at Hot Springs," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 19 February 1916, vol. 66, 592-3; and "Oertel System of Graduated Exercise," National Park Service informational leaflet, Hot Springs National Park, no date, as seen at: http://www.nps.gov/hosp/historyculture/upload/oertel.inc.map.pdf

[565] *Annual Report for 1915.*

[566] Ibid.

Parks reported on the November 1, 1914, opening of the Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital and Bathhouse.[567] The modern hospital, at 300 Prospect Avenue, cost in excess of $100,000 to build and featured a bathhouse operated exclusively as a charitable institution. Rules of the nonsectarian association prevented accepting anyone of means in its bathhouse. Physicians donated their services free of charge. During the first eight months of operation, the Levi Bathhouse gave 1,670 thermal baths. Dr. Parks faced the daunting task of separating operating costs of the hospital from the bathhouse expenses for reporting purposes.

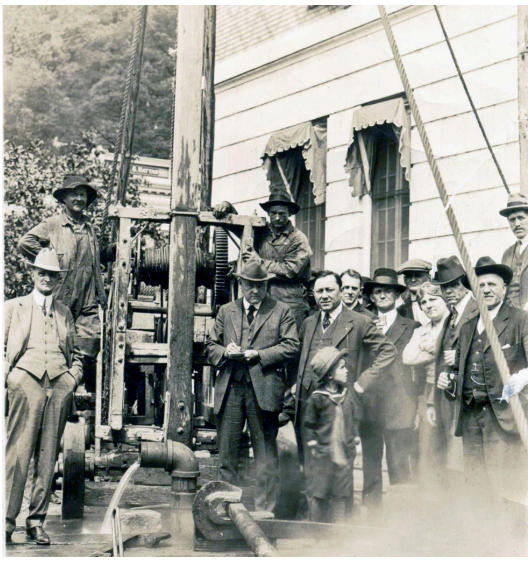

Figure 85. John R. Fordyce and Fordyce Bathhouse manager Jack Manier at drilling of Fordyce well, c. 1921 (HSNP 10181, National Park Service)

Opening its doors on March 1, 1915, the Fordyce Bathhouse, erected at a cost exceeding $200,000, saw a depressed market with visitation down fifteen percent citywide due to public uncertainty caused by the Great War in Europe. Two months previously, a remodeled Hale Bathhouse also opened. Refurbished at more than $50,000, the Hale attracted patrons desiring baths at a moderate cost. The Maurice also announced remodeling plans approved by the department. The Great Northern and Hot Springs Bathhouses closed their doors following expiration of their leases. The Pythian, serving African American patrons, opened in late December 1914, nearly a year ahead of schedule. Parks observed "This is a good house. Considering the price charged, the administration of baths there will compare favorably with baths given in other low-priced houses."

Interior demonstrated its determination to improve the Row. The department gave the Ozark, Horseshoe, and Magnesia a deadline of September 30, 1915, to submit construction plans for modern bathhouses, and the same with the Lamar until the end of 1916. As for the Superior, closed since 1911, the superintendent reported a company had formed to build a new establishment at more than $50,000 to provide moderate-priced baths. "It seems at this time," he wrote, "that the rebuilding of this bathhouse is practically assured, as the plans have been approved except as to some minor details." The new Superior finally opened its doors in February 1916.

Among a lengthy list of recommendations made in 1915, Parks called on Congress to appropriate funds each year sufficient to make "extensive improvements and beautification on an elaborate scale of the Hot Springs Mountain." It would be based on

[567] *Act of Congress*, *8 July 1916,* (39 Stat. 351). Congress authorized Interior to provide thermal water for five tubs and drinking purposes without cost or charge to the hospital, provided that an ambulance and treatment be given to emergency patients without charge.

plans drawn up by Mark Daniels to rival any of Europe's spa resorts. He called for a concerted publicity campaign to educate the American public about the national park and its waters. "Every effort," he wrote, "should be made to convey to suffering humanity reliable information as to just what health features this Government has to offer for their benefit and relief." He advocated rebuilding the Government Free Bathhouse on its present site and an appropriation for that purpose in the amount of $75,000. In response to a congressional requirement that all passenger-carrying vehicles in Government service obtain specific appropriations, Parks put in his wish list to maintain two in use and to purchase a new four-passenger vehicle—all powered by horses.

In Secretary Lane's 1915 report to Congress, he announced the roads in Yellowstone were opened to automobile traffic for the first time. Not so at Arkansas' national park where it was the exception rather than the rule, as Lane wrote: "The roads in Hot Springs Reservation are not in such condition, considering the safety of individuals and animals, as to permit of their joint use by motor-driven vehicles and vehicles drawn by horses, but on *special occasions and under special restrictions* [emphasis added] motor-driven vehicles are permitted on such roads."[568]

Mark Daniel's report to Congress the same year also mentioned Hot Springs and specified two "important problems" to be addressed. First, the abysmal Government Free Bathhouse "crumbling with decay, unsightly, insanitary, and reflects anything but credit upon the Federal Government." Conditions confronting the poor there, he declared, "arouses righteous anger. I can not conceive a more noble act or more justifiable expenditure of public money than the erection of a new and beautiful bathhouse as a gift from the Federal Government to the suffering poor of this country." The second issue to be solved, he stressed, was "the general development of the reservation from the standpoint of a landscape architect. Several plans have been submitted for the reservation, but none has been adopted."[569]

The long-promised trip of Assistant to the Secretary Stephen T. Mather to Hot Springs occurred in late 1915. Arriving on November 29 at the Missouri Pacific depot, Mather and his wife proceeded to the Arlington Hotel. From there, his party took six carriages to tour the area. His assistant, Horace Albright, later chronicled their visit, stating "Mather was eagerly looking forward to experiencing the full treatment at one of the marble palaces on 'Bathhouse Row.' We were informed that we had to have a physician check us out before we could go. Again, the federal government was omnipresent, as all physicians had to be passed by a local federal board." At the physician's office, they were presented with a flyer listing the various maladies which the thermal waters rendered relief as well as their radio-active and chemical effects. Wrote Albright, "Well, Mather and I felt we were not only going to see the wonders of the bath house but to experience a fountain of youth. So off we went to the finest one in town, the Fordyce Bath House, adjoining the 'Grand Entrance to the Government Reservation,' a gateway of stone pillars topped by eagles." They were "stunned" by the opulent splendor

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[568] *Reports of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1915, Vol. 1, Secretary of the Interior* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1916): 119.
[569] Ibid., *Report of the General Superintendent and Landscape Gardner,* 857.

at the Fordyce and experienced the full treatment there. "We thought we were through," he wrote, "when we completed the tour of the first floor, but we had hardly started. When we went up the marble staircase to the second floor and had a very short stay in the mechano-therapy department, when we tried out some of what the brochure called 'scientific wonders,' every conceivable mechanical device and ingenious Zander-gymnastic equipment—artificial rowing & horseback, vibrators, etc.'" On the third floor, they toured the 22 private staterooms, gymnasium, assembly hall, parlors and billiard room, beauty shop and music room, then up to the roof garden for refreshments and to enjoy the view of the city.[570] From there, back to the baths:

> "*Mather and I were almost worn out from all this inspection. Not just from trying all the waters and sports activities, but from laughing so much. Every new bath or drink of that awful mineral water set us both off into gales of laughter. Staggering out of the great pool onto a wide marble bench, he gasped, 'Horace, how much more of this can we take?' Before I could answer, our tour guide suggested that we follow him and try the 'vapor experience,' so down to the first-floor bath rooms we went. Here were deep tubs with very hot water—a very pleasant and relaxing experience. Then up to the massage room for the highlight of our visit—a long remarkable rubdown and, for me at least, a short catnap."*[571]

After touring with William Parks, Mather was guest speaker at a multiple-course lobster dinner at the Arlington Hotel hosted by the Business Men's League.[572] Mather expressed his "splendid impression" of Hot Springs: "I have been greatly impressed with Hot Springs and with the hot waters…. After all is said, though, Secretary of the Interior Lane is the man to be impressed, and I am going to do my best to impress him with what I have seen and learned of Hot Springs." Mather suggested sending a committee of local men to go to the capitol and talk to Congress, particularly members of the appropriations committee. Mather declared, "I hope we can find some way to show Congress the true value of Hot Springs. I know it would have far-reaching effect in the government's attitude toward the resort." He recommended sending physician records and data to Washington, D.C., especially from Army and Navy Hospital physicians as this evidence would impress the appropriations committee "with the wonders of the hot waters as they have been related to me here tonight." The consensus of the dinner meeting, a reporter noted, was that Stephen Mather became "a staunch friend" of Hot Springs Reservation.[573]

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[570] Albright and Schenck, *Creating the National Park Service: The Missing Years,* 114-15.
[571] Ibid., 116.
[572] *Dinner, Complimentary to Assistant Secretary of the Interior Mather and Party by the Business Men's League, Hot Springs, Arkansas at The Arlington, November 30, 1915*, Folder: Invitations to Stephen Tyng Mather, Carton (diary 1926, clippings regarding Mather, obituaries), Stephen Tyng Mather Papers, 1883-1930, Collection Number BANC MSS C-B-535, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley.
[573] "Mather Likes Hot Springs: Assistant Secretary of the Interior Expresses Himself as Highly Impressed with Hot Springs and Her Possibilities," *Hot Springs New Era* 1 December 1915 in scrapbook entitled "Stephen Tyng Mather: Book Z through Summer Trip of 1916," Vol. 4, Scrapbooks, 1915-1928, Stephen Tyng Mather Papers, 1883-1930, Collection Number BANC MSS C-B-535, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley.

Figure 86. Stephen T. Mather on horseback at Happy Hollow, November 1915 (HSNP 3493, National Park Service)

Mather's party spent a week touring and taking the waters. According to Horace Albright:

"In between social activities and department business, everyone enjoyed hours of rest and more adventures in the bath houses. Mather became almost addicted to them. Several times when no one could find him, I went to Bath House Row and checked each place until I located him. Usually he turned up at his favorite, the Fordyce, always in the waters or getting a massage. I had the last page from the Fordyce brochure framed and sent it to Mather for Christmas. It was a drawing of an old wheelchair covered with cobwebs and underneath was printed 'Permanently Interred.' I pasted a picture of Mather on it as though he was the one in the wheelchair."[574]

On the last day, Mather enjoyed a horseback trip to Ozark-Lithia Springs, then by automobile to Mountain Valley, returning to Hot Springs on horseback. He expressed great pleasure on the outing and "enjoyed himself immensely," stating, "I am greatly impressed with Hot Springs. I am impressed with the great future possibilities of the city as a health resort, and these possibilities seem unlimited." Upon his return to the capitol, Mather planned to speak to Senator Joe Robinson and the Arkansas congressional delegation to support his call for a "comprehensive plan to improve and beautify Hot Springs Reservation." His assistant, Horace Albright, commented that Mather was "struck by the number of remarkable cures effected by the hot waters" which was "a source of wonderment to Mr. Mather."[575]

Indeed, Stephen Mather's interest in Hot Springs was profoundly deep. He suffered from a long battle with what was then known as "melancholia," a psychiatric malady now called bipolar affective disorder or manic-depressive illness.[576] The curative

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[574] Albright and Schenck, *Creating the National Park Service: The Missing Years*, 116.

[575] "Mather Leaves for Washington; Assistant Secretary of the Interior is Greatly Impressed with Hot Springs—Will Seek Comprehensive and Stated Plan of Improvement for Resort," *Hot Springs New Era* [no date], in Volume 9, Personal Clippings, 1915-1929, Stephen Tyng Mather Papers, 1883-1930, Collection Number BANC MSS C-B-535, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley.

[576] According to http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/286342-overview "Bipolar disorder, or manic-depressive illness (MDI), is one of the most common, severe, and persistent mental illnesses. Bipolar disorder is a serious lifelong struggle and challenge. Bipolar disorder is characterized by periods of deep, prolonged, and profound depression that alternate with periods of an excessively elevated or irritable mood

power of the thermal waters was understandably intriguing to him on a personal level. According to Horace Albright, "it became one of Mather's favorite spots, to which he retreated when things got too stressful."[577] On a professional level, Mather recognized that Hot Springs Reservation was an income-producing national park which enjoyed a very high annual visitation. In fact, of the 17 national parks, Hot Springs ranked first with well over one hundred thousand visitors. That factored heavily in a national park system that had a total of 356,000 park visits in 1916, a status Hot Springs held for many years. According to one historian, "Mather's evaluation of national parks was also conditioned by their volume of use and popularity among the public at large."[578] Arkansas' Hot Springs was, therefore, a natural fit in Mather's conception of the national park system.

During his week-long investigation, Mather studied plans for new bathhouses and objected to two proposed towers to be added to a rebuilt Ozark Bathhouse. He restated Interior's rules that new buildings should conform to the same architectural skyline. The head of Mann and Stern, Architects, argued the rule was a great mistake, that these were "individual buildings, and should have an individuality in architectural treatment as well as in name; that the buildings were in a park and to give them all the same skyline, situated as they are among trees and backed up by the irregular mountain in the rear, would be as artistically wrong as to level the mountain itself to a straight line."[579] Mather asked Mann and Stern to prepare a theoretical drawing showing the proposed new buildings for presentation to Secretary Lane. Following Interior's review, the two towers perched above the Ozark were indeed vetoed.

As Mather's train passed through Little Rock, he paused to talk to local journalists who asked him more about the national park. Mather said it needed "development along the lines of European health resorts where many people go for fun, as well as for their health." Mather said Hot Springs was in "need of a general plan to beautify the city by a well-known landscape architect" and it needed a "good band to furnish entertainment. Too many members of Congress regard Hot Springs as a local matter. We want to make it a place of national interest, a place where people go for fun as well as to take the baths. At Karlsbad, half the crowds that gather go there for recreation."[580]

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known as mania. The symptoms of mania include a decreased need for sleep, pressured speech, increased libido, reckless behavior without regard for consequences, grandiosity, and severe thought disturbances, which may or may not include psychosis. Between these highs and lows, patients usually experience periods of higher functionality and can lead a productive life."

[577] Horace M. Albright and Marian Albright Schenck, *Creating the National Park Service: The Missing Years* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999) 114. This statement may indicate that Mather retreated to Hot Springs during his several spells of "melancholia" utilizing the thermal waters to restore himself to good health.

[578] Ronald A. Foresta, *America's National Parks and Their Keepers* (Washington, D.C.: Resources for the Future, Inc., 1984) 11, 28.

[579] "Proposed New Buildings for Bath House Row," *Arkansas Gazette* 20 February 1916, 1, Box 48, Folder Bathhouses, MC 534 Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

[580] "Hot Springs Needs More Amusements, That Is Conclusion of Assistant Secretary of Interior Mather," *Arkansas Gazette* 4 December 1915, in scrapbook entitled "Stephen Tyng Mather: Book Z through

A change in national park leadership came on December 9, 1915, when Mark Daniels resigned his position to pursue private sector business. At Mather's suggestion, Secretary Franklin K. Lane appointed Robert Marshall, detailed from the U.S. Geological Survey, to the position of superintendent of national parks based in Washington, D.C. At the same time the recommendation to change titles of park administrators from "superintendent" to "supervisor" went into effect, an administrative experiment that was reversed in 1917.[581]

Supervisor Parks followed the path of his predecessors by focusing attention on the Government Free Bathhouse. His sensibilities as a medical professional were offended by the abysmal conditions there. As he lobbied for appropriations to build a new structure, he recognized the need to re-establish a free clinic to help the indigent sick and infirmed. With Interior's backing, Parks called together a group of registered physicians and proposed a new free clinic to open on the second floor. Through volunteers and charitable contributions, the free clinic opened on April 1, 1916, and utilized equipment purchased by late medical director Harry Hallock. The clinic operated 1:00 to 3:00 every afternoon except Sundays and holidays. In its first three months, 382 patients were served. Parks had an ulterior motive. As previous calls to determine the physiological effects of the thermal water and its therapeutic value had fallen short, he determined to use both patients of the free clinic as well as regular bathers for this purpose. Physicians observed effects of the water on pulse, temperature, and blood pressure, as follows:

1. *Determination of atmospheric temperature in the bath hall and the temperature of the water in each pool.*
2. *Observation of the pulse, temperature, and blood pressure before the bath.*
3. *Observation of the pulse, temperature, and blood pressure in the bath at various intervals.*
4. *Recording of the duration of the bath.*
5. *Observation of the pulse, temperature, and blood pressure after the baths at various intervals to determine the degree of reaction and the duration of the same.*
6. *An observation of the results to determine the influence on the reaction obtained on persons of widely different ages, the number of previous baths, air temperature in the bathhouse, temperature of the water, and duration of the baths; also the rapidity and duration of the reaction. Also observation is being made on the blood pressure, the effects of the hot water on the leucocytes, the polynuclear cells of the blood, and its phagocytic power.*[582]

Summer Trip of 1916," Vol. 4, Scrapbooks, 1915-1928, Stephen Tyng Mather Papers, 1883-1930, Collection Number BANC MSS C-B-535, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley.

[581] *Annual Report of the Superintendent of National Parks to the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1916* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1916), 4.

[582] *Supervisor's Annual Report for 1916.*

Parks also continued to wage war against drumming, but when his efforts made little headway, he convened a group of anti-drumming physicians to devise a new strategy. Since government funds could not be used, the physicians pooled their resources and hired attorneys and Burns detectives who furnished dictographs.[583] The effort ultimately culminated in twenty-one physicians being dropped from the registered list and twenty hotels denied the privilege of their guests bathing in thermal water. It effectively crippled the time-honored system of doctor drumming in Hot Springs. The city council also banned drumming from the depots and only permitted drummers to solicit patronage within fifty feet of the hotels.[584]

AUTOMOBILE USE PERMITTED AT HOT SPRINGS, 1916

As Interior slowly opened the national parks to automobiles, it partially lifted the ban at Hot Springs on February 7, 1916, when it authorized the supervisor to permit them only on West Mountain. After notification in local newspapers, the road opened to automobiles on February 22. The department issued the following policy statement:

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FRANKLIN K. LANE, SECRETARY

REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE ADMISSION OF AUTOMOBILES TO WEST MOUNTAIN ROADS ON THE HOT SPRINGS RESERVATION, ARKANSAS.

Washington, D.C., March 1, 1916.

The Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation is directed to enforce a prompt and faithful compliance with the following regulations:

1. Automobiles will be permitted to enter upon West Mountain roads only at the Prospect Avenue entrance through Pecan Street, and make exit through Gem Street to Whittington Avenue.

2. No automobiles will be permitted on these roads except between the hours of 7 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., except from April 1 to September 30, when automobiles may use such roads until 8 p.m.

3. Speed will be limited to 12 miles per hour on any part of the roads, but this speed must be reduced to 6 miles per hour when approaching and rounding turns, or approaching and passing vehicles.

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[583] William J. Burns International Detective Agency operated as a private detective agency in the U.S. at the time. A dictagraph is "a telephonic instrument for office or other similar use, having a sound-magnifying device enabling the ordinary mouthpiece to be dispensed with. Much use has been made of it for overhearing, or for recording, conversations for the purpose of obtaining evidence for use in litigation." Found at: http://thinkexist.com/dictionary/meaning/dictograph/

[584] Maurice Moore, "Life Sketch of Dr. W. P. Parks," *The* Record, No. 8 (Hot Springs, Ark.: Garland County Historical Society, 1967) , 41; "Pass Drastic Anti-Drumming Measure," *Arkansas Gazette,* 2 September 1916, 2;

4. Horses and horse-drawn vehicles have the right of way, and automobiles will be backed or otherwise handled as may be necessary so as to enable horses and vehicles to pass with safety.

5. Signals with horn will be given at or near bends to announce approaching drivers the proximity of a machine.

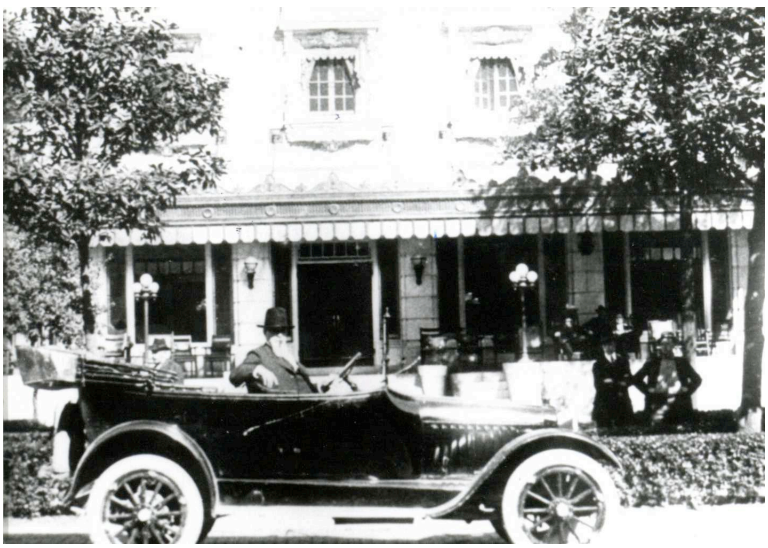

Figure 87. Samuel Wesley Fordyce in a roadster in front of his bathhouse, late 1910s (HSNP 10172, National Park Service)

6. Automobiles will not be permitted to use the Canyon or Hawthorn Street entrances to West Mountain roads, either as entrance to or exit therefrom.

7. The Government assumes no responsibility, either financially or otherwise, for any accident or damage that may occur on these roads.

8. Violation of any of the foregoing rules for the regulation of automobiles will, in the discretion of the Superintendent, cause the revocation of the privilege of using these roads; and will subject the owner of the automobile to liability for any damage occasioned thereby and to ejectment [sic] *from the Reservation.*

R. B. MARSHALL,
Superintendent of National Parks.

Approved:
STEPHEN T. MATHER,
Assistant to the Secretary.

Supervisor Parks made a number of recommendations in his 1916 report to the secretary. He asked for $10,000 for the preparation of a comprehensive general development plan to be prepared by a competent landscape engineer. Along with long-standing recommendations for storm sewer and surface drainage systems, he asked for "securing and permanent maintenance of a band," another of Mather's suggestions. Parks also called for construction of a road thirty feet wide and 2½ miles long through Gulpha Gorge at the east end of Hot Springs and North Mountains in order to open up that area of the national park.[585]

Upon Mather's urging, Interior asked Congress three times for the $10,000 appropriation to conduct a general survey of Hot Springs Reservation by an architect, civil engineer, and landscape engineer. A local committee of doctors came to the capitol

[585] *Supervisor's Annual Report for 1916.*

to lobby for it. The physicians shared numerous testimonies of water cure healings and Mather reportedly stated, "As a layman I was deeply impressed with apparent evidence of their curative values in several diseases."[586] Finally, as part of the sundry civil bill in June 1917, Congress allotted $10,000 from the revenues of the reservation for architectural planning which was undertaken by Mann and Stern, architectural firm in Little Rock. Their drawings featured a large Italian Renaissance building to be erected onsite of the supervisor's office at the corner of Reserve and Central Avenues. It was conceived to provide park administration, free bathhouse and clinic, and Federal Registration Board facilities under one roof. Interior sought and secured a $190,000 appropriation for its construction. While local interests lobbied hard to defeat it, arguing against including the free bathhouse directly on Bathhouse Row, the pre-war and subsequent war-time economy made materials and labor cost-prohibitive until conditions improved.[587]

CREATION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, 1916

Years of lobbying paid off when President Woodrow Wilson on August 25, 1916, signed the *Act to Establish a National Park Service*, placing it under direction of the secretary of the Interior, to "have the supervision, management, and control of the several national parks and national monuments which are now under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior, and of the Hot Springs Reservation in the State of Arkansas, and of such other national parks and reservations of like character as may be hereafter created by Congress."[588] Superintendent of National Parks Robert Marshall resigned on December 31, 1916, to return to his position as U.S.G.S. chief geographer, and was not replaced. Stephen T. Mather, who as assistant to the secretary of the Interior since January 1915 had been exclusively concerned with national parks, was appointed the first director of the National Park Service on May 16, 1917.[589] Because the new service lacked appropriations to operate, it only came into being on April 17, 1917, with approval of a deficiency appropriation act as the ninth bureau of the Department of the Interior.[590]

Creation of the National Park Service (NPS) brought more intense supervision and oversight at Hot Springs. The year's achievements were summarized in Acting Director Horace Albright's report to the department, Stephen Mather being away for an

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[586] "Mather Lauds Doctors Here," *Sentinel Record* , 29 December 1916, Vol. 5, Scrapbooks, 1915-1928, Stephen Tyng Mather Papers, 1883-1930, Collection Number BANC MSS C-B-535, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley.

[587] H. R. Gregg, "A History of the Administration Building at Hot Springs National Park," no date, Special Collections, HSNP Archives.

[588] Section 2 of *An Act to Establish a National Park Service, And For Other Purposes,* Approved 25 August 1916 (39 Stat. 535; U.S.C. 3).

[589] *Secretary of the Interior, Reports of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1917, Volume 1* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1918), 784. On the following page, Secretary Lane wrote: "The first national park to be set apart was the area embracing the hot springs of Arkansas. The reservation of this land was made April 20, 1832. However, it was nearly 50 years after the act of reservation before steps were taken to develop the park in the public interest."

[590] Public Law No. 2, 65th Congress, as noted in "Annual Report of the Director of the National Park Service," *Reports of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1917, Volume 1* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1918) , 783.

undisclosed illness. Heralding the preparation of the general development plan took the first three paragraphs of a seven paragraph entry for Hot Springs. NPS lauded the 135,000 park visitors and the charitable work the city provided to "thousands of indigent sick who swarm into the city" as well as the operation of the free clinic by "public-spirited doctors." The war against drumming saw fourteen doctors removed from the registered list and 17 drumming hotels denied access to the baths for their guests.[591] Supervisor Parks also praised the anti-drumming crusade with local funds raised to employ detectives and attorneys to secure evidence for successful prosecutions. He observed, "As a final result, it is extremely gratifying to me to now report that doctor drumming in Hot Springs is practically eliminated. In fact, it is the subject of common comment that Hot Springs is now free from drumming than ever before in its history, and the laws, rules, and regulations are being more rigidly enforced and observed."

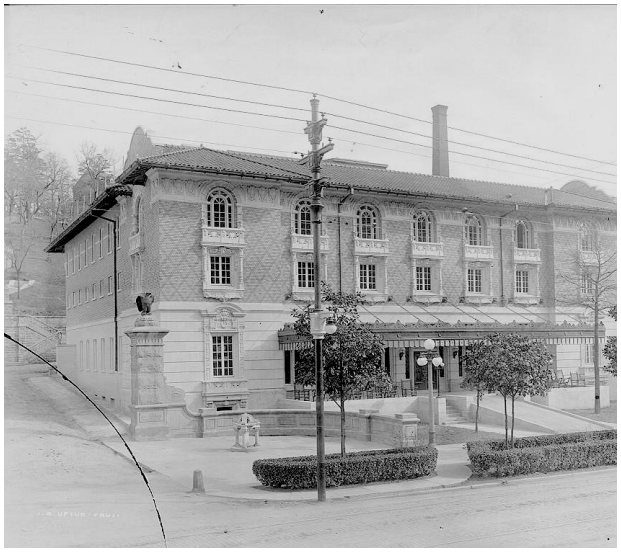

Figure 88. Fordyce Bathhouse with exedra fountain in place, c. 1920 (HSNP 1855, National Park Service)

Declaration of war against the Germany and the Axis Powers on April 6, 1917, had the impact of two key employees absent for military training. Richard L. Lawrence, manager of the Government Free Bathhouse, and John W. St. Clair, train inspector, both took three month's leave without pay to attend officer's training camp at Fort Logan H. Roots in North Little Rock. Pending the general development plan, Parks refrained from making any new or fundamental improvements during 1917, however, a brick addition on the north of the old pump station/superintendent's office was built following a plan prepared by the department. The addition held pumps for the thermal water reservoirs and had an ornamental front which was painted white to match the larger building. Park crews devoted their efforts to beautifying the lawns, flowers, and shrubbery. Parks noted, "Old-time visitors to Hot Springs have commented that the reservation front now presents a more pleasing appearance than ever before. In fact, it has been stated that there is no more beautiful place in the United States than the reservation front."[592]

Robert Sterling Yard carried out Stephen Mather's plan to promote the national parks and their new bureau. Leading the national parks educational committee, Yard highlighted the wonders of Hot Springs. In a 1917 pamphlet augmented with photographs entitled *The Hot Springs of Arkansas*, Yard described the beauty of the park,

[591] Ibid., 860-61.
[592] Ibid., Dr. William P. Parks, Supervisor, Hot Springs Reservation, 889-95. Both Lawrence and St. Clair received commissions in the U.S. Army.

its recreational amenities, and the water cure to the American public. The promotional material rightly presented Hot Springs Reservation as "the First National Park" stating:

> *"The reservation is the oldest national park, having received that status in 1832, forty years before the wonders of the Yellowstone first inspired Congress with the idea that scenery was a national asset deserving of preservation for the use and enjoyment of succeeding generations. No aesthetic consideration was involved in this early act of national conservation. Congress was inspired only by the undoubted, but at that time inexplicable, natural power of these waters to alleviate certain bodily ills. The motive was to retain these unique waters in public possession to be available to all persons for all time at a minimum, even a nominal cost."*[593]

National park administrative policies were spelled out in a lengthy letter from Secretary Lane to Director Mather on May 13, 1918. Based on experiences at Hot Springs and other parks, the NPS "creed" encouraged the new service to seek cession of exclusive jurisdiction over parklands from the states. Enjoyment of the national parks was paramount under certain resource-based and administrative restrictions: "Every opportunity should be afforded the public, whenever possible, to enjoy the national parks in the manner that best satisfies the individual taste. Automobiles and motorcycles will be permitted in all of the national parks; in fact, the parks will be kept accessible by any means practicable." This lifted the general ban on automobiles and, for Hot Springs, would permit more roadways to be retro-fitted to accommodate them. Camping and accommodations should also be provided:

> *"Low-priced camps operated by concessioners should be maintained, as well as comfortable and even luxurious hotels whenever the volume of travel warrants the establishment of these classes of accommodations. In each reservation, as funds are available, a system of free camp sites will be cleared, and these grounds will be equipped with adequate water and sanitation facilities."*

Adequate protections for concessions should be afforded to provide for the needs of visitors and "All concessions should yield revenue to the Federal Government, but the development of the revenues of the parks should not impose a burden upon the visitor."

Most importantly for Hot Springs and other small parks was Secretary Lane's following assertion: "It is not necessary that a national park should have a large area. The element of size is of no importance as long as the park is susceptible of effective administration and control." And finally, Secretary Lane encouraged studying existing

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[593] Robert Sterling Yard, *The Hot Springs of Arkansas, Department of the Interior, Franklin K. Lane, Secretary* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, National Park Service, 1917), 3.

parks "with the idea of improving them by the addition of adjacent areas which will complete their scenic purposes or facilitate administration."[594]

MANN AND STERN DEVELOPMENT SCHEME, 1918

Director Mather reported on the Mann and Stern design for Hot Springs' improvements in the 1918 report to Secretary Lane. Calling it the "vision… of the National Spa of the future," the plans were exhibited in one of the committee rooms of the Senate Office Building as well as locally at the Eastman and Arlington Hotels. Under the subtitle "The Great American Spa," Mather wrote:

> *"If Congress adopts the present suggestions the visitor of the future will enter Hot Springs from the railroad by a dignified central avenue lined upon the east by a series of bathhouses which, while highly individual, possesses a note of common feeling. Several are distinctly Spanish. Others, including the administration building, are inspired by Italian Renaissance. Yet all, treated freely, fall into a tasteful whole which is the more pleasing for its variety. At the end of the row is the Arlington Hotel.*
>
> *"Behind this rich architectural row rise abruptly low densely wooded rolling hills. These are reached by stairways through three street entrances between the bathhouses, all leading to a park driveway behind and above the bath houses, from which walks carry into the hillside forest.*
>
> *"The first of these entrances rises to a richly paved and planted formal garden supported by a high wall on the east and bounded by a wall on the west, both to be covered by shrubbery and by vines dropping from above. This feature is really an elaborate camouflage of the unsightliest of the present premises, but so cunningly is it designed that the fact never will be suspected. The second is the formal entrance, broad and dignified, leading to a garden and a monumental conservatory which towers above the red-tiled roofs of the bathhouses below. The third is a broad concert garden, flanked by the rest houses and culminating in a band stand and plaza, a meeting and resting place to sit at ease and drink the healing waters. Next comes the great hotel with its broad porches."*[595]

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[594] Secretary Lane to Director Mather, letter, 13 May 1918, *Reports of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1918, Volume 1* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), 110-13. Assistant Director Horace M. Albright later claimed authorship of the "Lane Letter" with input from wife Grace Albright and Robert Yard. See Horace M. Albright and Marian Albright Schenck, *Creating the National Park Service: The Missing Years* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 274-75.

[595] "Report of the Director National Park Service" in *Reports of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1918, Volume 1* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), 79-80. It centered around Bathhouse Row and the road system as well as Whittington Lake Park. There were twenty-three drawings. See Mann and Stern, Architects, *Recommendations for Improving U.S. Reservation, Hot Springs, Arkansas*, 1 March 1918, Letter Document Box 5, HOSP 7183.

Large scale development was not deemed possible because of existing infrastructure and topography.

The "landscape background" of the Mann and Sterns plan focused on the hilly, forested backdrop with canyons, brooks, cliffs, and foothills accessible by trails and roadways. Use included by foot, on horseback and via automobile. Discussion of the free bathhouse included

> *"It is to be removed from its present unsightly location, which will become the site of one of the most attractive landscape features. The new plans place it on the corner of Central and Reserve Avenues, under the same roof as the administrative rooms on the street front. This part was planned to be carried out as soon as practicable, $190,000 having been appropriated for it, of which $50,000 came out of the revenues of the reservation."*

The combined cost for the Mann and Stern improvements came to two million dollars. Mather ended his report heralding the 140,000 visitors to the springs, a 5,000 person increase from the previous year. This war-time influx was noteworthy when national travel numbers had declined, but at Hot Springs it was off-set by a growing convention trade.[596]

Mather also reported on the change in nomenclature for park managers. Under the subtitle "Superintendents Now, Not Supervisors," he stated without further explanation, "The designation of the park executives was changed on November 1, 1917, from supervisor to superintendent." Managers of national monuments retained the title "custodian." As for the workforce, Director Mather believed "Merit… must be recognized and rewarded. All appointments to places in the National Park Service are made after examination and proper certification in accordance with the civil service laws and regulations, except in the grades of superintendent, custodian, and ranger, which under Schedule A are excepted from examination." He continued,

> *"I expect to submit to you in the early future a plan of classification of the personnel of this bureau and with it a plan for making all appointments to the field force upon certification of eligibles by the Civil Service Commission, these eligibles to be secured by the commission in the regular way by examination. In other words, the time is nearly at hand, when, in the interest of good administration, all excepted places in the National Park Service can be made subject to the rules of the classified civil service as to examination, certification, appointment, and dismissal of Government employees."*[597]

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[596] Ibid., 80-81. Four national conventions boosted visitation: General Federation of Women's Clubs, executive council of the American Bankers' Association, National Editorial Association, and the Southern Baptists.

[597] Ibid., 92-93.

Changes in personnel policy also translated to salary. Employees receiving less than $1,200 per annum were increased ten percent, and those receiving between $1,200 and $1,800 were awarded five percent increases, effective July 16, 1917.[598]

While the Mann and Stern recommendations received consideration, few improvements occurred in the 1918 fiscal year. Among these were placement of a 2,000 linear foot galvanized pipeline in Whittington Lake Park to provide for sprinkling and a brick garage, 21½ by 24 feet, three inches, stucco-finish with a tile roof was added to the superintendent's residence. It was the only outbuilding constructed and its design matched that of the official residence. Parks also reported on observations made at the free clinic:

> *"The benefits which seem to accrue from the natural thermal waters of the Hot Springs are due in all probability to their action on metabolism and elimination, and the medical conditions most benefitted are those in which the disturbance is due to a toxemia, either of bacterial or metabolic origin. Upon the physiological findings of the hot water the physician is as well equipped to prescribe the waters as intelligently in such ailments as are benefitted by them as he would be to prescribe a drug whose physiological action and therapeutic value are known to him."*[599]

PROPOSED NAME CHANGE TO NATIONAL PARK, 1918

To herald acceptance of the Mann and Stern plan, Stephen Mather returned to Hot Springs in November 1918. Accompanied by F. W. Griffith, NPS Chief Clerk, and Joseph J. Cotter, administrative assistant to Secretary Lane, the group also welcomed Howard H. Hays, manager of the Bureau of Service, National Parks and Monuments of the U.S. Railroad Administration. The men conferred with leading citizens and conducted fact-finding to improve the park's administration. On the evening of November 26, the Business Men's League held a banquet to honor Stephen Mather as NPS Director. Mather was to give a keynote address on the Mann and Stern plan, but was upstaged by Howard H. Hays who urged the name of Hot Springs be changed. According to the *Arkansas Gazette*, "The idea is to differentiate Hot Springs from the various other Hot Springs in several states and to make the National Park addition to the name apply to all the city and not merely to the government reservation. As far as the city outside the reservation is concerned, action will have to be taken by the legislature before the name can be changed. For the reservation, however, appropriations in [the] future will be for the Hot Springs National Park."[600]

The name change for Hot Springs Reservation had Stephen Mather's approval as Interior and NPS considered Hot Springs equal in status among the fold of national parks. In his report to the secretary, Mather wrote:

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[598] *Annual Report for 1918.*
[599] Ibid.
[600] "'Hot Springs National Park' is New Title of Hot Springs," *Sentinel Record* 27 November 1918, 1.

> *"The first national reservation, Hot Springs, was created in 1832. The name national park had not yet been invented, and it was 50 years before Hot Springs was regarded as a park—not, in fact, until the Yellowstone National Park had become famous under that title. The Yellowstone was made a national park in 1872 and for a long time was popularly known as 'the national park' in ignorance of the fact that Hot Springs had enjoyed the same legal status for many years."*[601]

Re-naming the city, however, to duplicate the name "Hot Springs National Park" was an entirely different matter. It lacked both NPS and the Arkansas Legislature's approval.[602]

Mather announced a major shift in policy during the Arlington dinner. He had reconsidered the location of the new Government Free Bathhouse. Instead of a combined function structure at the end of Bathhouse Row, Mather proposed moving it to Spring and Reserve Avenue, three blocks from Central Avenue, and asked the city to donate the site. He also proposed a "community house" where the indigent could receive "free medicine, upkeep, books, etc., as well as free baths." Mather said he was contacting other American philanthropists to donate to this charity and he was contributing $5,000 of his own money for it.[603] Mather declared the owners of the three wood frame bathhouses remaining on the Row were given another year in which to tear them down and an additional year in which to build modern buildings according to Interior/NPS standards. To demonstrate his fondness of the national park, he announced he had placed an order for 10,000 to 15,000 assorted bulbs to further beautify Reserve Park for a springtime display to augment the heavy visitation season. He encouraged citizens to beautify their city and suggested the blighted area near the depot be converted to parkland. He ordered all signs removed from the reservation front and "only the sign which forbids autoists from ascending Hot Springs Mountain from bath house row was permitted to remain." He urged the city to cleanup storefronts opposite the Row. According to the *Sentinel Record,*

> *"Mr. Mather suggested it was the duty of the people of Hot Springs to see that the property across the street from bath house row was razed and that the other side of the street was placed back in the condition nature left it, and that the city spread its commerce north and south of Central avenue*

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[601] "Report of the Director National Park Service" in *Reports of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1918, Volume 1* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), 29-30. The effort to change from "reservation" to "national park" fell short at first try. Mather wrote: "An effort was made during the consideration of the last sundry civil bill to change the name of this park area from Hot Springs Reservation to Hot Springs National Park, but it was unsuccessful. There is no reason why this change should not be made, and at the first opportunity another effort will be made to present the merits of the proposal to Congress." "Report of the Director National Park Service" in *Reports of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1919, Volume 1* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), 115.

[602] Thus began the troublesome practice of some in Hot Springs using the name "Hot Springs National Park" in reference to their city. See "Big History Evolves from Small Park," *Sentinel Record* 11 February 1990, 1.

[603] "Hot Springs to Change Its Name: To Be a National Park If Movement Started Bears Fruit," *Arkansas Gazette* 27 November 1918.

> *from this narrow strip. He also suggested that the overhead wires, including the trolley wires be taken off Central avenue."*

Mather also said that he denied permission of the Memphis, Dallas, and Gulf Railroad to build a line through Gulpha Gorge as that area was reserved for park improvement.[604]

In reporting on events concerning the Government Free Bathhouse, Mather informed Secretary Lane that he was not satisfied with the Mann and Stern plan on where to locate it. "I finally concluded that two buildings should be erected, one for administrative purposes on the present office site, and the other a free bathhouse to be built on some other site, which would be not far distant from the hot-water supply, and yet accessible directly from the part of the city in which most of the indigent people who would use the free baths would ordinarily dwell while there for treatment." No parcel within the national park was found to be suitable. He continued, "At length it was discovered that Block 82 in the city of Hot Springs across Reserve Avenue from the Reservation and nearly opposite the eastern end of the Army and Navy Hospital area would meet our requirements very satisfactorily." While the city agreed to buy and donate it to NPS, title to the land actually rested with an estate tied to a Central Powers enemy and being administered by the Alien Property Custodian, a war-time agency that had responsibility for the seizure, administration, and sometimes sale of enemy property in the United States. NPS was pursing action to have title transferred to it and renewing the congressional appropriation and authorization was also secured with the argument that this site would provide more space for a much larger facility. Mann and Stern again developed construction plans which were blessed by both Secretary Lane and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts. Until plans and funding could be secured for a replacement, NPS would continue to utilize the present administration building. Mather advocated remodeling with a new front so "as to make it harmonize fully with the new bathhouses on … Bathhouse Row."[605]

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[604] "'Hot Springs National Park' is New Title of Hot Springs," *Sentinel Record* 27 November 1918, 1. Howard H. Hays later shared these newspaper articles saved from an old album in his garage. He forwarded them to Superintendent Donald S. Libbey and carbon-copied it to NPS Director Conrad Wirth and former Director Horace Albright. In his letter he wrote: "[Mather] arranged for me to speak in my official capacity, and asked me to give a pep-talk, as his talk would involve a controversial topic. It suddenly occurred to me that I could create a stir if I painted a picture of all the advantages of doing business in a National Park and then declared that Hot Springs could secure all these advantages through the magic of adding 'National Park' to Hot Springs. Accordingly, I went down to the railroad station and borrowed a big railroad guide. I also called the Post Office and asked the number of towns in the United States named 'Hot Springs. That night, for my climax, I displayed the big railroad guide and read from it the many railroad stations in a dozen states named 'Hot Springs.'; I also announced the number of post offices of that name. My peroration summoned all my listeners to go to work 'tomorrow' to transmute their famous spa into an even more famous National Park. My proposal really stole the show and no one was more pleased than Steve Mather, who delighted in seeing a young fellow score a hit." See Howard H. Hays, President, *Riverside (Calif.) Daily Press,* to Superintendent Donald S. Libbey, letter, 20 January 1959, Library Vertical File: Hot Springs Name Change—1918, HSNP Archives.

[605] "Report of the Director National Park Service" in *Reports of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1919, Volume 1* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), 113-14.

Director Mather made good on his pledge to help beautify Bathhouse Row. He contacted Vaughn's Seed Store in Chicago and personally ordered the bulbs using his own funds.[606] He also contacted Chicago friend and president of Friends of Our Native Landscape Jens Jensen to come at his expense to Hot Springs and layout the bulbs. He asked Jensen to confer with Leonard Vaughn to select the proper colors for "the most harmonious effects" and sent a map detailing Bathhouse Row. Mather directed most of the planting to occur near the Arlington Hotel in the picturesque park area. "[It] is quite a park," he wrote. "We usually have a planting of the American flag in hyacinths there. In fact, the bed is now ready and awaiting the arrival of the hyacinths. This is why such a quantity of red, white and blue hyacinths were ordered."[607] He instructed Superintendent Parks not to do anything until Landscape Architect Jensen arrived to direct the planting--and to ensure all Jensen's expenses were charged to Mather.[608] Jens Jensen arrived on December 8 and he supervised the planting of four cases of bulbs: "9,930 tulip, 4,000 narcissus, and 1,500 hyacinth."[609] During his stay, Jensen was the guest of honor at a luncheon sponsored by the Business Men's League at which he spoke about civic improvements. Before his departure he examined plans for improving Valley Street north of the Missouri-Pacific depot and reportedly was "not at all impressed with the plans."[610]

Stephen Mather undoubtedly observed the treatment of the boxwood hedge lining both sides of the promenade from the superintendent's office to the Arlington Hotel. An unusually harsh winter and "heavy freeze" had stunted the growth of the hedge, causing the top to freeze and die. Park maintenance cut it down to an average height of about eight inches to facilitate its growth. New plants were installed to replace those that died. It served as an important means to restrict and channel pedestrian traffic along Bathhouse Row. Dr. Parks wrote:

> *"After cutting the hedge, a line of 2" x 2" x 3' yellow pine stakes, placed just inside the curb, eight feet apart and extending from the Superintendent's Office to the Arlington Hotel, was installed and a line of #12 single wire was run along and fastened with small staples to the top of the stakes, which are approximately twenty-four inches above the level of*

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[606] The newspaper account said 10,000 to 15,000 tulip, hyacinth, and narcissus bulbs. A telegram from Vaughn's specified 10,000 early and late tulips (10 kinds), 4,000 daffodils (4 or 5 kinds), 1,500 hyacinths (four colors). See Vaughn's Seed Store to Stephen Mather, Arlington Hotel, Western Union Telegram, 20 November 1918 in D22 Construction/Preservation, 1917-32.

[607] Stephen Mather to Jens Jensen, letter, 23 November 1918, D22 Construction/Preservation, 1917-32. He also asked Jensen to advise on the improvement of Valley Street. See Director Mather to Superintendent Parks, letter, 7 December 1918, D22 Construction/Preservation, 1917-32.

[608] Director Mather to Superintendent Parks, letter, 3 December 1918, D22 Construction/Preservation, 1917-32.

[609] Superintendent Parks to Director Mather, letter, 9 January 1919, covering conditions for the month of December, 1918, HSNP Archives. Jensen reportedly made other "valuable suggestions" for landscape improvements in the national park. The beautification effort bore fruit, as Parks reported "During the early spring the Reservation presented an unusually beautiful appearance which elicited expressions of favorable comment from the visiting public." See *Annual Report for 1919.*

[610] Superintendent Parks to Director Mather, letter, 11 December 1918, D22 Construction/Preservation, 1917-32.

> *the ground, in order to prevent persons getting off street cars or crossing from the opposite side of the street to the Reservation from crossing the lawn between the curb and the outside of the concrete walk along the Reservation Front. Wire was also placed on both sides of the several concrete entrance walks between the curb and the Reservation walk which accommodates persons crossing from side walk to side walk on either side of the street and thus compels them, when crossing the street to the Reservation side, to use the walks provided for that purpose."*

With a sharp eye on aesthetics, all the wooden stakes were painted green.[611] Similarly, in order to make the iron White Way light poles more pleasing, workers painted the standard poles pea green and the bases "bronze green."[612]

With the nation's war-time economy unsettled following Armistice Day in November 1918, and labor and building materials shortages continuing through 1919, NPS decided to extend the deadline for Bathhouse Row building demolitions. The only remaining wood frame bathhouses on the Row were the Horseshoe, Ozark, Lamar, and Magnesia. All were put on notice that their new deadline was June 3, 1920, at which time the thermal water would be shut off in preparation for demolition. NPS hoped by then to have approved construction documents for modern, state of the art replacements.[613] The following months, crews were busy trimming and shaping the magnolias, elms, and other species of trees framing the reservation front and lower slope of Hot Springs Mountain "in order to maintain the symmetrical appearance and to preserve and beautify the trees."[614]

In December 1919, Mather approved an across the board increase of bath rates to boost park revenues. The new rates took effect on New Year's Day 1920. Rates for baths in all bathhouses went up $3 per full course of twenty-one baths, $1.50 per half-course of ten baths, 75 cents for a quarter-course of five baths, and fifteen cents for a single bath. The water rent also increased $20 per tub per annum.[615] The 1921 sundry civil act contained a formula to boost revenues further:

> *"The Secretary of the Interior is hereby authorized to assess and collect from physicians, who desire to prescribe the hot waters from the Hot Springs Reservation, reasonable charges for the exercise of such privilege, including fees for examination and registration; and he is also authorized to assess and collect from bath attendants and masseurs operating in all bathhouses receiving hot water from the reservation,*

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[611] Superintendent Parks to Director Mather, letter, 8 November 1919, covering conditions for the month of October, 1918, HSNP Archives.
[612] Superintendent Parks to Director Mather, letter, 9 October 1919, covering conditions for the month of September, 1918, HSNP Archives. Electric light poles in Whittington Lake Park and Hot Springs Mountain were all painted black. See *Annual Report for 1919.*
[613] *Annual Report for 1919.*
[614] Superintendent Parks to Director Mather, letter 5 January 1920, covering conditions for the month of December 1919, HSNP Archives.
[615] Ibid.

> *reasonable charges for the exercise of such privileges. The moneys received from the exercise of this authority shall be used in the protection and improvement of the said reservation."*[616]

During the first fiscal year the provision went into effect, revenues increased more than $8,500 per annum through payment of "privilege fees."[617]

A change in leadership at Interior occurred in early 1920 when Franklin K. Lane submitted his resignation, effective March 1. President Wilson soon appointed John Barton Payne to the position. In his 1920 report to Congress, Secretary Payne announced a proposed expansion of the national park. He wrote: "Recently there has been a discussion of the possible extension of the park itself to include forest areas lying between Hot Springs and Mountain Valley, with the idea of ultimately constructing automobile roads in this region and opening up extensive camping grounds." He added, "This suggestion carries interesting possibilities."[618] The proposal for possible expansion in order to provide more recreational opportunities undoubtedly had Director Mather's full support and encouragement.

Popularity of the thermal baths continued to increase. Larger numbers of visitors were arriving thanks to advertising campaigns conducted by the U.S. Railroad Administration and NPS. One of the primary spurs to increase numbers came from personal testimonies, particularly from famous citizens. "The Great Commoner," William Jennings Bryan, praised the healing of his wife, Mary. Crippled with rheumatism, confined to a wheelchair and unable to feed herself, Mary Bryan had to be carried to and from the tubs at the beginning of her treatment. Four months later, her husband declared, "Now she walks with the aid of one cane, and can walk alone without any aid whatever. Her hands are so much improved that she is able to sew and knit and writes with pen and typewriter. She is almost without pain and improves daily." Should she relapse, Bryan pledged to return immediately: "With us, the healing streams that flow from these smitten rocks have no rivals."[619]

U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE AND THE GOVERNMENT FREE BATHHOUSE

Groundbreaking for the proposed new Government Free Bathhouse and Clinic came on January 31, 1920, with Assistant Secretary of the Interior Selden G. Hopkins in attendance. Construction was under the direction of Col. John R. Fordyce. During the November 1919 NPS superintendent's conference in Denver, Fordyce had volunteered

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[616] Report of the Director of the National Park Service, in *Reports of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1920, Vol. 1* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1920) 149; and *Act of Congress, 5 June 1920* (41 Stat. 918)(USC 16, Sec. 369).
[617] *Annual Report for 1921.*
[618] Report of the Secretary of the Interior John Barton Payne in *Reports of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1920, Vol. 1* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1920) 124.
[619] "Bryan Praises Our Hot Waters," *Sentinel Record* 14 December 1919, Folder: Bryan, William J., Box 49, Group II, Series 9, Hot Springs Vertical File, ca. 1900-1984, MC 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

his service at the nominal fee of one dollar a month. A delighted Secretary Lane appointed him NPS Engineer to supervise Hot Springs building construction and road improvements. Fordyce soon determined available funding was insufficient and estimated another $110,565 would be required to complete the project.[620] The Arkansas Legislature ceded exclusive jurisdiction over block 82 to the United States the following year.[621]

Director Mather, always interested in national park development and elevating the NPS profile, consulted with the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) concerning the new facility. The most prevalent disease afflicting patients seen at the free clinic was venereal disease (VD), primarily syphilis. The same affliction affected many of those rejected for military service in World War I. In 1918, Congress passed the Chamberlain-Kahn Act which established the Division of Venereal Disease within USPHS. The new office was charged to cooperate with state health departments to prevent and control VD, and to stop interstate transmission of these diseases. USPHS coordinated a nationwide survey from 1919 to 1920 to confirm the extent of VD in the U.S. Treatment was rudimentary. Patients endured a program of painful injections of Arsphenamine or Salvarsan (also called "606") which replaced mercury rubbing. The severe side effects, however, caused many to discontinue it convinced that the treatment was worse than the disease. Because Hot Springs had attracted those with VD for many years, many of whom received relief from their symptoms, Mather wanted to form a partnership with USPHS to assist in operating the new facility. To his credit, Mather secured an agreement—devised by Dr. Oliver Clarence Wenger, USPHS Commissioned Corps Officer assigned to Hot Springs—with U.S. Surgeon General Hugh S. Cummings (head of USPHS) and Dr. C. W. Garrison, Arkansas State Health Officer to participate in the new center.[622]

Assistant Interior Secretary Hopkins and his wife stayed for a month to take the waters and were on hand to officiate at a February 14, 1920 ceremony along with General John J. Pershing opening the roads of Hot Springs and North Mountain for automobile travel. Thousands of people witnessed the ceremonies which included an automobile parade over those roads and down Central Avenue. Because of the narrowness of the lanes, travel had to be one-way under rules approved by Interior. Park crews had installed two-inch iron pipe railings painted black at certain "danger points" and turns were widened in many areas, work which was on going over the winter. They also installed nineteen directional and warning signs along the roadways. Each sign board was white with black lettering and bore the red, white, and blue U.S. shield in the upper left-hand corner. The seven-foot iron posts, set two feet in the ground with concrete,

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[620] *Annual Report for 1920.* Fordyce volunteered his services in honor of his father, Samuel W. Fordyce, who had passed away August 3, 1919. He wanted to continue his father's work to herald the virtues of Hot Springs.

[621] *General Acts of Arkansas, 2 February 1921.*

[622] Edwina Walls, "The Public Health Service VD Clinic in Hot Springs, Arkansas," *PHS Chronicles* January-February 1995, Vol. 110, No. 1, 103; and Audrey Wenger McCully, "The United States Public Health Service Venereal Disease Clinic and Government Free Bath House, 1919-1936, *The Record,* Vol. 22 (Hot Springs, Arkansas: Garland County Historical Society, 1981), 96-97. Actual construction of the building did not commence until February 23, 1920. See *Annual Report for 1920.*

were painted black.[623] To assist the work, they utilized the first motorized vehicle owned by the park: a two-ton Nash Quad stake-back truck. Because it was not suitable for hauling and dumping gravel, workers crafted a new truck bed made out of white oak and lined with twenty-four gauge galvanized iron.[624]

Opening the mountain roads was inevitable as automobile traffic continued to increase with each passing month. Hot Springs business interests and local boosters played a key role in the Good Roads Movement in Arkansas promoting ease of access to the Spa City. Hot Springs found itself strategically positioned to serve as a wayside on two principal highways: the Bankhead Highway, connecting Washington, D.C., with San Diego, California; and as the terminus of the Albert Pike Highway, Hot Springs to Colorado Springs, Colorado.[625]

City codes were amended on December 11, 1920, to prohibit the advertisement of "nostrums and patent medicines" which had proliferated for decades. The practice was one which superintendents had lobbied in favor of its abolition and its passage was welcomed with high praise from William Parks.[626]

One of the primary maintenance improvements in fiscal year 1921 involved the former superintendent's residence on Fountain Street. Unused since 1913, it received new plastering, refinished flooring and new screening. A large front porch was erected on rock piers and a concrete floor was added to the rear porch. Workers wired the house for electricity and connected its furnace to the city natural gas line. . Two years later, in 1923, the park's chief clerk, George C. Bolton, later promoted to assistant superintendent, occupied this house.[627]

CONGRESS RENAMES RESERVATION "HOT SPRINGS NATIONAL PARK," 1921

Director Mather and his family were in Hot Springs December 27 -31, 1920, for a site inspection.[628] Mather wanted to consult with Superintendent L. C. Way of Rocky Mountain National Park dispatched to Hot Springs to recommend road improvements there. The local chapter of the Federation of Women's Clubs hosted Mather at an evening banquet at the Arlington Hotel. In his speech, the NPS director announced a provision had been successfully inserted into the annual sundry civil bill that "Hereafter the Hot Springs Reservation shall be known and designated as the Hot Springs National Park."[629] Congress would finally recognize with a long overdue name change what

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[623] Superintendent Parks to Director Mather, letter, 5 Marcy 1920, covering conditions for the month of February, 1920, HSNP Archives; and *Annual Report for 1920.*
[624] *Annual Report for 1920.*
[625] Larry Cook, "Charles Hillman Brough and the Good Roads Movement in Arkansas," *Ozark Historical Review* (Spring 1977): 26, 30.
[626] *Annual Report for 1921.*
[627] Ibid.
[628] Superintendent Parks to Director Mather, letter, 7 January 1921, covering conditions during the month of December, 1920, HSNP Archives.
[629] "Elaborate Banquet in Mather's Honor," *Hot Springs New Era* 29 December 1920, and "National Parks are to Receive Increased Help," *Sentinel Record* 31 December 1920, both in Vol. 6 Scrapbooks, 1915-

Interior and national park officials had recognized for many decades. That innocuous provision became effective March 4, 1921, and the quaint, but archaic, name "Hot Springs Reservation" passed into history.[630]

During the director's visit, the Fordyce Bathhouse requested permission to employ a "physical culture director" for its gymnasium. This was designed to appeal to those visitors who wished to engage in physical exercise in addition to a course of baths. Parks was dubious about it and feared it would be opposed by the other lessees as an unfair advantage. Mather saw it differently:

Figure 89. Government Free Bathhouse under construction as seen from Army-Navy Hospital grounds, January 6, 1921 (HSNP 1892, National Park Service)

> *"In giving permission… to employ the physical director I am unable to see the force of the argument put forth by some of the cheaper bathhouses that this action will tend to draw patronage from them in view of its advertising value. To me it would appear just as logical for low-rate hotels to protest against orchestras and other services in the higher-priced hostelries. I feel that properly supervised physical exercise can be made an excellent accompaniment to the baths, and productive of good results."*[631]

Rocky Mountain Superintendent L. C. Way and William Parks conferred on allowing two-way travel for automobiles on the mountain roads. Both men recommended to Director Mather that it was feasible to do, although a few hairpin turns would have to be altered. They staked those areas for enlargement by the park road crew.[632] Way stayed for three months and performed a number of valuable tasks including surveying the park boundaries, mapping all the roads and trails, and making a preliminary survey for a new road on Hot Springs Mountain as well as laying out other new trails.[633]

Director Mather advised on another issue related to bathhouse operations first one way and then reversed himself several months later. The Buckstaff Bathhouse requested permission to discontinue its hydrotherapy department because it was unprofitable. Physicians were not prescribing the treatment and there were four other hydrotherapy departments in the city to accommodate demand. The Buckstaff wished to use the space

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1928, Stephen Tyng Mather Papers, 1883-1930, Collection Number BANC MSS C-B 535, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

[630] *Act of Congress, 4 March 1921* (41 Stat. 1407)(USC 16, Sec. 2 and 361).

[631] Director Mather to Superintendent Parks, letter, 11 February 1921, C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse 1914-23. See also, J.R. Fordyce to Director Mather, letter, 22 November 1920.

[632] Superintendent Parks to Director Mather, letter, 17 February 1921, D18 Planning Program 1918-1939.

[633] *Annual Report for 1921.*

for other public service uses.[634] Superintendent Parks recommended the request be denied stating "I feel that the hydrotherapy department is an asset which each bathhouse should have and be proud of." He also feared it would set an unwelcome precedent.[635] Mather concurred and wrote: "You will recall that the plans for the Buckstaff Bath House were approved with the distinct understanding the hydrotherapeutic rooms should be maintained. It is not expected that all departments of the bathhouse will prove equally profitable, and the government distributed the hot waters to the bathhouses with the object of benefitting the greatest possible number of persons."[636] The Buckstaff, however, persisted and provided evidence that there simply was not a sufficient demand for the equipment to keep it in operation. Mather conceded that the equipment could be kept in storage and if future demand necessitated, it could be re-installed upon request.[637]

Another Washington Office visitor came in March 1921. Chief Civil Engineer George E. Goodwin arrived to consult with Construction Engineer John Fordyce. They inspected the ongoing construction at the Government Free Bathhouse as well as the demolished sites of the former Horseshoe and Magnesia Bathhouses where the new Quapaw Bathhouse was to be built. Consulting on a proposed new impounding thermal reservoir, Goodwin also made a number of recommendations on several of the more problematic curves on the mountain roadways.[638] Improvements were necessary to accommodate the increased flow of automobile traffic. Many of those visitors took advantage of the Gulpha Gorge campground as Superintendent Parks noted: "The camp grounds, in the vicinity of the Gorge, took care of quite a number of cars and campers. The place is an ideal site for campers, and I have seen as many as 80 cars there at one time." Unfortunately, with such a mass of people congregated in one area, tragedy soon struck. An elderly male camper, who had been at the Gorge for almost a month, dove from a

Figure 90. Summer 1921 view of Government Free Bathhouse nearing completion, Spring Street entrance (HSNP 1900, National Park Service)

[634] Gilbert E. Hogaboom, Buckstaff Bathhouse Company, to Director Mather, 31 January 1921.
[635] Superintendent Parks to Director Mather, letter, 2 February 1921.
[636] Director Mather to Gilbert E. Hogaboom, letter, 9 February 1921.
[637] Superintendent Parks to Gilbert E. Hogaboom, letter, 2 June 1921.
[638] Superintendent Parks to Director Mather, letter, 5 April 1921, covering conditions during the month of March, 1921, HSNP Archives. The Horseshoe had closed in 1915; Magnesia closed December 20, 1920, and was razed. Short time extensions were granted to the Lamar and Ozark until December 1921 to close and be demolished for new bathhouses. See *Annual Report for 1921.*

spring board into the small lake. He failed to surface and his body was later retrieved from the water.[639]

Superintendent Parks alerted Director Mather that he wished to suspend J. F. Manier, manager of the Fordyce Bathhouse, for 90 days as punishment for Manier breaking rule 15. Manier was caught selling oil stock at the Fordyce, Hale, and Superior, and pocketing a fifteen percent commission on every sale. Parks outlined a history of trouble caused by Manier. He declared,

> *"Mr. Manier is the most obstinate manager in any of the bathhouses in regard to obeying the rules and orders. He is resentful toward orders from this office, and I thought that the suspension of ninety days, together with the reprimand which I have given him for general disobedience to the service and infraction of the rules would do him good. At the end of that time, if he has not improved, it is my intention to discharge him from the bathhouse service."*[640]

Figure 91. African American men's bath hall under construction, Government Free Bathhouse, June 1, 1921 (HSNP 1908, National Park Service)

The proposed action was appealed and involved a senator and congressman interceding on Manier's behalf, calling at Interior and with Mather himself. The result saw the director over-ruling his superintendent. In evaluating the specific rule itself—"The renting and selling of bath robes, towels, soap, toilet articles, or articles of merchandise in bathhouse is prohibited" — he found it to be too ambiguous. He agreed with Manier that he received no prior notice of the charges or given any opportunity to respond prior to his proposed suspension. Mather responded:

> *"All in all, I feel that the suspension of Mr. Manier in this instance, under the circumstances, was too drastic and that warning and written reprimand would have been sufficient, which then could have been*

[639] Superintendent Parks to Director Mather, letter, 3 October 1921, covering conditions during the month of September, 1921.

[640] Superintendent Parks to Director Mather, letter, 16 June 1921, C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse 1914-23. The suspension was to be effective starting July 1. Col. Fordyce suggested during his "vacation" he set up an office outside the national park and sell oil stocks—and that Mrs. Manier would assume his duties as "Acting Manager" at the Fordyce Bathhouse. See John R. Fordyce to J. F. Manier, letter, 18 June 1921,Box 10, Folder 10-10 Fordyce Bath House—Correspondence 1921-23, MC 1311 Fordyce Family Papers, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayettteville.

> *followed by suspension if the practice was persisted in. For that reason I am of the opinion that the suspension in this instance should not stand, and your action is therefore disapproved. I think Mr. Manier is entitled to the benefit of the doubt, but in communicating this to him you should warn him that there will be no doubt as to the application of the rule in the future."*

To prevent future sales, Mather also favored amending the rule to include the phrase, "or the solicitation for and sale of any other thing of value in bathhouses is prohibited." [641]

In response to a shortage of thermal water during the busy visitor season of January, February, and March 1921, NPS drilled just south of the Fordyce "to ascertain whether hot water could be conserved by drilling wells." At a depth of more than sixty-seven feet, thermal water gushed from a well at a temperature of 141 degrees Fahrenheit and at an average flow of 50,000 gallons daily. The flow was piped to the main impounding reservoir.[642]

Figure 92. NPS Director Stephen T. Mather, top row, second from left, on dedication day November 14, 1921, of the Government Free Bathhouse (HSNP 3494, National Park Service)

Before consideration was given to additional drilling, NPS arranged for an analysis by USGS Geologist Kirk Bryan. Bryan came to the same conclusion as Thomas Musick had in 1890: there should be a common distribution system. As Musick had recommended, Bryan also called for metering water from a government-controlled system to replace the present flat rate system of charging for water which only encouraged waste. Bryan found the current arrangement lacked both centralization and unified control: "The practice of allowing private bathhouses to pump from reservoirs or springs makes supervision difficult, and leads to unnecessary rivalry among the proprietors. From a standpoint of engineering efficiency a single pumping system has

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[641] Director Mather to Superintendent Parks, letter, 28 June 1921, C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse 1914-23. He added: "This is done to save the patients of the bathhouses the annoyance of solicitors, and also have the bathhouse employees attend strictly to their duties as bathhouse operatives. You should notify all bathhouse managers accordingly, so that there may be no misunderstanding in the matter." Mather concluded his letter: "I should add that no pressure has been brought to bear on this office from any source except a request for careful consideration of the application of existing rules to the alleged offense according to evidence on hand."

[642] *Annual Report for 1921.*

obvious advantages. Such a system, operated by the Park Service, would give the park superintendent undisputed control and assist him in his other supervisory capacities."[643]

Two deaths during the 1921 fiscal year shook the park. B. Frank Bailey, chief clerk and assistant to the superintendent for more than twenty years, passed away on August 1, 1920, following a two-month illness. Bailey's expertise in operating the park through successive superintendents was a valued asset. Parks wrote: "His many years of experience, his conscientious and careful work, coupled with his deep interest in all matters pertaining to the park made him a most valued employee, and his loss has been keenly felt." Five months later, James Daniels, an African American laborer, passed away at age eighty-one. Daniels had served the park for more than thirty years "and was a most trusted and faithful employee."[644]

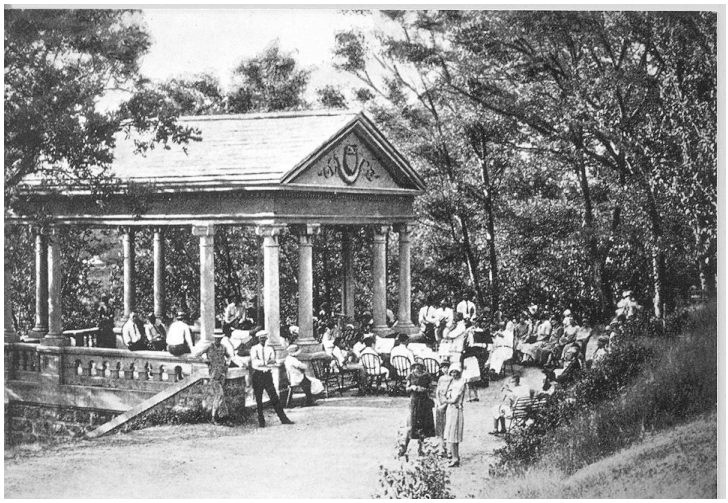

Figure 93. Concert in session at formal entrance bandstand, early 1920s (HSNP 2209, National Park Service)

Dedication of the new Government Free Bathhouse came on November 14, 1921. Representing NPS were Stephen Mather, Horace Albright, and Arno B. Cammerer. First Assistant Secretary of the Interior Edward C. Finney turned the key in the lock to open the front door of the new facility. In his dedication speech, Finney called Hot Springs "our oldest national park… established 89 years ago. More and more has Hot Springs Park been appreciated and used until it has become cosmopolitan, knowing neither North nor South nor East nor West alone, but all of them." Mather declared the bathhouse "the most advanced steps ever taken by any government for the relief of its indigent afflicted" and the mayor thanked the government for making Hot Springs the "greatest health and pleasure resort in the world."[645] The two-story structure featured interlocking red mission tile and reinforced stucco concrete in Roman Revival style. Its cost was more than $270,000. The lower level with entrance from Spring Street featured a USPHS clinic and dispensary operated by Dr. Oliver Clarence Wenger. The bathhouse on the upper level with entrance on Reserve Avenue did not open until September 1921. Staffing was largely USPHS—three physicians, bacteriologist, laboratory technician,

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[643] Kirk Bryan, *Report on the Hot Water Supply of the Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas; Prepared for the National Park Service by the U.S. Geological Survey*, 10 November 1921. R.G. 79, Entry 6, Box 333.
[644] *Annual Report for 1921.*
[645] "Bath House Dedicated as Opening Feature of Convention of Medicos," *Sentinel Record* , 15 November 1921, Vol. 6, Scrapbooks, 1915-1928, Stephen Tyng Mather Papers, 1883-1930, Collection Number BANC MSS C-B 535, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. The dedication ceremony coincided with the fifteenth annual meeting of the Southern Medical Association, held in Hot Springs.

registered nurse social worker, and two secretary clerks. NPS employees included a bathhouse attendant and two porters.[646]

During his visit, Mather directed the pavilion over the Harry M. Hallock Spring be dismantled. Its deteriorated, archaic appearance conflicted with the opulent appearance of new construction on Bathhouse Row. Workers capped the spring, leveled the site, reestablished the lawn, and planted a boxwood hedge to match the surrounding park area.[647]

Government Free Bathhouse closed behind Bathhouse Row, opening at the new location in September 1921 where it preserved the segregated bathing system. Parks described the interior as follows:

> *"It is divided into four separate units—one each for white men and white women, colored men and colored women. In the unit for white men, there are six tubs and six large pools, while in the unit for white women there are two tubs and one large pool. The unit for colored men has six tubs and four pools, while the unit for colored women has two tubs and two pools. Each unit is equipped with show and vapor baths, and with dressing and cooling rooms. Lobbies for the reception of patients and bathers have been provided, and convenient offices are available for the use of bathhouse manager, director of clinic, physicians and others of the management of the bathhouse and clinic. The finish of the interior of the building, on both floors, is of plaster, tile and marble."*[648]

Figure 94. Cooling towers for the Government Free Bathhouse thermal water reservoir (HSNP 1712, National Park Service)

Thermal water supplied to the building originated at the superintendent's office/ Administration Building where a centrifugal electric pump propelled it through underground pipes to a tank built into the mountainside above the superintendent's

[646] Edwina Walls, "The Public Health Service VD Clinic in Hot Springs, Arkansas," *PHS Chronicles* January-February 1995, Vol. 110, No. 1, 104.
[647] Superintendent Parks to Director Mather, letter, 5 December 1921, covering conditions during the month of November, 1921.
[648] *Annual Report for 1921.*

official residence. From there pipes led directly to the bathhouse for immediate use or to a second tank on the roof equipped with aerators for cooling the water.[649]

The registered physicians at the old Government Free Bathhouse discontinued their work on March 31, 1921, ostensibly in preparation for the move to the new clinic operated by USPHS at the Spring Street location. The real reason for their resignation, however, was hidden from the public. When these physicians who had donated their time and services to operate the part-time free clinic were assessed the "privilege fee" imposed by the June 5, 1920 Act of Congress, they resigned en masse. The question now presented to NPS was would the USPHS physicians employed at the new clinic be assessed the same tax or would they be exempt? When both Cammerer and Mather ruled that they should not be exempt, a chagrined William Parks appealed their decision arguing that payment of the $60 annual tax was a matter of principle:

Figure 95. Noble Fountain in front of Administration Building, c. mid-1920s (HSNP 10036, National Park Service)

> *"Sixteen of the registered physicians of this city are connected with the clinic, as members of the Advisory Board, Chiefs of Department, and Visiting Physicians…. We have been extremely proud of the class of men who have volunteered their services at the clinic, because it is, in most every instance, a great sacrifice for them to do so…. I fear this will not continue when the announcement is made that these physicians are to be required to pay the privilege tax. They gained the impression from the beginning of the work that they would not be required to pay it, and know that I recommended that they be exempted from the tax…."*

He feared that many of them would resign on principle and be very difficult to replace.[650] Understanding the political implications of the matter, Stephen Mather acquiesced and

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[649] Consulting Engineer John R. Fordyce to Superintendent Parks, 30 June 1921, prepared for the 1921 Annual Report. Fordyce reported the building was 95 percent completed and should in operation in September 1921.

[650] Superintendent Parks to Director Mather, letter, 17 January 1922, in response to Assistant Director Arno B. Cammerer to Superintendent Parks, letter, 4 January 1922, and Director Mather to Superintendent Parks, letter, 11 January 1922, all in A18 Registered Physicians, 1915-1924.

granted the exemption to all 16 physicians connected to the USPHS clinic.[651] When a petition by the Garland County Medical Society soon after requested an exemption, too, the Service held firm and denied it.[652]

Figure 96. Visitor's carriage on Hot Springs Mountain Drive with Arlington Hotel in background, early 1920s (HSNP 1408, National Park Service)

[651] Director Mather to Superintendent Parks, letter, 23 January 1922, A18 Registered Physicians, 1915-1924.

[652] Petition to the Director of National Parks from Committee of Hot Springs/Garland County Medical Society, 1 July 1922. In response, Acting Director Cammerer responded on July 11, 1922: "The Service fully appreciates the presentations of these physicians but feels that a situation considerably different than is encountered anywhere else in the United States exists at Hot Springs. The Congress of the United States authorized the assessment and collection of such charges from the physicians, and I do not consider the tax unjust—nor do I believe it is unethical. Physicians as a mass are deriving special benefits by practicing on the United States Reservation and the charge is so reasonable as not to be burdensome." Both found in A18 Registered Physicians, 1915-1924.

Figure 97. Superintendent Parks and park ranger "policemen" in front of Administration Building, February 25, 1922 (HSNP 10570, National Park Service)

CHAPTER EIGHT

U.S. Public Health Service Management Begins, 1922

THE BRIEF SUPERINTENDENCY OF CLARENCE H. WARING, M.D., 1922-1924

Having crippled the drumming evil and built the new Government Free Bathhouse, William P. Parks decided to return to private medical practice in early 1922. His resignation came at the close of business February 28, 1922. With concurrence of President Warren G. Harding and Secretary of the Interior Albert B. Fall, a "cooperative arrangement" was negotiated with the Treasury Department to designate a U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) professional into the superintendent position. Dr. Clarence H. Waring entered on duty March 1, 1922.[653] NPS sanctioned this decade-long experiment whereby a USPHS employee was detailed to head Hot Springs National Park. Dr. Waring maintained his USPHS affiliation, but was answerable to Director Stephen T. Mather and, ultimately, the secretary of the Interior. The experiment of having USPHS professional medical men assigned to the Hot Springs National Park superintendency ended the time-honored political patronage appointee system.[654]

Waring took charge and oversaw completion of three new bathhouses: Quapaw, Ozark, and Woodmen of the Union, the latter being off Bathhouse Row and designed as a combination hospital and bathhouse for African Americans. It joined the Pythian Bathhouse and Sanitarium in providing racially-segregated service to the same minority community. The Lamar Bathhouse claimed the last spot on the Row. With its completion in early 1923, the "Magnolia Promenade" of modern buildings along Bathhouse Row was complete. The new Government Free Bathhouse began operating in early March, the delayed opening was the result of lack of individual lockers in the dressing rooms. Dr. Waring reinstituted the course of instruction for bathhouse attendants initiated by the late Harry Hallock. Utilizing the Smith-Hughes Act for

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[653] "Secretary Fall's Inspection Trip to the Parks," *Park Service Bulletin*, No. 17, March 1922, p. 2, Box 144, Folder 13, Special Collections 2056 Horace A. Albright Papers, University of California, Los Angeles. Initially, Parks moved to El Paso, Texas, but soon accepted an offer to practice in Claremore, Oklahoma, where he planned and constructed The Radium Bathhouse. He later returned to practice medicine in Hot Springs, retiring in 1935. He passed away in Fort Smith, Arkansas, in 1941. See Maurice Moore, "Life Sketch of Dr. W. P. Parks," *The Record*, No. 8 (Hot Springs, Arkansas: Garland County Historical Society, 1967) 42-43.

[654] Martin A. Eisele, "History of the Government Supervisors in Hot Springs," *Hot Springs New Era*, Progress and Prosperity Edition, April 1930. Curiously, Waring's obituary in a professional journal neglected to list his service as superintendent at Hot Springs National Park, only listed that of medical director, U.S.P.H.S. (August 1914-July 1946), passing away in Gulfport, Mississippi, at age 66. See "Deaths, Clarence H. Waring," *Journal of the American Medical Association* Vol. 139, No. 8, 30 April 1949, p. 1291.

government-funded vocational education, he invited the Arkansas State Board of Education and the local school district to offer practical instruction to bath attendants in cooperation with local physicians and nurses. Subjects covered included general and personal hygiene, operation of the bath, first aid, ethics, and regulations approved by Interior. All attendants received a complete physical examination to whom health cards were issued. Examinations were ongoing through the year with results noted on individual health cards. Waring declared no attendant would be permitted to work unless he or she was free from all communicable diseases. Those found to be afflicted were furloughed until cured or determined to be non-infectious.[655]

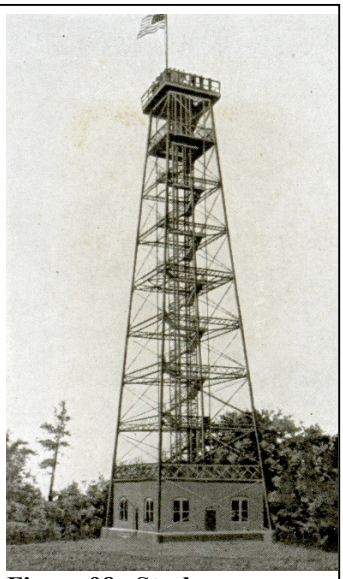

Figure 98. Steel observation tower on Hot Springs Mountain, 1920s (HSNP 6966, National Park Service)

Other improvements included rebuilding the impounding reservoir to prevent leakage, thereby conserving several thousand gallons of thermal water daily. Waring stated that automobile tourists continued to surge and estimated the traffic on park roads at 5,000. The new superintendent made several recommendations in his first annual report. The first involved the shabby superintendent's office. He wrote: "As Bathhouse Row is now complete, it is recommended that the Administration Building be remodeled, as its present appearance, compared with the balance of the Row, is anything but a compliment to the Government. In other words, the Government has forced the building of a row of beautiful buildings and should now place its own building in the same class in order that the incongruity may not be too great." He called for extending the roads over the mountains through Gulpha Gorge "to open to the public a portion of the park that is seldom seen, and which, from a scenic standpoint, is really the most striking

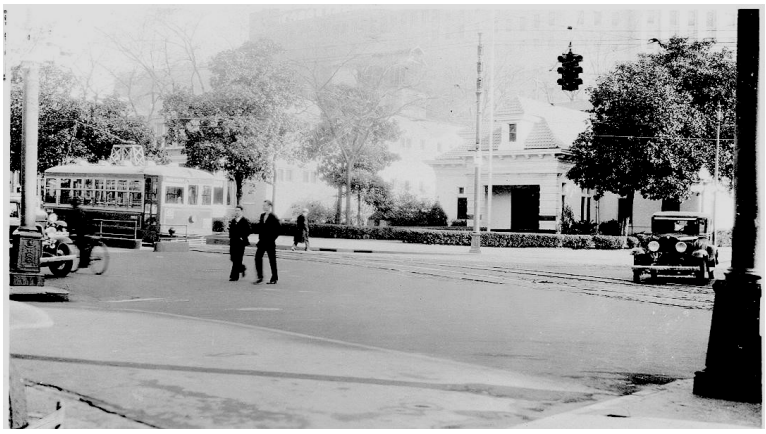

Figure 99. Central and Reserve Avenue intersection in front of Hot Springs National Park Administration Building, early 1920s (HSNP 1877, National Park Service)

[655] *Annual Report for 1922*; and Superintendent Waring to Director Mather, letter, 3 November 1922, covering conditions during the month of October 1922. The issue regarding the missing lockers was first reported in Superintendent Waring to Director Mather, letter, 5 January 1922, covering conditions during the month of December 1921.

part." Finally, he called for public comfort stations along the reservation front and at other areas of the park. Waring welcomed appropriation of funds to construct two comfort stations along Central Avenue, but believed there should be at least two additional ones at other locations.[656]

Superintendent Waring supported changing the official train announcement much-despised by physicians and business interests because its warnings were oftentimes misunderstood by new visitors and prejudiced them against the city of Hot Springs. He proposed changing it from a warning into a welcome and informative message and submitted several texts developed by local organizations for consideration. Waring believed not only would it engender goodwill, but having it printed in souvenir booklet form "would seem to me to eliminate any possibility of misunderstanding this speech, as it could be distributed by the train inspectors immediately following their announcement, and would serve in a way as an ethical advertisement of the park, although there would be no advertising matter of any character in it." Following Director Mather's approval, local business men promised to finance its publication.[657]

Figure 100. Central Avenue at Fordyce Bathhouse, early 1920s. Sign reads "All Automobiles Are Prohibited from Using This Driveway" (HSNP 5464, National Park Service)

Director Mather interceded in approval of the final plans for the exterior façade and entrance to the Quapaw Bathhouse. He urged Mann and Stern to consider a redesign, writing:

> *"It seems to me that further study of the entrance way into the main lobby would indicate some method whereby, by glass screening the inside of the lobby at the entrance to the flanking porches, some solution of the difficulty could be found. I am so firmly of the opinion from a study of the plans and sketches that the suggested solution would add nothing to the appearance of the building, but, rather, would detract from the appearance of the reservation, that I would not be prepared to commit*

[656] *Annual Report for 1922.* His first annual report was short, "condensed into as brief a statement as possible, due to Department instructions and the shortage of print paper."
[657] Superintendent Waring to Director Mather, letter, 22 March 1922, A54 Inspections, Etc.—Train Inspectors 1919-1932.

myself favorably unless I had made a personal inspection of the grounds and been convinced of the appropriateness of the suggested plan."[658]

Final design of the entrance and publication of the aforementioned train announcements proceeded under the auspices of Mather's subordinates. In May 1922, he suffered another "breakdown" in May and spent late spring and summer months recuperating in Chicago with his family.[659]

A fundamental shift occurred mid-year when Congress changed the way Hot Springs administrators had always deposited receipts from water and ground rents into a St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank account for park use. On May 24, 1922, Congress stipulated that all revenues received after July 1, 1922, went to the U.S. Treasury to the credit of miscellaneous receipts. Henceforth, the cost of providing free baths would be borne by an annual appropriation line item to be provided from the operating funds of Hot Springs National Park.[660]

Friction between Interior and the War Department threatened to erupt again in September 1922 when a new well was drilled on the grounds of the Army and Navy Hospital. Concerned that drilling activity could endanger the springs, Waring telegrammed Washington that the new well was at a depth of 251 feet and had struck thermal water. USGS geologist Kirk Bryan was dispatched to Hot Springs to investigate and report on his findings; in the meantime, Interior invoked the legal restraint against drilling on the original Hot Springs Reservation contained in the Act of Congress, December 16, 1878 (20 Stat. 258). By that time, the well had reached 350 feet. Bryan observed that "the mere penetration of a drill hole into the hot water zone is unlikely to divert water from the natural openings. The new well, therefore, can be dangerous to the Park only if pumped." He subsequently tested to see if damage had occurred to three

Figure 101. "Men's Toilet" on Bathhouse Row between Quapaw and Ozark bathhouses, c. mid-1920s (HSNP 5491, National Park Service)

[658] Director Mather to Messrs. Mann and Stern, Architects, letter, 10 April 1922, Letter Document Box 4, HOSP 5147.

[659] Arno B. Cammerer to Horace Albright, letter, 11 September 1922, Box 8, Folder 6 Correspondence 1920-22, Special Collections 2056 Horace A. Albright Papers, University of California, Los Angeles. Cammerer wrote: "Haven't had a chance to see Mr. Mather yet. Betty is going to school in Chicago on the 26th and I suppose Mrs. Mather will go with her. Whether Mr. Mather will go along or not I don't know. Perhaps I'll get a chance to see him before long. It's more than three months now since he left here. Isn't that a bit longer than his other time?"

[660] *Act of Congress,* 24 May 1922 (42 Stat. 590).

springs closest to the new well and found a rise in temperature in two springs and fluctuations in the third. Measuring devices were left in place for daily monitoring.[661]

Subsequently, Bryan published an article in the *Journal of Geology* on the matter of whether the supply of thermal water could be increased, something dependent on the ultimate origin of the water itself. He ultimately surmised "the present state of the science of geology is so imperfect that a definite conclusion as to the ultimate origin of the water in the Hot Springs cannot now be reached." He evaluated the recent well at the Fordyce and concluded,

> *"Since the well appears not to have decreased the flow of any existing spring or well, it must be supplied with water which had previously reached the surface in minor seeps and concealed springs. Other wells in the same geologic position near the contact between the shale and sandstone will save seepage, but will probably dry up the hillside springs. The resulting concentration of flow will be convenient for a single unified distributing system and the substitution of artificial openings for the natural openings or hot springs will be an inconsiderable sentimental loss."*[662]

The brewing Teapot Dome scandal forced Secretary Albert B. Fall's resignation on March 4, 1923, and President Harding appointed Hubert Work to the position the following day. NPS officials scrambled to accommodate the new secretary who was said to be very much interested in the national parks. Because Work was himself a medical doctor and former head of the American Medical Association, Assistant Director Cammerer wished to have the new secretary accompany Representative Louis Cramton, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Appropriations for the Interior Department, for an inspection visit to Hot Springs National Park. The visit was scheduled for the second week in April and Cammerer urged Dr. Waring to have the registered physicians send an invitation to Dr. Work.[663]

The week prior to the official visit, disaster again struck Hot Springs on April 5, 1923, when a fire smoldering in the basement of the Arlington Hotel slowly grew to a conflagration. All guests were evacuated as it grew in intensity throughout the afternoon. NPS and city policemen as well as soldiers from the Army and Navy Hospital kept order around the blazing building as thousands watched firemen try in vain to extinguish the blaze. One fireman was killed when he was crushed beneath a collapsed wall. The

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[661] Kirk Bryan, "Memorandum on the New Well in the Grounds of the Army & Navy Hospital at Hot Springs, Ark.," 14 October 1922, Legal Document Box 2, HOSP 11574. Bryan recommended the park have a permanent resident engineer to continue monitoring as well as supervise and inspect construction projects, including roads.

[662] Kirk Bryan, "The Hot Water Supply of the Hot Springs, Arkansas," *The Journal of Geology* September-October 1922, p. 423, 444, and 449, in Library Vertical File, HSNP. He published a follow-up article based on results of monitoring the three springs and determined day to day fluctuations and a seasonal temperature curve. See Kirk Bryan, *The Journal of Geology* August-September 1924, p. 456, 458.

[663] Assistant Director Cammerer to Superintendent Parks, letter, 8 March 1923, A54 Inspections, Investigations, Etc. 1923-53.

park's greenhouse immediately behind the hotel was also destroyed by fire.[664] An anomaly on the federal reservation, the Arlington's destruction prompted NPS, backed by Interior, to rule that its future location be outside the national park boundary. Plans were soon underway for its reconstruction on the opposite corner of Fountain Street and Central Avenue with a groundbreaking ceremony held on October 25 that same year.

Four days following the fatal fire, the official party from Washington arrived. Accompanying Secretary Work and Congressman Cramton were Surgeon General of USPHS H. L. Cumming, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles H. Burke, and Director Mather. All the men were honored at a dinner sponsored by the Business Men's League held at the Eastman Hotel.[665] During the visit Mather came down with a severe cold and was confined to bed for two days, but not before he and others were able to convince a dubious secretary about the merits of Hot Springs. As Waring reported to Cammerer, "Dr. Work seemed to be changing from his former rather hostile attitude toward Hot Springs to one of open-mindedness, where he would be open to conviction should we be able to present convincing evidence to him." Also changed were the preconceived opinions of Lewis Cramton, who the secretary believed "feels that Mr. Cramton's visit here will be of a great deal of value to this national park in the future." Waring continued writing,

> *"Mr. Cramton has apparently had his ideas of what we actually have here considerably changed, and stated that he had no idea of the scenic beauty of this little park. He thinks the entire scheme of things should be developed, and he and Mr. Mather were in accord on practically every question of importance."*

Mather and entourage approved the concept of restoring to parkland the area formerly occupied by the Arlington Hotel. With the area open, views could be had of the slope of Hot Springs Mountain from the street as well as from the roads there of Bathhouse Row and Central Avenue. It opened the possibility of constructing a new administration building on the site and demolishing the old building at the opposite end of the Row where a small park could accommodate a new comfort station. With the old greenhouse destroyed, plants salvaged from it were temporarily stored at both the superintendent's official residence and the old residence on Fountain Street which was now being occupied by the park's chief clerk.[666]

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[664] Debbie Calhoun, "Hotel Fire Anniversary Burns Woman's Memory," *Sentinel Record* 5 April 1990, 1; and Superintendent Waring to Director Mather, letter, 2 May 1923, covering conditions for the month of April, 1923.

[665] Announcement, "Dinner in Honor of Hon. Hubert Work, Secretary of the Interior, by the Business Men's League," Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas, 9 April 1923, Letter Document Box 9, HOSP 7368.

[666] Superintendent Waring to Assistant Director Cammerer, letter, 13 April 1923, A54 Inspections, Investigations, Etc. 1923-53. Burke and his wife stayed to take a full course of baths and improve their health. Waring wrote: "Apparently the Secretary is using him as an experiment, and has stated that if we can cure Mr. Burke he will feel that there is probably something to the hot waters here and also think that we probably have some good physicians."

Disaster struck again the following month when heavy rains over the entire state caused widespread flooding. In downtown Hot Springs, it resulted in floodwater as deep as nine feet cascading down Central Avenue sweeping away automobiles and everything else in its path. So destructive was the deluge that the pavement from Central Avenue was washed away in an eight block area. Fire broke out and destroyed several buildings. Businesses suffered extensive damage. Bathhouse Row had four feet of water and suffered a washout of hedges and electric light poles. Floodwater penetrated and filled the impounding reservoir behind the superintendent's office which was also flooded. Park roads and trails also suffered heavy damage and large sections of iron fencing in Whittington Lake Park were damaged. In addition, the park had damage to its concrete bridges, retaining walls collapsed, and only one pavilion remained on its foundation. The bathhouses all had flooded basements, causing loss of supplies and ruined machinery. Dr. Waring ordered all bathhouses closed May 15 and 16 as cleanup proceeded. He reported:

"I was very much gratified at the cooperative and helpful spirit shown in this emergency. The bathhouses which could open took care of the bathers of the unfortunate ones without charge, and Colonel Bratton offered the facilities of the bathhouse at the Army and Navy General Hospital. All bathers were cared for in an efficient, satisfactory manner, and very little business was lost during the flood period by the bathhouses. By the end of the week, all establishments were doing business as usual, and have now entirely recovered from the effects of the flood. Care was taken to see that all bathers were furnished with unquestionably pure water for drinking purposes in the bathhouses until all danger of contamination from hot water was removed."[667]

Figure 102. Arlington Hotel under construction with former hotel site on government land now called Arlington Lawn being used as a staging area for the work, c. 1923 (HSNP 1669, National Park Service)

[667] Superintendent Waring to Director Mather, letter, 2 June 1923, covering conditions during the month of May, 1923. See also 1951 reprint "Flood and Fire Coupled in Great Disaster," *Sentinel Record* 15 May 1923, HSNP Archives.

Traditional financial arrangements changed in 1922. Except at Hot Springs, all revenues generated in the national parks went into the miscellaneous receipts of the Treasury. Hot Springs had always benefitted by use of its own special fund to finance small-scale development projects, but after July 1, 1922, Congress extended the same provision to include Hot Springs. This meant that all improvements had to be sanctioned and approved through the regular congressional appropriation process. Congress provided funding for an accounting office to "study, verify, and check" the accounts of all park concessioners and NPS charged San Francisco certified public accountant Francis P. Farquhar with this task. Mather praised Farquhar's work at Hot Springs for investigating "the earnings of the various park bathhouses, assisting the service materially in conclusions affecting the approval of bathhouse rates for the general public."[668]

Clarence Waring oversaw a number of improvements during the 1923 fiscal year. Two long-awaited comfort stations, one for each gender, were constructed on Bathhouse Row and the antiquated Government Free Bathhouse was demolished. With completion of the Lamar, Bathhouse Row and its "Magnolia Promenade" were now complete. Waring instituted a reorganization of the park workforce dividing it into the following departments: administrative, police and train inspection, maintenance, free bathhouse and clinic, and sanitary. The administrative division had three employees: chief clerk, clerk-stenographer, and porter. Two more clerks were sorely needed. The police and train inspection division was made up of the captain of police and five policemen, with two more needed. The maintenance division had a foreman and twelve laborers; two assistant foremen were needed. The free bathhouse division consisted of a manager, stationary engineer, head bath attendant, and seven attendants. Its clinic section had three employees. The sanitary division consisted of a single employee.[669]

Figure 103. Tents and automobiles in Gulpha Gorge Campground, c. 1925 (HSNP 10073, National Park Service)

[668] *Report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1923 and the Travel Season, 1923* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1923) 27, 44. *Act of Congress, 24 May 1922* (42. Stat. 590) placed Hot Springs in the same category as other national parks: expenditure of revenue for park purposes not authorized – sundry civil act of June 12, 1917 (40 Stat., 153), Ibid., 101.

[669] *Annual Report for 1923.*

In the fall of 1923, Secretary Work followed up on his observations made while at Hot Springs. As a medical professional, he believed scientific study should be made through physiologic experiment and clinical test to determine the thermal water's value as a therapeutic agent. Work referred the issue to the National Research Council's Division of Medical Science. This harkened back to a decade previous when a bill in Congress sought $50,000 for a similar study had failed to pass. Acting on Work's request, the National Research Council convened a conference of leading medical professionals on November 15 and the group came to the same conclusion. An investigation was required for the public's protection and advancement of medical science. It appointed a special committee to outline details of such an investigation.[670] With a perceived lack of interest from Congress, Work sought funding from private sources like the Rockefeller Foundation but his efforts were unsuccessful. However, the group advised that any mention of radioactivity in connection with Hot Springs be omitted from all government publications, along with any other claims of its healing properties. This prohibition went into effect immediately.[671]

The first "physical culture department" at the Fordyce Bathhouse opened in its gymnasium on November 12, 1923, with Anna Louise Hotchkiss as physical educator. Tickets were sold at the rate of $9 for ten lessons; those wanting less than five lessons were charged $1 per lesson and more than five lessons the rate was ninety cents each. Duration of each class was thirty minutes. Enrollees were entitled to shower and dressing room privileges.[672]

Improvements during fiscal year 1924 involved construction of park amenities. A new comfort station was built near the observation tower on Hot Springs Mountain. A new greenhouse replacing the one that burned in the Arlington Hotel fire was erected on Fountain Street near the Cold Spring Pavilion. Because the spring dried up, its fountain was connected to the city water supply line. Crews built two shelterhouses measuring ten by fourteen feet near trails on Hot Springs Mountain along with another measuring fourteen by twenty-two foot atop West Mountain. Materials used were native stone, rough lumber, and redwood shingles. A four-foot-wide trail leading from Happy Hollow to the top of Hot Springs Mountain terminating at the observation tower was joined by another from Happy Hollow to the eastern slope of North Mountain, terminating near the rear of the new Arlington Hotel. An off-shoot trail led from there to the top of North Mountain. This totaled almost 9,000 feet of new trails. Workers repaired the past year's

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[670] "Secretary's Interest in the Parks," *Park Service Bulletin,* No. 19, August 1923, p. 2; and "Hot Springs Waters," *Park Service Bulletin*, No. 21, December 1923, p. 5, both in Box 144, Folder 13, Special Collections 2056 Horace A. Albright Papers, University of California, Los Angeles; "Favorable Medicinal Waters Inquiry: Medical Leaders Confer on Physiological Action and Therapeutic Value of Hot Springs," *New York Times* 25 December 1923, p. 30.

[671] Elizabeth S. Pitt, "Administrative Review of Radioactivity Controversy at Hot Springs National Park." 19 February 1932, RG 79, Entry 6, Box 324. Pitt concluded, "Dr. Work's action in removing all radioactivity data from the Department's publications until further investigations could be made was undoubtedly due in large measure to the activities of the Post Office Department and the Department of Agriculture in investigating complaints of fraud against concerns making unwarranted claims for so-called radio-active waters or preparations made therefrom which they offered for sale."

[672] Talbot P. Shelby, Manager, Fordyce Bathhouse, to Superintendent Waring, letter, 7 November 1923, and Waring to Manager, letter 8 November 1923, both in C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse 1914-23.

flood damage in Whittington Lake Park. They also placed fill dirt, sod, and shrubbery in front of the two comfort stations on Bathhouse Row and laid sidewalks connecting to the promenade. Excavators building the new Arlington Hotel were allowed to dump the dirt behind the Row where maintenance men then built a new terrace. When the heating system at the Government Free Bathhouse failed, a new steam heat system was installed.[673]

SUPERINTENDENCY OF JOSEPH S. BOLTEN, M.D., 1924-1929

Clarence Waring did not complete the 1924 fiscal year before his reassignment. Waring's resignation dated to March 22 and under the cooperative arrangement with USPHS, Dr. Joseph S. Bolten entered on duty the next day. On March 31, the Chamber of Commerce held a dinner at the Eastman Hotel to honor both USPHS men. The month had been problematic as the Hale, Superior, Ozark, Maurice, and Lamar Bathhouses experienced great difficulty in securing enough thermal water to operate an entire day during a month when bathing reached a peak. Obtaining water from the Upper Arlington reservoir, increasing demand saw it emptying by mid-afternoon forcing the establishments to close. A solution was found when a more powerful pump channeled water from the Lower Arlington reservoir.[674]

In May 1924, NPS Landscape Engineer Dan R. Hull arrived to confer on how to develop the Arlington Lawn area as well as the new auto campground. Under special agreement with the service, Arlington Lawn was temporarily used as a storage site for building materials used during construction of the new Arlington Hotel, surrounded by a painted board fence to present a neat appearance. Bolten and John R. Fordyce proposed having stone benches in the new park. The idea also had the support of Assistant Director Arno B. Cammerer.[675] Funding for the project would come from the Arlington Hotel Company who was responsible for returning the ruined area back to a suitable condition approved by the government. Blueprints prepared by Mann and Stern revealed exactly where government property began and city property ended; previous use had the government occupying a sizeable area of city land. As Bolten reported:

> *"The plan contemplates a continuation of the present parking strip, and placing the sidewalk so it will join up with the sidewalk adjoining the Superior Bathhouse. It is intended to set back the fountain that is now on the sidewalk a few feet, so as to make the walk and parking strip absolutely in line without having the fountain break into the sidewalk."*[676]

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[673] *Annual Report for 1924.*
[674] Superintendent Joseph Bolten to Director Mather, letter, 3 April 1924, covering conditions during the month of March 1924.
[675] Superintendent Waring to Director Mather, 4 December 1923, covering conditions during the month of November 1923; Superintendent Bolten to Director Mather, letter, 4 June 1924, covering conditions during the month of May 1924; and Superintendent Bolten to Landscape Engineer Hull, letter, 14 June 1924, D32 Arlington Lawn 1924-25.
[676] Superintendent Bolten to Director Mather, letter, 24 June 1924, D32 Arlington Lawn 1924-25.

Commenting on the Mann and Stern design, Hull advised there should be a small area for a children's playground, away from traffic, to serve as a draw for hotel guests. Bolten responded that the small swimming pool proposed in the play area should be eliminated fearing it would be a mosquito-breeding area and difficult to drain. He also advised against the shelterhouses as an understanding had been reached that there would be no permanent structures in the park. However, the Arlington Hotel was interested in having a bandstand there so that when its radio broadcasting station went online in the new hotel, it could be played on a loudspeaker and people sitting in the park could enjoy concert music. Intended to be an open-air area, the potential existed in the future for erecting a pavilion for inclement weather.[677]

Bolten's first annual report included two key recommendations. First, he called for an appropriation of $40,000 to construct a central thermal water storage reservoir. This would help alleviate chronic shortages during heavy visitor seasons and conserve water running to waste. Such a reservoir could be placed on Arlington Lawn, covered with soil, and topped by grass. A central pumping system would then supply all facilities along Bathhouse Row. Second, Bolten called for all the mountain roads to be converted to two-way automobile traffic. This would assist traffic flow for the increasing numbers of park patrons arriving by automobile.[678]

Figure 104. "Ladies Toilet" in Gulpha Gorge Campground, c. 1925; "Men's Toilet" is on the other end of wooden building (HSNP 1273, National Park Service)

Thanks to the chamber of commerce, the city donated sixteen acres adjacent to Hot Springs National Park in the Gorge area of Gulpha Creek for use as a public auto campground. Congress accepted the donation on June 5, 1924.[679] Park maintenance crews cleared away underbrush, dug drainage ditches, erected a bridge over the creek, installed electric lighting, and built a comfort station. To provide potable water, they drilled a 100-foot artesian well.[680]

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[677] Landscape Engineer Hull to Superintendent Bolten, letter, 24 July 1924; and Superintendent Bolten to Hull, letter, 28 August 1924, D32 Arlington Lawn, 1924-25.
[678] *Annual Report for 1924.*
[679] *Act of Congress, 5 June 1924* (43 Stat. 423). The land was a part of Section 27. The state ceded exclusive jurisdiction the following year: *General Acts of Arkansas, 27 March 1925,* p. 677. Congress accepted exclusive jurisdiction under *Act of Congress, 3 March 1927* (44 Stat. 1359).
[680] Superintendent Bolten to Director Mather, letter, 4 February 1925, covering conditions during the month of January 1925.

The new Arlington Hotel and Bathhouse began accepting guests on December 20, 1924, but the formal opening took place in conjunction with a New Year's Eve party attended by 1,500 guests representing the social elite of the South. Parties from St. Louis, Memphis, New Orleans, cities in Texas, Chicago, and some foreign guests arrived on special trains on the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific, and the Missouri Pacific Railroads. NPS Director Stephen Mather and his family also attended the event which Superintendent Bolten described as "the most brilliant social affairs which has taken place in the South in many years." The festivities were broadcast on the maiden launch of KTHS—Kum To Hot Springs—billed as the Hot Springs National Park radio broadcasting station. The impressive hotel, featuring marble interiors, brass railings, and crystal chandeliers was an architectural delight to behold.[681]

Bolten and Public Land Registrar Wallace Townsend inspected and appraised the remaining eleven unsold government lots in late 1924. All but one sold at public auction in 1925, yielding $20,035 to the special fund for park improvements.[682] Those improvements in fiscal year 1925 saw nearly all the roads constructed to double travel width along with reconstruction of the North Mountain loop road. Landscaping of Arlington Lawn occurred with grass, shrubbery and decorative trees planted and gravel and concrete walks laid out. The Arlington Hotel Company donated six five-cluster-light metal standards along with 750 feet of electrical cable to tie the area into the White Way lighting along Bathhouse Row. More work at the public campground saw a 3,000 gallon storage tank and pump house for the water well which produced 30,000 gallons a day, and an electrical lighting system put in place. They built a road to open up the area for campsites and added two concrete bridges with wood superstructures and three concrete culverts to bridge the streams. Crews deepened the swimming pool and repaired the dam. An

Figure 105. Arlington Lawn restored to park land with third Arlington Hotel in background with KTHS radio tower atop it. (HSNP 1665, National Park Service)

[681] Ibid., and Rod Fensom, *America's Grand Resort Hotels: Eighty Classic Resorts in the United States and Canada* (Charlotte, N.C.: East Woods Press, 1985), 30. The Arlington Hotel was one of two historic grand resort hotels in Arkansas. The other was the Crescent Hotel in Eureka Springs.
[682] Ibid., and *Annual Report for 1925.* The remaining city lot sold for $4,300 in 1926. See *Annual Report for 1926.*

existing community house was remodeled with dressing rooms. Along Bathhouse Row, crews installed a new sewer line within the arched conduit of Hot Springs Creek.[683]

Clearly in the post-war years American travel patterns were shifting away from passenger railroads in favor of gasoline-powered conveyances. July 4, 1925, marked the dedication and opening of the new paved highway between Little Rock and Hot Springs, a route replacing the old dusty Lonsdale Road with a fifty-three-mile ribbon of concrete winding through the scenic Ouachita Mountains. Chamber of commerce estimates had 44,380 people arriving at the resort town by automobile during the month of July, 6,237 via railroads, and 6,942 by bus lines. Cars registered at the campground totaled 450, bringing 2,567 people from twenty-six states and Mexico. Other commercial automobile tourist campgrounds in and near Hot Springs saw 2,567 people registered.[684] Following the first year of the new Little Rock to Hot Springs highway's operation, visitation at Hot Springs National Park hit 260,000.[685]

NPS approved an across the board two-dollar increase per course of 21 baths effective in all bathhouses on October 10, 1925. This followed intense lobbying by bathhouse owners for the much needed rate increase.[686]

The issue of installing water meters to measure thermal water allotments and outlays had been discussed in the late nineteenth century. It did not prove feasible until the first quarter of the twentieth century was about to expire. The first water meter was installed on the Lamar Bathhouse on November 18, 1925, providing the first record of actual thermal water consumption. Previous to its

Figure 106. Visitor conflicts increased as horse and machine travelers shared the narrow lanes of Hot Springs Mountain Drive, c. 1925 (HSNP 1980, National Park Service)

[683] *Annual Report for 1925.* Assistant Engineer J. B. Hamilton, *Report on Improvement of Roads on North, West, and Hot Springs Mountains, Projects Nos. 2 and 3, Period 1925 to 1926*, D30 Roads and Trails. A fourteen inch cast-iron sanitary sewer was completed under contract in 1926 stretching 2,000 feet inside the creek arch from the north end of Bathhouse Row to a point 800 feet south of the superintendent's office. It replaced the former ten inch tile sewer and accommodated all Row bathhouses as well as the Army and Navy Hospital. See *Annual Report for 1926.*

[684] Maurice Moore, "First Paved Spa-Little Rock Highway Dedicated in 1925," *The Record* (Hot Springs, Ark.: Garland County Historical Society, 1967) 82, 84; and Superintendent Bolten to Director Mather, letter, 4 August 1925, covering conditions during the month of July 1925. This route was supplanted in 1959, with the current alignment of U.S. Highway 70.

[685] *Annual Report for 1926.*

[686] Superintendent Bolten to Director Mather, letter, 30 September 1925, covering conditions during the month of September 1925.

installation, the best estimate was set at an average of 100 to 125 gallons consumed per bath. Actual average use, however, proved to be much higher: 190 gallons per bath. The new meter provided both direct and graphic readings, with the later indicating the time and rate of flow when water was being taken.[687]

Obtaining a military band for Hot Springs during the summer months had long been a goal of superintendents and was something that had the enthusiastic support of Stephen Mather. Mather was against building any kind of architectural bandstand within the park. He supported portable knock-down flat platforms built on trestles one foot off the ground. That variety was commonplace in Washington where regimental or the U.S. Marine Band would perform a concert, the infrastructure could be positioned before the performance and dismantled immediately afterward.[688] The effort to obtain a regimental band was pushed by the chamber of commerce as something the spa resort needed. When local bands performed concerts, large audiences came to enjoy the music and Superintendent Bolten wished to have a bandstand in the new Arlington Lawn park area on an elevated place next to the tufa bluff. He urged Director Mather to request the War Department to authorize such a regimental band for Hot Springs. The request went forward but the response was that there were no bands available. A more permanent, non-portable bandstand platform feature was constructed within the park.[689]

The NPS Washington Office paid close attention to the monthly status reports sent in by park superintendents. When Hot Springs reported fifty-four crimson crepe myrtles were planted along Bathhouse Row "making a complete line of these plants from the Fountain Street residence to the administration building," it generated an inquiry and a rebuke. Assistant Director Cammerer wrote:

> *"I do not know whether you have followed any definite plan in this planting, or that it has been done with the advice of Chief Landscape Engineer Hull…. I am not quite clear, however, whether the stringing up of the crepe myrtle along Bath House Row will in the long run be the best solution. I have always felt that the grassy lawns along Bath House Row, free from much planting, were the best kind of landscape treatment we could devise."*

He made it clear that clumping the bushes in an area to mask an undesirable feature or view was better than "stringing them out in a long line with considerable space between each bush…. The point I want to make is that it would be well for you to consult the

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[687] Superintendent Bolten to Director Mather, letter, 2 December 1925, covering conditions during the month of November 1925.
[688] Director Mather to Superintendent Bolten, letter, 16 January 1925, A82 Special Events 1914-47.
[689] Superintendent Bolten to Director Mather, letters, 10 and 28 January 1925; and Assistant Director Cammerer to Superintendent Bolten, letter, 12 February 1925, both in A82 Special Events 1914-47; and Superintendent Bolten to Chief Landscape Engineer Hull, letter, 18 May 1925, D34 Buildings General, 1922-51. The bandstand existed from 1925 until 1951 when "minor grading, seeding, and sodding" occurred to "replace old bandstand which is being removed." The area continued to serve public events. See Regional Landscape Architect Jerome C. Miller to Superintendent Libbey, 30 October 1951, D22 Construction/Preservation, Arlington Park.

Chief Landscape Engineer on any larger planting schemes that you consider in the future." Cammerer insisted that the matter be referred to Dan Hull in the Los Angeles field office. [690] Joseph Bolten admitted that the idea was his own, inspired by Hull's use of crepe myrtle in the Arlington Lawn park, but agreed to refer it to Hull who later nixed the concept. The errant plantings were relocated elsewhere.[691]

Hull, comparing a photograph of the completed work to his design drawings, complained to the Washington Office when he realized his landscape plan for Arlington Lawn was not implemented as planned. "I do not know who is to blame for this great variance," he wrote, "but I certainly hate to have it thought that the present layout represents the results of a landscape architect's efforts." The alignment of the sidewalk was radically different from the original plan. A piqued Arno B. Cammerer, recalling the crepe myrtle matter, concurred that Hull's plan was "absolutely ignored" and asked Bolten to determine how "this miscarriage of plans" occurred but to take no steps to correct anything until Hull's next inspection visit.[692] Both Hull and Bolten had originally supported a more recreation-intensive approach with tennis courts, a children's wading pool, and playground being incorporated but the concept was rejected by the Washington Office which preferred a more tranquil park setting. Local groups and the chamber of commerce petitioned NPS to provide more diversions for tourists, calling for tennis courts, croquet courts, and putting greens. When Hull arrived in mid-December, he directed changes to the sidewalk layout and various plantings to conform to the original design. He hoped that funds could be found to erect two small shelter buildings in the future to complete the plan. In evaluating the local call for intensive recreational use, he stated that even a single tennis court in the confined space would be undesirable. Tennis courts and sufficient room for other recreational activities would be better served at the Whittington Lake Park, a short ten minutes away from downtown.[693]

A five-year development program developed in 1925 outlined proposed future park improvement projects. While no new roads were planned, three trails were proposed. The first, on Hot Springs Mountain, would traverse the southeastern boundary line from Reserve Avenue to the public campground. The second, on North Mountain, would hug the northwest slope and connect to two other trails. Finally, a West Mountain trail would lead from the Prospect Avenue entrance to the crest and run above and

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[690] Assistant Director Cammerer to Superintendent Bolten, letter, 9 February 1925, D32 Arlington Lawn 1924-25.

[691] Superintendent Bolten to Director Mather, letter, 18 February 1925, D32 Arlington Lawn 1924-25; and Superintendent Bolten to Chief Landscape Engineer Hull, letter, 7 April 1925, D34 Buildings General, 1922-51. Bolten waited two months and then tacked on the crepe myrtle matter at the end of this letter dedicated to other park landscape improvements with the following: "Last fall I had some crimson crepe myrtle shrubs planted along Bath House Row, in line with those planted on the Arlington Park. The Service requested me to send you a plan of the planting for your approval or a rearrangement of the plants."

[692] Chief Landscape Engineer Hull to Assistant Director Cammerer, letter, 13 November 1925, and Assistant Director Cammerer to Superintendent Bolten, letter, 18 November 1925, both in D32 Arlington Lawn 1924-25.

[693] F. Leslie Body, Manager, Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce to Superintendent Bolten, letter and petition, 23 December 1925; Superintendent Bolten to Manager Body, letters, 28 November and 28 December 1925; and Chief Landscape Engineer Hull to Superintendent Bolten, "Memorandum Covering Inspection of Hot Springs National Park, December 13 and 14, 1925," all in D32 Arlington Lawn 1924-25.

parallel with the northwestern road alignment, terminating where the main road joined with Canyon Street. While no new administration building would be erected on the Row, the present structure could be remodeled with a new front added to the Central Avenue façade bringing it into alignment with the rest of Bathhouse Row. Comfort stations and shelterhouses were requested for both North and West Mountains and another comfort station for the public campground. A comprehensive hot-water metering system was requested for each bathhouse in order to monitor actual consumption, provide an equitable basis for government assessments, and prevent excessive or wasteful use. A series of sprinkling systems controlled by valves was also proposed for all lawn areas as a means of conserving manpower as well as good turf management. Finally, the five-year development plan called for three public thermal drinking fountains on the lower slope of Hot Springs Mountain, behind Bathhouse Row.[694]

Chief Landscape Engineer Hull opined on the issue of constructing a new administration building during his Hot Springs inspection visit. Because the existing building provided adequate space, he declared "it hardly seems reasonable to discard the structure in favor of an entirely new unit." He proposed to prepare sketches to remodel it in order to serve its intended function but with a new façade to compliment Bathhouse Row.[695]

Heating the new Government Free Bathhouse with a coal-burning furnace proved problematic and required a laborer to stoke the burners shortly after midnight each day to warm the building sufficiently for the day and to ensure vaporized air did not unduly impede operations. The solution was found in 1926 when the local utility company brought a high pressure gas line to the building and fitted the boilers with new gas burners. It necessitated a complete overhaul of the heating system to ensure comfort of bathers and clinic workers.

Hot Springs National Park became fully motorized in 1926 necessitating a total refurbishment of the maintenance barn or utility building. All livestock, horses and mules, were sold at auction. The lower floor was completely concreted, floors replaced on the second floor and attic, with separate rooms for carpenter shop, storeroom, blacksmith and machine shop and electricity provided for a power motor, electric floor grinder, band saw and drill press. An overhead pulley system was erected and all windows were replaced. The exterior walls were stuccoed and woodwork painted. A concrete road lead to the building's rear area and all vehicles were stored on the first level. Workers constructed a twelve- by thirty-six foot addition to the greenhouse and replaced its heating plant.

Other 1926 improvements saw beautification efforts continue with 100 maples, elm, and poplar trees planted along the lower slope of Hot Springs Mountain, along the

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[694] Superintendent Bolten to Director Mather, letter, 18 December 1925, D18 1918-39. Called a "Future Development Outline," it was first conceived on May 27, 1925, and amended in December when Chief Landscape Engineer Hull added another trail.

[695] Chief Landscape Engineer Hull to Superintendent Bolten, "Memorandum Covering Inspection of Hot Springs National Park, December 13 and 14, 1925," D32 Arlington Lawn 1924-25.

park front, around the remodeled shop building, and the superintendent's residence. A new hedge was planted around half of Bathhouse Row, at the Government Free Bathhouse, and superintendent's residence. Experimental water metering continued for the Lamar as well as adding the same at the Buckstaff Bathhouse. By monitoring thermal water usage and insisting on strict conservation there was no hot-water shortage during the busy 1926 bathing season. Finally, in the public campground, crews readied an additional two acres for new campsites by clearing underbrush, draining, filling, and leveling the ground and graveling the roadways. The local telephone company installed a pay telephone for the campground. Crews built a twenty- by forty-two foot community house from native stone and cut logs with a concrete floor to accommodate a kitchen and laundry.[696]

Superintendent Bolten oversaw a minor revision of the official rules and regulations of the Federal Registration Board involving the much maligned $60 privilege fee paid by registered physicians. First imposed in 1920, physicians were required to pay $30 semi-annually (January 1 and July 1). Interior and NPS approved a rule revision on February 24, 1926, imposing a penalty on those who failed to pay. The new rule stated: "The registration of a physician remaining delinquent for a period of six months or more shall be revoked, and such physician will be required successfully to pass a regular examination to reestablish his registration." It was hoped the measure would ensure full compliance with the fee requirement.[697]

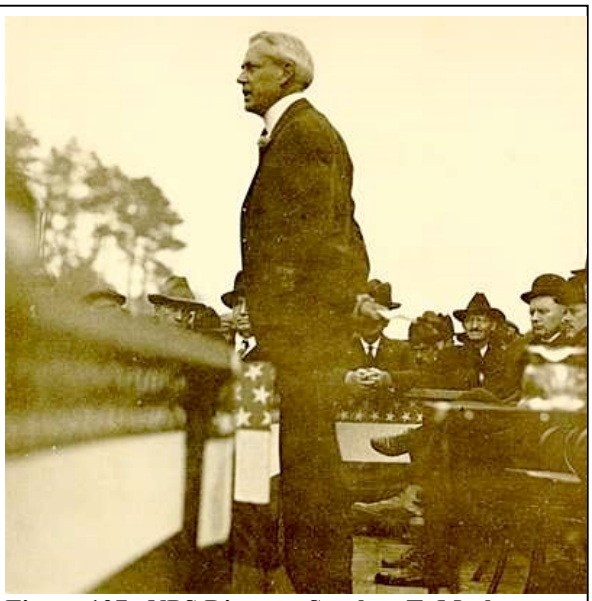

Figure 107. NPS Director Stephen T. Mather, speaking before a crowd at the Sixth National Conference on State Parks hosted in Hot Springs, Arkansas, in April 1926 (Historic Photograph Collection, Harpers Ferry Center, National Park Service)

Stephen Mather returned during the week of June 14, 1926, to participate in the Sixth National Conference on State Parks hosted in Hot Springs. Two hundred delegates were in attendance, headquartered at the Arlington Hotel. NPS hosted an old fashioned barbecue at the

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[696] *Annual Report for 1926.*

[697] Superintendent Bolten, Memorandum to all Registered Physicians, no date, A18 Federal Registration Board 1916-33. The Garland County-Hot Springs Medical Society passed a resolution in late 1927 asking Interior to abolish the "burdensome" privilege fee calling it an "occupation tax… levied at a time when the reservation was required to expend only such money as was collected." See J. L. Greene and O. H. King to Superintendent Bolten, letter 16 November 1927, A18 Registered Physicians 1925-32. Interior Secretary Hubert Work supported the annual privilege fee. See Secretary Work to Superintendent Bolten, letter, 15 March 1928, A18 Registered Physicians 1925-32.

public campground in the Gorge followed by a campfire meeting where addresses were given by several of the more prominent delegates.[698]

The following month Superintendent Bolten found himself enforcing the era's ugly Jim Crow racial segregation policies. During an inspection of the Ozark Bathhouse, he discovered that one of the African American attendants had permitted two acquaintances to bathe there. A stern letter to the bathhouse manager soon followed with Bolten writing: "You are instructed that this office will not tolerate colored persons bathing in white bathhouses. The tubs are installed for the use of white persons only, and managers are expected to know what is going on in their bathhouses and to prohibit such actions." He also related that another attendant was found sleeping on a table in the massage room, not in the area reserved for attendants to congregate. He continued his admonishment: "In the future, if the colored help is found occupying the bathhouse in such a manner and permitting their friends such advantages, disciplinary action will be taken against the bathhouse."[699]

Another bathhouse matter arose but of much less controversy during 1926 when the Fordyce requested permission to move the De Soto fountain out of the men's bath hall lobby and place it in front of the building in line with the drinking fountains between the Maurice and Fordyce. John R. Fordyce believed it should be enjoyed by all visitors, not just his male patrons. The move was also predicated on Fordyce's exhaustive research trying to prove that Spanish explorer Hernando De Soto or at least some of Desoto's men visited Hot Springs in October 1541. Supposedly, the scheme was proposed five years previously and permission was denied to place the fountain outside the bathhouse. Superintendent Bolten was also against the idea and the Washington Office refused to consider the matter until such time as the chief landscape engineer could investigate. Not wanting to set a precedent with lawn ornamentation and interfere with the carefully landscaped appearance of Bathhouse Row, the De Soto fountain remained inside Fordyce Bathhouse.[700]

Landscape improvements in 1927 brought the completed planting of the hedge around the second half of Bathhouse Row. Along the lower slope of the mountain, 200 maple and pine trees were planted and 2,000 additional tulip bulbs graced the Row, both residences, and Government Free Bathhouse. Two new pavilions were erected, one on North Mountain overlooking the cutoff road and one atop the ridge on West Mountain. They measured 10 by 14 feet and were made up of native rough stone, logs, and redwood shingles. Workers erected a storehouse to hide the unsightly water tank near the observation tower on Hot Springs Mountain. They also built a concrete road circling the

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[698] Superintendent Bolten to Director Mather, 9 July 1926, covering conditions during the month of June 1924. The barbecue took place on the evening of June 14. Aside from Stephen Mather, other prominent figures in attendance were former Secretary of the Interior John Barton Payne and Washington lawyer representing Hot Springs bathhouse interests W. T. S. Curtis.

[699] Superintendent Bolten to S. J. Erickson, Manager, Ozark Bathhouse, letter, 28 July 1926, file Ozark Bathhouse.

[700] John R. Fordyce to Director Mather, letter, 8 October 1926; Superintendent Bolten to Director Mather, letter, 17 November 1926; Assistant Director Cammerer to Superintendent Bolten, letter, 22 November 1926; and Superintendent Bolten to J. R. Fordyce, letter, 26 November 1926, all in RG 79, 900-05 pt. 2

tower and leading down to Fountain Street, bringing the park's road system to 12 miles total. Crews built two new trails. The Arlington Trail stretched from the North Mountain ridge road to the beginning of Goat Rock Trail on North Mountain. Another trail connected the superintendent's residence on Reserve Avenue to the Gorge auto campground where it connected to the Iron Springs Trail. The park's system of maintained trails totaled 10 miles. A second public comfort station was added to the campground where all buildings were stained "National Park brown."[701]

MURDER OF U.S. POLICEMAN JAMES A. CARY, 1927

Saturday afternoon, March 12, 1927, national park Policeman James A. Cary was murdered while on duty patrolling West Mountain. The 31-year-old Cary, a World War I Navy veteran, left a wife and two children, and was the first National Park Service ranger In the United States killed in the line of duty. When he failed to return to headquarters, a search found his vehicle, driver's door open, at the West Mountain summit that evening. Cary's own relatives found his body the following morning a quarter-mile away at the edge of a ravine where a struggle had taken place. Cary had been shot by unknown assailants with a .45 caliber pistol at close range through the chest. Suspicion soon pointed to bootleggers Cary had arrested on West Mountains a few months previously. Federal prohibition agents and the U.S. Attorney began an investigation but determined that the federal government lacked jurisdiction: it was not a federal crime to kill a federal employee until Congress made it a felony in 1934, and Arkansas had not ceded jurisdiction over West Mountain.[702]

Figure 108. James A. Cary, first National Park Service ranger killed in the line of duty, died March 12, 1927, on West Mountain (HSNP 13632, National Park Service)

When county and city investigations stalled, Superintendent Bolten requested NPS seek involvement of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). He appealed to Mather: "I think that the Department of Justice should send a man to Hot Springs to investigate this matter, inasmuch as Cary was a Federal employee… and Federal employees on duty are entitled to the protection of the national government. There is too much local politics involved in these matters, and

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[701] *Annual Report for 1927.*

[702] M. Jeff Ohlfs, "Cary's Story," *The Record* vol. 34 (Hot Springs, Ark.: Garland County Historical Society, 1993) 65-66. A brief note appeared under "Police Protection" in the December 1926 monthly report, as follows: "Raymond Hunt and Walter Weldon, white men, held to the Federal Grand Jury under bond of $750 each, on a charge of transporting and possessing whiskey within the park. They were found with ten gallons of whiskey." See Superintendent Bolten to Director Mather, 11 January 1927, covering conditions for the month of December 1926.

an unbiased and unprejudiced investigation—in my opinion—will not be had unless an outside man is sent here to investigate the case." Cary's widow had put up $500 and local citizens another $500 for the apprehension and conviction of the perpetrators.[703]

The FBI investigation pointed to bootleggers previously arrested by Cary and five men were indicted in the Cary murder case, but when the first trial resulted in a not guilty verdict,[704] charges against the others were soon dropped. Prosecution for the West Mountain bootlegging case proceeded with the prime suspect entering a *nolo contendere* plea. He spent 366 days in a federal prison.[705] The Cary murder case remains officially unsolved.[706]

While the Cary case remained in the headlines, attention within the park focused on the persistent issue of remodeling the old pump station/administration building. With a new building programmed for construction in the next decade and the old structure a blight on the end of a gleaming new Bathhouse Row, Bolten pressed for a solution. "Disgusted" with drawings produced by the NPS Landscape Division, Joseph Bolten accepted Mann and Stern's offer to design a proper plan. He sent the plan to Washington and suggested using the balance of funds from the sale of lots with a matching $25,000 congressional appropriation for the work, arguing, "It seems strange that the Government should require the bathhouses to put up substantial, imposing buildings, while they are content to house their administrative force in a building which was formerly an old pump house."[707] The Washington Office response pointed out that the present five-year development plan did not call for any remodel work until fiscal year 1932, and that the park's upcoming top priority was a $150,000 reservoir project.[708]

Into the mix came Senator Joe T. Robinson of Arkansas who wanted a new building and assistance from NPS in drafting the necessary legislation. He believed money spent on remodeling the old structure would be wasted when a new one was clearly needed.[709] Washington officials pointed out that the priority need was a new storage and reservoir system for the park, but Bolten held out hope that he could get both with Robinson's support.[710]

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[703] Superintendent Joseph Bolten to Director Mather, letter, 25 June 1928, Library Vertical File: Park Ranger James Cary Correspondence 1927-28.
[704] Ibid., "Five Indicted in Grand Jury Probe of Cary Murder," *Sentinel Record* 5 February 1929; and "Jury Finds Raymond Hunt Not Guilty of Murder James A. Cary After Four Hours Deliberation," *Sentinel Record* 1 March 1929.
[705] M. Jeff Ohlfs, "Cary's Story," *The Record* vol. 34 (Hot Springs, Ark.: Garland County Historical Society, 1993) 68. As an NPS law enforcement ranger killed in the line of duty, James A. Cary's name was inscribed in the National Law Enforcement Officer's Memorial in Washington, D.C., in 1991. Ibid., 69.
[706] A copy of Cary's Department of Justice/FBI file is in park archives: 90-1-7 Box 13324, 28/19F. See Library Vertical File: Park Ranger James Cary Department of Justice Files.
[707] Superintendent Bolten to Director Mather, letter, 17 May 1927, D34 Buildings General 1922-51.
[708] Acting Director Arthur E. Demaray to Superintendent Bolten, letter, 20 May 1927, and Superintendent Bolten to Director Mather, letter, 27 May 1927, both in D34 Buildings General 1922-51.
[709] Senator Joe T. Robinson to Dr. Borden [sic], Superintendent, letter, 4 June 1927, and Robinson to Stephen Mather, telegram, 4 June 1927, both in D34 Buildings General 1922-51.
[710] Superintendent Bolten to Director Mather, letter, 8 June 1927, D34 Buildings General 1922-51.

At the end of 1927, companion bills introduced in Congress to create Ouachita National Park were designed to carve 163,000 acres out of the nearby Ouachita National Forest in west-central Arkansas. It initiated two years of heated debate on the proposed park's merits. Stephen Mather, NPS director and chairman of the National Conference on State Parks, opposed it arguing it did not meet national park standards. An NPS study revealed the area lacked distinctive scenic or other features meriting national park status. Powerful local interests opposed it and with Hot Springs and Platt National Parks to the east and west, Interior also did not endorse it. Nevertheless, both houses of Congress passed the measure with large majorities and sent it to the White House for signature. President Calvin Coolidge, however, exercised his pocket veto authority by failing to sign it into law before his presidency came to an end.[711]

Persistent leaks in the thermal pools at the Government Free Bathhouse and Clinic required that all thirteen pools be torn out, re-leaded, and retiled. Leaks in the white men's shower room also required the same treatment before it was re-plastered and painted as were five rooms in the clinic. Improvements in the landscape of the park also came in 1928 with 5,000 pines, holly trees, and cedars planted on the mountain slopes to fill in treeless gaps in the forest canopy. Crews cleared all dead trees and down timber from West Mountain for the first time. A new West Mountain trail called the High Point stretched from the Prospect Avenue entrance area leading 2½ miles to the Whittington Avenue entrance.

Removal of unsightly cooling tanks from behind Bathhouse Row began to be used as fill in a sharp turn on West Mountain. New cooling tanks were erected by the Quapaw and Ozark Bathhouses. A new West Mountain comfort station was built of native stone and timber and crews installed a sprinkling system on the lawns gracing Bathhouse Row. The county constructed a new scenic road along the north boundary of the public campground to connect with the new Little Rock to Hot Springs highway.[712]

Congress revised its 1912 provision when it gave the city lot 3 of block 115 to build a new fire department building. Because the city failed to do so within five years, the revocation clause nullified the original measure. On May 29, 1928, Congress reauthorized the donation but allowed the city to sell the property and use proceeds to construct a new fire department building.[713]

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[711] Jane Jaree Lynn, "The Ouachita National Park: A Failed Proposal from the 1920s," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly,* Vol. 55, (Winter 1996) 410-11,421; and "The Ouachita Project," *Report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1929 and the Travel Season, 1929* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1929), 9. Director Horace Albright wrote: "It is my earnest hope that this area will not become a national park. That it is interesting and even beautiful, with its combination of streams, hills, and forest cover, is not denied. It has not, however, that distinctive character which is so essential to all national park projects if the national park system is to retain its position of preeminent importance in the scenic world. I believe the area should be considered for State park development."

[712] *Annual Report for 1928* and Superintendent Bolten to Director Mather, letter, 5 April 1928, covering conditions during the month of March 1928.

[713] *Act of Congress*, *29 May 1928* (45 Stat. 959).

Shockwaves reverberated through Hot Springs and the nation when Stephen T. Mather resigned his position on January 8, 1929, citing impaired health. Four days later, Assistant Director (field) and Superintendent of Yellowstone National Park Horace M. Albright succeeded Mather as director. Over the past fourteen years, Mather had pushed the national park system onto the public stage as something uniquely American and deserving of support and emulation. As the founder of the National Park Service, his devotion to the parks, and particularly Hot Springs National Park, was undeniable and his absence was keenly felt.[714] Unpublicized at the time, Director Mather had suffered a stroke on November 5, 1928, which left him partially paralyzed. He suffered a fatal stoke on January 22, 1930. His funeral was on January 25 at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, New Canaan, Connecticut, with burial in the Mather family cemetery at Darien, Connecticut.[715]

Mather's resignation came two months before the end of President Calvin Coolidge's presidency and the beginning of Herbert C. Hoover's. President Hoover appointed his boyhood friend Ray Lyman Wilbur as secretary of the Interior. Both Hoover and Wilbur had a Hot Springs connection. Hamp Williams, a prominent Hot Springs businessman and owner of a local hardware store, had served as Arkansas Food Administrator during the war and enjoyed a close professional association with both men. Soon, local business interests were pressing to have Williams named as superintendent of Hot Springs National Park and Williams notified his friend Ray Wilbur of his willingness to serve. Citing the special arrangement with USPHS and the "peculiar problems involved in the administration of this park," Wilbur discussed it with Hoover and, in short order, Secretary Wilbur appointed Hamp Williams of Hot Springs as chairman of a "Special Planning Committee" to make a study of Hot Springs National Park and provide recommendations for its "further development and utilization." The committee, to include the park superintendent and medical director of the Army and Navy Hospital, were charged with park "beautification and a further conservation of the water of the springs that it may serve a greater purpose"—all in advance of the 1932 centennial withdrawing Hot Springs Reservation "to be used in the public interest."[716]

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[714] "Resignation of Stephen T. Mather," *Report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1929 and the Travel Season, 1929* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1929), 2; and *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1929* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1929), 53. Albright received his appointment from Secretary of the Interior Roy Owen West.

[715] "Death of Former Director Mather," *Park Service Bulletin,* No. 49 (January 1930) 1-2, Box 144, Folder 13, Horace M. Albright Papers 2056, University of California, Los Angeles. To honor him and his work on behalf of the national parks, a group formed called "Stephen T. Mather Appreciation" and presented to NPS 25 memorial plaques for placement in national parks and monuments throughout the country as memorials to the first director. By 1934, the majority had been placed and dedicated. Hot Springs, General Grant, and Mount McKinley national parks had also received Mather plaques "and locations for them are now under consideration by the Branch of Plans and Designs." See: *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1934* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1934), 190.

[716] "Department of the Interior, Memorandum for the Press," 20 April 1929, Washington, D.C., A24 Committees 1929-53. The appointment was signed by Wilbur and Hoover on April 19, 1929. See Acting Director Demaray to Superintendent Bolten, letter, 23 April 1929. A delighted John R. Fordyce was one of those encouraging the appointment of Williams, writing "such a committee should act as an intermediary body between the citizens of Hot Springs and the Interior Department and that it should function not only

Within a month of Interior announcing the Special Planning Committee, the Hot Springs *Sentinel Record* began agitating for the widening of Central Avenue through downtown Hot Springs, a move that would destroy the trees and promenade fronting Bathhouse Row commonly referred to as "Magnolia Row." This represented a movement heralded by those who were tired of the traffic congestion along the city's principal artery through Hot Springs valley. They were opposed by those who wanted to preserve and protect Magnolia Row and who urged the city to find alternate routes to mitigate the congestion.[717] The matter reached the attention of Rep. Louis Cramton, chairman of the Subcommittee on Appropriations for the Interior Department. Cramton opposed ceding the eight-foot strip of land to the city. Acting Director Arno B. Cammerer acknowledged that the issue "seems to be made annually or oftener to do away with Magnolia Row…. While these propositions have been made at various periods, they have never been pressed with much vigor, probably because the thinking element of the good town of Hot Springs realizes the value of this wonderful promenade and would rise up in arms were any such proposition made seriously with the force of the city officials behind it."[718]

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on matters of conservation of water, development of roads, etc. but it should pass on business matters, which you must recognize are of vital importance to this community." See John R. Fordyce to Herbert Hoover, letter, 30 March 1929 (quotation), and Ray Lyman Wilbur to Hamp Williams, letter, 26 March 1929, both in John F. Fordyce Papers F759, Series 4, Box 8, Folder 11, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

[717] Inez H. Whitfield to Director Albright, letter, 26 May 1929, A24 Committees 1929-53.

[718] Louis C. Cramton to National Park Service, letter, 31 May 1929, and (quotation) Acting Director Cammerer to Representative Cramton, letter, 1 June 1929, both in A24 Committees 1929-53.

CHAPTER NINE

U.S. Public Health Service Management Continues

SUPERINTENDENCY OF HUGH DE VALIN, M.D., 1929-1930

Hamp Williams was slow to organize his Special Planning Committee and did not do so until the reassignment of Joseph Bolten. Williams informed Secretary Wilbur that he had no information regarding any of the pressing matters referred to his committee, namely enlargement of the Army and Navy Hospital, widening of Central Avenue, and the request of P. F. Connelly Paving Company to purchase park land for stone quarrying for road work.[719] Bolten informed the Washington Office that Williams had held no meetings and that Williams had told the local press none would be held until a new superintendent arrived.[720] Under the special arrangement with USPHS, Bolten's five year assignment came to an end on July 15. Bolten was reassigned and a new surgeon entered on duty as superintendent July 16, 1929: Hugh de Valin, M.D.[721]

A week later, Superintendent de Valin was in Hamp Williams' office along with Col. Robert U. Patterson, U.S. Army Medical Corps, to organize the Special Planning Committee. They discussed the Army and Navy Hospital's proposal for additional land in which to expand operations and de Valin, unfamiliar with the matter, asked for additional time to investigate it. The August 7 meeting took place in de Valin's office and focused on plans to pave or oil Reserve Avenue bordering the national park and blocks 27, 81, 82, 83, and 84, as well as portions of Laurel and Spring Streets with $4,000 available in federal funds if adjoining property owners contributed half the cost. The men also discussed proposed construction of new thermal water storage tanks and the hospital land addition request. They did not entertain the concept of widening Central Avenue.[722]

The Special Planning Committee met the third time on August 20, 1929, again in de Valin's office. The group studied a proposed expansion of the Army and Navy

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[719] Secretary Wilbur to Hamp Williams, letter, 4 June 1929, A24 Committees 1929-53. A subsequent park manager determined from files and conversations that the special planning committee "was more of a troublesome nature to park administration than it was of assistance." See Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 8 February 1933, A54 Inspections, Investigations, Etc., 1923-1953.

[720] Superintendent Bolten to Director Albright, letter, 5 June 1929, A24 Committees 1929-53. He wrote: "Inasmuch as the Committee has never been organized I cannot take any action regarding the transmittal of the correspondence to this Committee." The statement is clear indication that friction existed between Bolten and Williams.

[721] Hugh de Valin's obituary does not mention his detail as Hot Springs National Park superintendent, but during his seventeen month tenure, USPHS promoted him to senior surgeon (July 1, 1930), and after his transfer he became a medical director (September 5, 1931). He retired to New Orleans in 1939 and died at age 69, February 3, 1942. See "Deaths: Hugh De Valin," *Journal of the American Medical Association* Vol. 118, No. 9 (February 28, 1942) 749.

[722] Minutes of Special Planning Committee, 22 July and 7 August 1929, A24 Committees 1929-53.

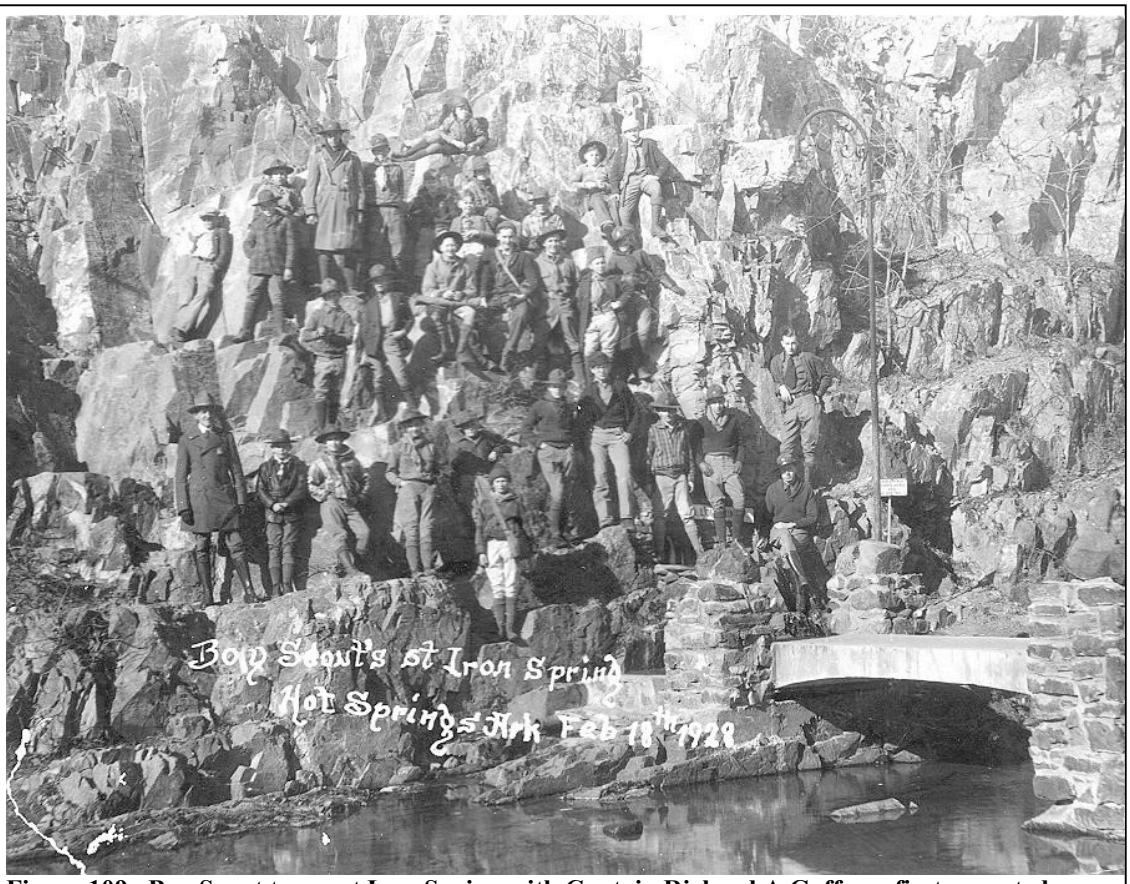

Figure 109. Boy Scout troop at Iron Spring with Captain Richard A Gaffney, first mounted policeman at bottom left, February 18, 1928 (HSNP 5161, National Park Service)

Hospital and made a recommendation to the secretary. They evaluated the need for new storage tanks for the conservation of thermal water and urged the secretary that "every effort be made to induce Congress to appropriate the necessary funds for the construction of the storage and distribution system."[723] This came following the spring 1929 inspection of NPS Chief Engineer F. A. Kittredge and Chief Landscape Architect Thomas C. Vint who estimated $143,500 was required to build a new storage and distribution system.[724]

[723] Minutes of Special Planning Committee, 20 August 1929, A24 Committees 1929-53. Williams had urged NPS to provide special stationery and a clerk to type minutes and special reports the committee would generate. The response from Washington was that the committee was to function informally and the request was denied. See Acting Director Demaray to Superintendent de Valin, letter, 12 August 1929, A24 Committees 1929-53.

[724] Assistant Engineer J. B. Hamilton, *Report of Construction of Hot Water Collecting and Distribution System, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas* (San Francisco, California: NPS Field Headquarters, January 26, 1932), 2. For several days in March 1929, several bathhouses ran out of thermal water for several hours each afternoon. Congress appropriated the funds for the new system May 14, 1930.

The committee did not meet that fall when the Wall Street Crash of 1929 occurred. The event precipitated a decade-long Great Depression that impacted the global economy and did not abate in the United States until it mobilized for World War II.[725] However, Congress did soon act on two matters that had been under the committee's purview. First, it appropriated $450,000 for the Secretary of War to build a new Army and Navy Hospital and raze old buildings, but with no additional land from Hot Springs National Park. Further, any exterior design had to be approved by NPS.[726]

Figure 110. Imperial Bathhouse on Reserve Avenue, late 1920s (HSNP 6137, National Park Service)

Second, Congress conveyed a tract of NPS land to P. F. Connelly Paving Company of Little Rock for quarrying.[727]

[725] Arkansas did not enjoy the same level of economic prosperity that other states did following World War I. In 1929, Arkansas was ranked forty-sixth in the country for per capita income while at the same time being ranked first in per capita indebtedness. See Gail S. Murray, "Forty Years Ago: The Great Depression Comes to Arkansas," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* Vol. 29, No. 4 (1970): 293.
[726] *Act of Congress*, *18 June 1930* (46 Stat. 781).
[727] *Act of Congress, 25 June 1930* (46 Stat. 1915).

Park improvements during 1929 were assorted. A new ramp for wheelchairs was installed at the main entrance of the Government Free Bathhouse and Clinic. Two new shelterhouses were built, one on West Mountain, the other on North Mountain where a

Figure 111. Four visitors on promenade in horse-drawn carriage with Arlington Hotel in background, c. 1930 (HSNP 1239, National Park Service)

new comfort station was erected at the junction of Canyon and Ramble Street. Workers finished demolition of all old storage tanks behind Bathhouse Row. They converted part of the old reservoir behind the Fountain Street residence to serve as a paint shop and storehouse.[728]

THE WARM SPRINGS CONNECTION

Press accounts in November 1929 focused on New York Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt's advocacy for the Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute for Rehabilitation in fighting the scourge of poliomyelitis, or infantile paralysis more commonly known as polio. An article in the *Washington Star* publicized the unique colony at Warm Springs, Georgia, and Roosevelt's experiences in regaining some mobility, going from a wheelchair to crutches. The governor believed that the Warm Springs experiment could be replicated at other thermal spring resorts around the country. The NPS Washington Office forwarded the article to Hot Springs National Park with the inquiry that similar hydrotherapy facilities there might be developed. Hugh de Valin was excited about the possibilities and cited the instance of a little boy with polio at the Government Free

[728] *Annual Report for 1929.* Superintendent de Valin failed to mention the Special Planning Committee.

Bathhouse and Clinic being treated by Dr. Oliver C. Wenger with positive results. He reported: "…the benefit is no doubt derived from the fact that the patient is able to exercise the affected muscles in water to a greater degree than is possible in air; the difference in specific gravity and buoyant property of the water making this possible." He continued:

> *"I certainly think there is a splendid chance for the government to do something here in the way of the erection of pools, etc., for the treatment of this type of case. In fact I think a wonderful opportunity for scientific research by the government is not being taken advantage of in Hot Springs. The truth of the matter is, we really know practically nothing as to the actual value of the Hot Springs water, and the information is given to the public is mostly guesswork and absolutely unscientific. In my opinion, appropriations should be made available whereby a thorough study along true scientific lines might be conducted in order to determine just what value these springs are to the general public."*[729]

Figure 112. Cascade feature (at left) at Arlington Lawn, early 1930s (HSNP 1282, National Park Service)

Associate Director Cammerer urged de Valin to make a full report on how Hot Springs might become a principal treatment facility for polio victims with an eye on submitting it

[729] Superintendent de Valin to Associate Director Arno B. Cammerer, letter, 12 November 1929, with enclosure: "New York Executive Visions Cure for Paralysis Victims," *Washington Sunday Star* 3 November 1929, A22 Warm Springs Foundation, 1929-35.

to Secretary Ray Lyman Wilbur, himself a physician.[730] Superintendent de Valin, inexperienced in the field, knew that special pools were constructed for prescribed exercise under direction by orthopedists and trained physio-therapists, and that pools at the Government Free Bathhouse were built for bathing, not exercising. Albright and Cammerer decided the only way to investigate the matter would be to send de Valin to Warm Springs. Consulting Engineer John R. Fordyce, owner of the Fordyce Bathhouse, proposed driving to Warm Springs and taking de Valin and Oliver C. Wenger, USPHS clinic director, with him.[731]

Figure 113. Caretaker's residence at Whittington Park (HSNP 1252, National Park Service)

The Hot Springs contingent made the trip to Warm Springs, Georgia, December 29, 1929, to January 5, 1930. In Georgia, the thermal springs issued from limestone at a rate three times the volume as that of Hot Springs and at a tepid eighty-nine degrees. They interviewed the staff and patients and observed the mechano-therapy sessions whereby patients grasped the parallel bars with water up to chest-high and lifted the weight of one foot to the other using the water's buoyancy. Each session lasted fifteen to thirty minutes after which patients were encouraged to swim around in the larger pool. Many patients were able to walk after a few months of underwater treatment. The Hot Springs group reached the following conclusions:

> *"We believe that a small pool could be constructed on the property of the Free Government bath house whereby a similar service could be rendered to our indigent patients. We have certain advantages in Hot Springs:*

1. *A natural water that can be graduated in temperature.*
2. *A group of patients who are suffering from paralysis due to syphilis who would be under treatment at the same time they are taking mechano-therapy measures.*
3. *We see many cases of arthritis who would be improved and recover use of joints and muscles that are becoming atrophied through disuse.*
4. *We have all the consultants and hospital equipment necessary to uncover and correct foci of infection.*

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[730] Associate Director Cammerer to Superintendent de Valin, letter, 18 November 1929, A22 Warm Springs Foundation, 1929-35.

[731] Superintendent de Valin to Associate Director Cammerer, letter, 3 December 1929; Associate Director Cammer to Superintendent de Valin, letter, 12 December 1929; and Consulting Engineer Fordyce to Superintendent de Valin, letter, 9 December 1929, all in A22 Warm Springs Foundation 1929-35.

5. *We believe that such a pool would be of immense service to our patients and would offer an opportunity for investigation along these lines."*[732]

As NPS contemplated the possibilities and as the national economic downturn worsened, John R. Fordyce began proposing that perhaps businesses along Bathhouse Row might consider combining to achieve greater efficiencies. He noted that during the 1927-1928 period, total receipts were $275,964 with expenditures at $222,205 yielding a net gain of only $53,759. With an original investment set at $1.5 million, the amount represented an anemic 3.5 percent return. Achieving economies in workforce, utilities, and closing certain bathhouses during slow periods, would maximize profits.[733] The official NPS position, however, was not to be the one to propose such a radical measure, preferring instead for it to originate among the bathhouse concessioners themselves—an unlikely event.[734] Nonplussed, Fordyce asked if Interior would grant a concession for him to build a sanatorium—a medical facility where people affected by long-term illnesses can receive treatment and those recovering from severe illnesses can recuperate—behind the Fordyce Bathhouse. He proposed utilizing the area formerly occupied by the Government Free Bathhouse. Director Albright nixed that proposal, replying:

> *"The Government desires the area back of Bath House Row, especially that area fronting the park, to be kept free from buildings that spoil the view of the park area from Central Avenue or from the paths within the park area on Hot Springs Mountain towards the city. The extension of the Army and Navy Hospital up Reserve Avenue, requiring the relocation of the Superintendent's residence and other plans for improvement, will result in a dearth of space for our own local national park purposes, and if any structures will be permitted along Bath House Row, it would be near the southern end toward the Army and Navy Hospital for our own purposes."*

Any sanatorium would have to be built outside Hot Springs National Park.[735]

On the issue of what land would be relinquished, if any, to the War Department for the Army and Navy Hospital reconstruction and expansion, Director Albright

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[732] Superintendent de Valin, "A Survey of the Georgia Warm Springs Foundation at Warm Springs, Georgia," January 1930, A22 Warm Springs Foundation, 1929-35.
[733] John R. Fordyce "Physical Reasons for the Combination of the Bath Houses on Bath House Row," 10 January 1930, RG 79, File 900-05, Hot Springs Public Utility Operators and Privileges, Public Utility Operators, Fordyce Bath House, Miscellaneous Correspondence.
[734] Acting Director Cammerer to John R. Fordyce, letter, 27 February 1930, RG 79, File 900-05, Hot Springs Public Utility Operators and Privileges, Public Utility Operators, Fordyce Bath House, Miscellaneous Correspondence.
[735] Director Albright to Superintendent de Valin, letter, June 1930, RG 79, File 900-05, Hot Springs Public Utility Operators and Privileges, Public Utility Operators, Fordyce Bath House, Miscellaneous Correspondence. Fordyce also asked permission to build a rooftop structure so that patrons could enjoy sun baths. Albright responded there would be no objection to any bathhouse doing so, but design plans would first have to meet with NPS approval.

established a board to make recommendations. Associate Director Cammerer, Superintendent de Valin, and Hamp Williams were all members of that board.[736]

REJECTION OF THE MANN AND STERN PLAN

NPS sent Junior Landscape Architect Charles E. Peterson to scope out a formal park development plan for Hot Springs in April 1930. He focused on the west slope of Hot Springs Mountain which Peterson described as a "hodge-podge" and "nothing but a catalog of lost hopes and unfulfilled desires of the garden laborers employed here in the past." For a formal development, he recommended someone from the San Francisco field headquarters be sent for three months to report and make design drawings, noting "This park is different from the western parks in that the extensive use of exotics is desirable here…. The formal development should reach from the Imperial bath house (on the south) to the present shop building (on the north), and from the back side of Bath House Row (below) to the concrete road (above). All other ground should be helped back to its natural state as quickly as possible." Peterson evaluated the 1919 plans prepared by Mann and Stern depicting an outdoor concert hall, a small formal park, and a large, ornate conservatory. While complimenting its "fine grade of draftsmanship and design," he called its "application to the problem as a whole… absolutely ridiculous," noting that the first two projects were precluded by other on-site construction. He added, "The conservatory, I am sure, would never be seriously contemplated by anyone but a visionary draftsman. Buildings of this style are phenomena peculiar to a passing school of design."[737]

Junior Landscape Architect Peterson went on to state that the original national park consisted of four to five square miles but because no appropriations were forthcoming "in the early days… park lands [were sold] piece-meal into private hands. This policy was carried to the point where there are no more level building sites on park land." He perceived Hot Springs as two separate, distinct areas separated by Central Avenue: the summits of Hot Springs and North Mountains and the summit of West Mountain. He observed there were actually two other small, isolated areas: Whittington Park and "a piece of ground on Sugar Loaf Mountain." Peterson stated the two tracts were of no value for park purposes, costly to maintain, and should be disposed to "any party [that] can be found to take over the titles." The remaining park areas were accessed by eight distinct entrances, five of which had the "sneaking up an alley effect. The

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[736] "Board Appointed to Study Proposed Transfer of Certain Hot Springs Lands to Army," *Park Service Bulletin,* No. 49 (January 1930) 1-2, Box 144, Folder 13, Horace M. Albright Papers 2056, University of California, Los Angeles. Cammerer made an inspection on January 9 and consulted with the Special Planning Committee. See Superintendent de Valin to Director Albright, letter, 8 February 1930, covering conditions for the month of January 1930.

[737] Charles E. Peterson, "Design of a Formal Park Development for Hot Springs Mountain; Report to Mr. Vint," 17 April 1930, D30 Roads and Trails 1930-43. Arno B. Cammerer recalled the fate of the Mann and Stern plan as follows: "I saw them last some eleven years ago after they had been in the Department… and Mr. Mather at that time had decided that carrying them out was too costly; in other words, that Congress would never be induced to provide the money for these plans, which instead of $10,000 would run into $200,000 or $250,000 for fulfillment, and that of course is out of the question." See Associate Director Cammerer to Hamp Williams, letter, 28 October 1930, A24 Committees 1929-53.

condition is deplorable." Three other entrances were opposite tracts of private property which had not been built upon, were currently for sale, and should be purchased to secure the area for park purposes. He added: "No one who has not been to Hot Springs park can realize the unfortunate condition resulting from the embarrassment of the park boundaries by private holdings. I feel that by prompt action the situation can still be pulled out of the fire. It will necessitate the spending of some money, but the results will lift the whole park standard here."[738]

Figure 114. Visitors swimming in the Gulpha Gorge Campground pool and sitting on the diving platform, c. early 1930s (HSNP 5475, National Park Service)

Peterson next evaluated potential sites for a new superintendent's house because the one on Reserve Avenue was to be claimed by a proposed expansion of the Army and Navy Hospital. Noting that it cost a total of $35,000, a replacement would not likely be as grand but needed to be "placed in a setting that will enhance its dignity." He evaluated seven different potential sites but opined that a vacant city lot on Prospect Avenue, opposite Pecan, was the ideal location if it could be purchased.[739]

The persistent issue of the annual $60 privilege fee (*Act of Congress, 5 June 1920*) emerged yet again when the Garland County-Hot Springs Medical Society petitioned Interior Secretary Wilbur to eliminate it on the basis that it was inequitably applied. While local physicians were expected to pay, those physicians around the country prescribing the waters for their patients were not. In addition, while USPHS physicians were exempt because of their charitable work at the Government Free Bathhouse and Clinic, local physicians who also dealt with indigent patients and performed other charitable work were assessed the fee. Superintendent de Valin endorsed their complaint. While the hated fee was first invoked to provide revenue for park operations, the income no longer went for that purpose but directly to the general fund in the U.S. Treasury. He argued that the fee charged to attendants and masseurs should also be discontinued because other bathhouse employees like clerks and managers

[738] Ibid., 18 April 1930. He suggested perhaps the 129 acres of salable timber on Sugarloaf Mountain be exchanged for the lots fronting park entranceways. As for the formal main entrance, "it is now of little importance, hidden behind two large bath houses, and is used almost entirely by loafers of the regular city park bench type."

[739] Ibid., 24 April 1930. A new superintendent's residence, while much debated and studied, never materialized.

were not subject to the fee.[740] Recognizing that Interior and NPS had long opposed discontinuing the privilege fee, Director Albright responded:

> *"This attitude is based not primarily upon the collection of revenue but because of the fact that it is a fee based upon an income derived directly from the availability and use of national park waters within the park and also because of the administrative functions necessary to be undertaken by the Government for the proper supervision of the activities of physicians prescribing the hot waters of the park. I cannot avoid the conclusion, after careful consideration of this matter that the fee charged physicians, as well as the fees required to be paid by bath house attendants and masseurs, are proper and just under the circumstances, and am therefore, unwilling to favor any movement for the repeal of the legislation under which the collection of these fees is authorized."*[741]

Figure 115. Superintendent Hugh de Valin stands on a Prospect Avenue proposed site for a new official residence that was never built, c. 1930 (HSNP 7267, National Park Service)

Nonetheless, local pressure succeeded in a bill being introduced in the House of Representatives to eliminate the despised privilege fee altogether.[742] The matter was clarified when Congress passed and President Hoover signed legislation amending the 1920 provision. It removed the set $60 fee by authorizing the secretary "to assess and collect fees from physicians who desire to prescribe the hot waters for examination and registration" and to

[740] J. L. Greene, M.D., W. T. Wooton, M.D., and Charles Dake, M.D., petition to Secretary Wilbur, 6 February 1930; and Superintendent de Valin to Director Albright, letter, 6 March 1930, A18 Registered Physicians 1925-32.

[741] Director Albright to Superintendent de Valin, letter, 21 March 1930, A18 Registered Physicians 1925-32. The Federal Registration Board recommended Secretary Wilbur seek privilege fee elimination by Congress and in the interim urged him to suspend the application and registration fees for all retired commissioned Army and Navy Hospital and USPHS officers. Concern by the NPS Washington Office over this matter rested principally on how its elimination would affect revenues accruing to the government for park administration—something which impacted annual congressional appropriations. NPS officials pledged to discuss it with the Bureau of the Budget and members of the Interior Department congressional subcommittee. See Acting Director Demaray to Superintendent de Valin, letter, 11 July 1929, A18 Registered Physicians 1925-32.

[742] H. R. 14275, "A Bill to regulate the prescribing and use of waters from the Hot Springs Reservation at Hot Springs, Arkansas, and for other purposes," introduced 3 December 1930 by Representative David Glover of Arkansas, A18 Registered Physicians 1924-32.

"assess and collect annual charges from bath attendants and masseurs to cover the cost of physical examinations." This meant the despised $60 fee was removed, but future nominal fees could be charged to cover NPS administrative costs.[743]

Figure 116. Visitors atop Goat Rock, early 1930s (HSNP 10183, National Park Service)

REVOLT AGAINST THE U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

Local irritation with USPHS and its assignment of superintendents became manifest when four bathhouse owners complained to Director Horace Albright about their arbitrary rules and personal whims, particularly of those managers assigned since 1922 (Waring, Bolten, de Valin). The owners declared "we are entitled to some consideration in the formation of rules directly affecting our business and should not be forced to comply… without being allowed the privilege of a hearing so that our side of the case may be intelligently submitted." They spelled out a list of grievances over new rules which many times conflicted with those issued by the preceding superintendent and stated none of those "under the Public Health (Service) regime have been men who are familiar with the business or commercial side of this situation or who are acquainted with local conditions generally." They complained that most of the rules were "old and obsolete" and required revision, but they wanted representation at any future meetings

[743] *Act of Congress*, *2 March 1931* (46 Stat. 1462). The same act also allowed Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital to mortgage Lots 1, 2, 3 and 4 in Block 114. The privilege fee for physicians ceased on June 30, 1931 and other fees were cut in half. See *Annual Report for 1931*.

"when said rules and regulations affecting our business and revenues are being considered."[744]

Figure 117. Assistant Superintendent's residence on Fountain Street, c. 1930 (HSNP, National Park Service)

The bathhouse lessees protested again when NPS suddenly lowered the Fordyce Bathhouse rate, calling it "inequitable, unjust and discriminatory to our several interests." They demanded NPS restore the former Fordyce rate of $23 for twenty-one baths, "thereby affording your other Lessees a fair opportunity to compete in business at rates that will not be less profitable. Because of the adverse national economic conditions, they did not want an across the board rate reduction. They argued, "A reduction of rates on the part of the other bath houses (were the same permitted by the Department) to meet this new unequal competitive basis will not solve the question, as none of the houses have to date earned a fair return on their investments under the past rate schedules."[745]

Park maintenance projects abounded in fiscal year 1930. A contract was let to oil all park roads and to pave a section of Reserve Avenue thereby eliminating the dust nuisance. Electric light poles began to be switched out from the former iron standard variety which was subject to rust and required constant scraping and painting to a concrete type which were poured and installed by park maintenance.

Hamp Williams' Special Planning Committee met on September 24, 1930, with two important agenda topics: proposed improvements at the Fordyce Bathhouse and formal park development. On the Fordyce matter, it endorsed the proposal to add therapeutic pools and other equipment for the treatment of polio, but did not approve the employment of a physician dedicated to that therapy because it would set an unwelcome precedent. As for park development, the reports of Junior Landscape Architect Peterson were read and the group recommended a skilled landscape architect be assigned to develop design plans. It endorsed Peterson's recommendation to purchase private tracts

[744] E. L. Howlett, M. T. Relyea, J. F. Manier, and G. E. Hogaboom, "Committee representing Hot Springs Bath Houses," to Director Albright, letter, 9 May 1930, C3823 1929-33.
[745] Petition to "Director of National Parks," 11 July 1930, C3823 1929-33. Signatories represented the following bathhouses: Buckstaff, Ozark, Quapaw, Lamar, Imperial, Maurice, Superior, and Hale.

at Prospect, Ramble, and Fountain Streets to protect park entrances there as well as a proposed sale of Whittington Park with proceeds used for national park improvements.[746]

Interior's General Land Office undertook a comprehensive boundary survey in the fall of 1930. For three months, Cadastral Engineer Arthur W. Brown and his crew conducted a cadastral survey to depict accurate dimensions of boundaries and confirm ownership titles. Brown prepared a map depicting all roads, trails, and buildings within Hot Springs National Park. He utilized aerial photography taken by the U.S. Army Air Corps of the area to conduct the cadastral survey. Before departing for his Denver headquarters, Brown took NPS personnel around the external park boundary where monuments and witness trees were located. It demonstrated for the first time the actual federal boundary and confirmed that several privately owned buildings were on park property. In one instance, an African American man's house and outbuildings were found to be within the park. Once the legal plat was finalized, NPS could then have the family in trespass removed from government property. The Brown survey also confirmed that several unauthorized roads existed as back entrances to private property across park land. Those illegal traces would also be eliminated.[747] Completion of the re-survey resulted in 18.79 acres added to the national park, bringing its total area to 945.79 acres.[748]

SUPERINTENDENCY OF GEORGE L. COLLINS, M.D., 1930-1932

The seventeen month long superintendency of Senior Surgeon Hugh de Valin came to an end on December 12, 1930. Under the special arrangement Interior and NPS had with USPHS, George L. Collins, M.D., entered on duty the following day. Collins, a medical director, would be the fifth and final USPHS employee detailed to the Hot Springs superintendency. To facilitate the turnover in superintendents and ensure continuity of park operations, NPS had promoted the park's chief clerk, George C. Bolton, to the position of assistant superintendent, a title which better suited the management and administrative duties assigned to his position. One of Superintendent Collins' first acts was to call an informal meeting of the Special Planning Committee. Collins sought to alleviate growing local unemployment by hatching a scheme to use matching federal road funds with those from a proposed citizen's bond effort in order to pave the roads in and adjoining Whittington Park. The bond issue fizzled as unemployment continued to grow.[749]

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[746] Minutes of Special Planning Committee, 24 September 1930, A24 Committees 1929-53.

[747] Superintendent de Valin to Director Albright, letter, 5 November 1930, covering conditions during the months of October; and Superintendent George L. Collins to Director Albright, letter, 12 January 1931, covering conditions during the month of December 1930. The cadastral survey remained incomplete in 1932 as NPS wished to have two non-contiguous tracts surveyed and monumented. See Superintendent Thomas J. Allen to Director Albright, 8 March 1932, covering conditions during the month of February 1932.

[748] *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1933* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1933) 161.

[749] Superintendent Collins to Director Albright, letter, 14 February 1931, covering conditions during the month of January 1931. The idea of paving Whittington Avenue to help unemployed workers came from

One sizeable NPS-sponsored jobs program not available to local laborers involved construction for a park wide thermal water central distribution system. Launched in December 1930, NPS Assistant Engineer J. B. Hamilton detailed from San Francisco supervised the contract awarded to Wickes Engineering and Construction Company of Des Moines, Iowa. The project extended through the end of 1931 and also utilized park maintenance crews. The 1891 impounding reservoir was utilized as the central collecting point after being cleaned and sealed.

Figure 118. John R. Fordyce stands beside a novaculite boulder on Indian Mountain, 1930 (HSNP 7277, National Park Service)

The original deteriorated piping was abandoned and a new twelve-inch distribution pipe extended north along Central Avenue to a juncture between the Superior and Hale bathhouses. From there, a pipeline went east up the mountain to a new 400,000 gallon concrete reservoir. To supply bathhouses away from the Row, a high-pressure pipeline followed the same course but extended to another 100,000 gallon reservoir higher up the mountain. Both systems were controlled from a pumping station adjacent to the Administration Building where centrifugal pumps would keep thermal water flowing from the collecting main to the elevated reservoirs until at capacity when a float valve system automatically shut-off the pumps.

The work involved opening all thermal springs, cleaning them out, and re-capping with brick and concrete tops. Many of the springs were found to be leaking badly and new three-inch outlet pipes eliminated the leaks and connected the springs to the collecting main. Each bathhouse was connected to the distributing main by four-inch pipes and water meters were installed to measure output. As with most newly designed systems there were problems. Persistent leaks plagued the pipelines no matter how tight the gaskets were tightened. Asbestos gaskets were removed and replaced with rubber ones, but Assistant Engineer Hamilton concluded it was impossible to stop the leakage completely. Finally, a subcontractor completely replaced the concrete front promenade along Bathhouse Row and park crews regraded and reseeded the lawns.[750]

Horace Albright. See Director Albright to Superintendent Collins, telegram, 23 January 1931, A18 Registered Physicians 1925-32.

[750] *Hot Springs National Park, Bathhouse Row: Mechanical and Piping Systems; Written Historical and Descriptive Data, HAER No. AR-4* (Washington, D.C.: Historic American Engineering Record, National Park Service, 1987), 16-17; *Report of Civil Engineering Division* (Appendix D) in *Annual Report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30,*

Congressional action in early 1931 related to Hot Springs National Park involved acceptance of a land donation and retention and directed use of another tract. First, Congress authorized acceptance of adjacent land described as the north half southwest quarter section 27, township 2 south, range 19 west as part of the national park.[751] The donation by Col. John R. Fordyce consisted of sixty-three acres and adjoined the public campground giving NPS property on both sides of Gulpha Creek. The Fordyce tract also included prehistoric Native American novaculite quarries on Indian Mountain.[752] Second, Congress considered a bill on the Arlington Lawn area once the site of the burned and demolished Arlington Hotel. After the 1923 fire, Horace Albright wrote:

> *"the decision was made by this service to keep the old site free and develop it as a park. This decision was based on two underlying reasons: First, because it had been found that the park is over-bathhoused and over-hotelled, and secondly, because of the need of some recreational space in the form of a park which might be landscaped to beautify this particular location."*

Albright added that NPS might also need it as the future site of a new administration building. In his explanation to Secretary Wilbur, he stated

> *"While this site is still under lease with the Arlington Hotel Co., under which this service has arranged for landscape treatment of the area with a view to providing a breathing place in this congested area, this lease will expire on March 6, 1932, and it is very desirable that the site be kept free thereafter from additional hotel or bathhouse buildings."*[753]

The bill provided that following lease expiration, it be "kept, retained, and maintained by the United States for park and landscaping purposes; and no new lease shall be granted by the Secretary of the Interior for the erection of another hotel, bathhouse, or other

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1931 and the Travel Season, 1931 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931), 124; and Superintendent Collins to Director Albright, letter, 5 December 1931, covering conditions during the month of November 1931.

[751] *Act of Congress, 14 February 1931* (46 Stat. 1106).

[752] Sharon Shugart, *The Hot Springs of Arkansas Through the Years: A Chronology of Events* (Hot Springs, Ark.: National Park Service, 2004) and *Annual Report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1931 and the Travel Season, 1931* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931), 60. Conveyance was delayed until 1935 when the secretary accepted the deed. Description of the archeological part was as follows: "During its Indian occupation the Hot Springs region was the center of the flint implement industry. The deeded land contains a quarry of novaculite, originally worked by the Caddo, Tunica and Quapaw Indians, who traded the arrowheads made from this mineral with tribes as far distant as Virginia and the Gulf of Mexico. Piles of waste chips from the nearby quarry, left by these aboriginal artificers, may be seen today by the visitor." See "Hot Springs Park Enlarged," *Park Service Bulletin,* Vol. 5, No. 5 (July 1935), 9, Box 312, Horace M. Albright Papers 2056, University of California, Los Angeles.

[753] Director Albright to Secretary Wilbur, letter, 12 January 1931, printed with Wilbur's concurrence in *To Provide for the Retention by the United States of a Site Within the Hot Springs National Park Formerly Occupied by the Arlington Hotel and Bathhouse for Park and Landscape Purposes,* House of Representatives, Report No. 2260, 71st Congress, 3d Session.

structure thereon."[754] "Or other structure thereon" precluded a new administration building. Both measures were signed by President Hoover on February 14, 1931.

The year saw two milestones reached, both with nineteenth century roots. First, NPS received official notification that the Bath House Association formally "disorganized" on December 29, 1930.[755] Because of its important liaison role with NPS management, the official NPS response was for the local organization to restructure and continue operations. Second, Interior Secretary Wilbur recommended and President Hoover approved placing all NPS superintendents and custodians into the U.S. Civil Service system—no longer subject to political patronage appointments. This occurred on August 10, 1931, as Director Albright reported: "During the year most of these officers were reallocated to grades and salaries more nearly commensurate with the dignity and responsibilities of their positions."[756]

Associate Director Arno B. Cammerer came to Hot Springs and spent twelve days inspecting and evaluating park operations. Chief Landscape Architect Thomas C. Vint joined Cammerer and the two consulted on scenic features and landscape improvements. The men investigated the proposed new road leading from North Mountain to U.S. Highway 70 and were joined by Assistant Engineer Hamilton, Consulting Engineer John R. Fordyce, and Hamp Williams, chairman of the Special Planning Committee. The group continued discussions on a proposed site for a new superintendent's residence. On March 30, bathhouse owners and managers and the chamber of commerce hosted Cammerer to a luncheon at the Arlington Hotel.[757] During his address at the gathering, Cammerer stated "Hot Springs had been the football of politics for years and for that reason it was hard to convince the appropriations committee that Hot Springs was more than a city park and therefore it had not come in for the improvements so much needed." He believed that with the assistance of trained NPS professionals this perception would change. He declared that NPS was interested in the national park's future,

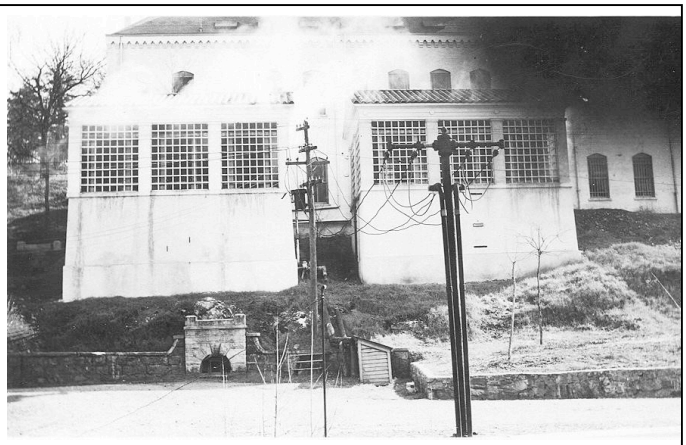

Figure 119. Thermal water cooling towers behind Ozark and Quapaw bathhouses, c. early 1930s (HSNP 1710, National Park Service)

[754] *Act of Congress, 14 February 1931* (46 Stat. 1109).
[755] H. H. Bell, President, Bath House Association, to Superintendent Collins, letter, 16 January 1931, A22 Hot Springs Bathhouse Association , 1931-51.
[756] *Annual Report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1931 and the Travel Season, 1931* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931), 2.
[757] Superintendent Collins to Director Albright, letter, 10 April 1931, covering conditions during the month of March 1931.

acknowledging that the experiment with USPHS officials was temporary but that NPS and Interior had been discussing placing a professional NPS employee as park superintendent. He intimated that the temporary loan of George L. Collins would soon come to an end. Cammerer announced NPS was "contemplating extensive improvements, which would put this park on the great east to west transcontinental trek between the newly created national parks of the east and the older ones of the west." He pledged Director Albright's desire "to do something fine for this resort which would make it second to none of the spas of Europe… including museum, classic entrances to the park, improved avenues and streets, memorials, ornamental fountains and a bath house row further enhanced by beautiful shrubs and landscape effects." To thunderous applause, he declared "We believe that instead of cutting down magnolia avenue, that we should plant more magnolias." Cammerer next paid high compliments to the secretary's local friend, Hamp Williams, and his work on the Special Planning Committee. He described Williams' idea to secure a $100,000 appropriation for a "large memorial of national interest" to commemorate the centennial of Hot Springs National Park.[758]

Another high-level inspection party arrived on April 17. Led by Assistant Director Arthur Demaray, the group included Hamp Williams, an aide to Secretary Wilbur, and a member from the Interior appropriations subcommittee and other staff. Another park tour and inspection of proposed new developments allowed the Washington contingent the ability to understand NPS proposals. On April 19, the head of the U.S. Army Quartermaster's Corps construction division arrived and agree to the demolition of an unsightly smokestack on hospital grounds fronting Reserve Avenue. The general concurred that in order to blend hospital grounds with Bathhouse Row, demolition of the aged Imperial Bathhouse was in order. At the end of the month, Hamp Williams, intimately involved in the ongoing planning activities, suffered a heart attack and was hospitalized.[759] Two weeks later, Hamp Williams died. Secretary Wilbur did not name a replacement for the Special Planning Committee and its work terminated with Williams' death.[760]

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[758] ""New Head of Park Service Here Hinted; Dr. Collins May Be Supplanted by a Trained Park Man," *Sentinel Record* 1 April 1931. Director Albright arrived at the end of May to inspect park operations and make suggestions for improvements. See Superintendent Collins to Director Albright, letter, 8 June 1931, covering conditions during the month of May 1931.

[759] Superintendent Collins to Director Albright, letter, 6 May 1931, covering conditions during the month of April 1931. Collins also reported that "a great many oak trees" were dead and dying from the previous year's drought and were being removed and made available to local poor people to use as fuel.

[760] Superintendent Collins to Director Albright, letter, 8 June 1931, covering conditions during the month of May 1931. NPS Chief Auditor C. L. Gable spent two weeks in the park studying bathhouse finances and assessing the need for future rate increases. A meeting with bathhouse managers and owners, however, yielded a unanimous opinion not to raise rates under existing economic conditions.

NPS Chief Landscape Architect Thomas C. Vint released his *General Development Plan of Hot Springs National Park* on May 13, 1931. He divided the plan into two components: west slope of Hot Springs Mountain for formal or semi-formal development and the other mountain areas for woodland park development for roads and trails. On Hot Springs Mountain, Vint proposed a landscaped area with a wide promenade behind Bathhouse Row, an area which could incorporate Hamp Williams' idea of a memorial fountain to commemorate the park's hundredth anniversary. Incorporating a fountain would be appropriate, Vint wrote, because "the present practice of concealing the hot springs for practical reasons takes away the feature of running water in an area where one naturally would expect to find it." This would necessitate demolition of Imperial Bathhouse in favor of a formal entrance to the new promenade combining NPS and Army and Navy Hospital stairways. For the other mountain areas, Vint called for including all of Hot Springs and North Mountains into the park through land purchases in order to improve approaches and entrances to the national park. In addition, Vint wanted all of Sugarloaf Mountain for the same reasons and combined, the three mountains could be developed into a superb "Woodland Park" with a system of roads and trails. As for Whittington Park, Vint believed it did not conform to national park development and should be relinquished to the city for park purposes.[761]

Figure 120. First jug fountain on Reserve Avenue, 1932 (HSNP, National Park Service)

Director Albright returned to Hot Springs in June for five days to inspect, along with Chief Engineer Frank Kittredge and park staff, the roads and trails systems and other project areas. One of those areas included the proposed new Army and Navy Hospital, with the War Department still pressing for additional NPS-owned land for expansion. He met with the newly-organized Bathhouse Owners Association, successor to the former Bath House Association, to discuss future park development. Albright again addressed a dinner audience of 600 people sponsored by the local chamber of commerce on the same subject.[762]

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[761] Chief Landscape Architect Thomas C. Vint to Director Albright, memorandum, 13 May 1931, D18 Planning Program, 1918-39.

[762] Superintendent Collins to Director Albright, 8 July 1931, covering conditions during the month of June 1931. NPS was not pleased with the siting of the new hospital. Previous hospital commander wanted a portion of the old hospital to remain along with the nurse's quarters—which locked in utilizing the current site. New managers, however, subsequently wanted all buildings razed, much to the dismay of park planners. Assistant Landscape Architect Charles E. Peterson reported: "While the new plans seem very satisfactory in themselves, the fact remains that no buildings at all would be better. One of the arguments for placing the building on the shoulder of the mountain inside of our area has been to catch some of the slight breeze which plays through this sultry area in the hot season. I am afraid the hospital location is going to be regarded as a closed matter. I know that you recommended a shift in location some years ago and am sorry that it was not carried out." See Peterson to Chief Landscape Architect Vint, letter, 22 May 1931, D18 Planning Program, 1918-39. The new organization's name soon after reverted to the original one, omitting "Owners" from the title.

Horace Albright was concerned about Hot Springs National Park and wanted NPS to do more for its development. He confided in Interior Secretary Ray Lyman Wilbur:

> *"For lack of adequate appropriations the park itself has suffered in the past in development so that instead of being an example of the best in a health resort, bearing the stamp of approval of the Federal Government, it has run down until visitors comment on the lack of attractiveness in comparison with other similar resorts, and particularly with the spas of Europe. Bathing has fallen down in number until few, if any of the bathhouses are making a satisfactory return."*[763]

Albright spent considerable time with Consulting Engineer John R. Fordyce, owner of the Fordyce Bathhouse, who wanted to do everything possible to promote Hot Springs National Park. In addition to giving the government the significant sixty-three-acre pre-historic American Indian quarry, he lobbied unsuccessfully to resurrect the failed Ouachita National Park. Fordyce now wanted NPS and the U.S. Forest Service to expand their holdings to create "an almost unbroken [federal] area from Hot Springs to Mena, Arkansas.[764]

The Maurice Bathhouse became the first on Bathhouse Row to request permission to install a pool for the treatment of polio, arthritis and other chronic muscular conditions by underwater manipulations and exercises. The special Maurice pool was located in the basement and modeled after those at Warm Springs, Georgia. Superintendent Collins called the experimental pool "the forerunner of an entirely new and extensive system of hydrotherapy at this park. [I] believe that hydrotherapy as practiced here at present is considerably behind that followed in other bathing resorts, such as those in Germany, and feel that every encouragement should be given to bath houses here to improve their treatment along this line." The action prompted the Fordyce Bathhouse to request similar permission.[765]

Based on the Landscape Division's vision, Collins approved his park's updated Park Development Plan which covered the five year span of 1933-37. It envisioned upgrading and paving all park roads. Because the superintendent's residence was on land slated for Army and Navy Hospital construction, any new construction, estimated at $15,000, was contingent on acquisition of privately-owned lands. Construction of a new caretaker's residence and water reservoir at the Gulpha Gorge campground was already underway and other than new dressing rooms for the swimming pool, no other construction was anticipated. Privately-owned campgrounds nearby possessed a

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[763] Director Albright to Secretary Wilbur, letter, 13 April 1931, RG 79, Entry 6, Box 321.

[764] Fordyce to V. W. St. John, letter, 5 June 1931, Series 4, Box 8, Folder 4: 1925-1931, Manuscript Collection F759, John Rison Fordyce Papers, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Both men were on the board of directors for the Ouachita National Park Foundation Society. He wrote: "Mr. H. M. Albright is here now and I am trying to show him how the Park should be developed. He seemed favorably impressed and agreed with me."

[765] Superintendent Collins to Director Albright, letter, 20 July 1931, Folder: Maurice Bathhouse; and John R. Fordyce to Superintendent Collins, letter, 2 December 1931, C38 Fordyce Bathhouse.

sufficient amount of cottages; the government campground would be one where campers would always utilize their own equipment. Finally, the 100-acre outlying unit on Sugarloaf Mountain would not be improved by a ranger station or other facilities.[766]

[766] Superintendent Collins to Director Albright, letter, 2 December 1931, D18 Planning Programs 1918-39.

CHAPTER TEN

National Park Service Management Begins, 1932

SUPERINTENDENCY OF THOMAS J. ALLEN, JR., 1932-1936

George L. Collins resumed his medical director's career with the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS), resigning the Hot Springs superintendency after thirteen months on January 14, 1932, but remaining at the USPHS clinic researching the thermal water effects on infantile paralysis and arthritis. NPS Director Horace Albright arrived to thank Collins for his service and to introduce his successor. Albright selected a veteran NPS employee, Thomas J. Allen, to the position thus ending the ten year "cooperative arrangement with USPHS. Allen, who began his NPS career as a seasonal park ranger at Mount Rainier National Park, subsequently served as chief ranger and assistant superintendent at Rocky Mountain National Park, followed by two superintendencies at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park and Bryce Canyon/Zion National Park. Gone were the USPHS superintendents who were unfamiliar with Interior and NPS policies and operations.

Figure 121. Thomas J. Allen, Jr. (National Park

Allen's appointment indicated NPS fully accepted Hot Springs National Park as an equal among the crown jewel units in the National Park System and wanted a professional NPS manager there.. A community-wide banquet held at the Arlington Hotel on February 1, 1932, honored all three men, Collins, Albright, and Allen. In his remarks, Albright stated: "Supt. Allen comes here quite well posted on Hot Springs problems. He has read extensively about the park, its history, its policies, its problems. He has been in Washington conferring with me and my staff on current matters of importance. Both Mr. Allen and I have recently conferred with U.S. Senators Robinson and Caraway and with Congressman Glover about the needs and problems of the park." Albright extolled the many virtues of Hot Springs, adding: "We've got to work together to get these advantages brought home to the people of the United States while disabusing them of the idea that there is any reason why they should not come here. There is no reason why Hot Springs should not be one of the best known and most popular summer and winter resorts in the country. We are ready to help in any way we can."[767]

[767] Alta Smith, "New Day Dawns for This Resort as Active Aid of the Government Pledged," *Hot Springs New Era* 2 February 1932, 1, HOSP 8548-49 Newsclippings Scrapbooks 1924-1945. The newspaper's editorial, "New Dawn Is Breaking" stated "this resort has never received such unqualified endorsement from a high executive in Washington as it received last night at the hands of Horace M. Albright."

Figure 122. Army-Navy Hospital, c. 1933-37 (HSNP 1999, National Park Service)

Figure 123. Army-Navy Hospital therapeutic pool with two therapists and two patrons, one in lift, c. 1934 (HSNP 2216, National Park Service)

CENTENNIAL, DEPRESSION, AND DEVELOPMENT: 1932

Focusing national attention on Hot Springs, NPS chose its oldest national park as the site of the 1932 superintendent's conference, the first in more than two years since the death of Stephen T. Mather. Held in conjunction with Hot Springs National Park's centennial celebration, the April 3-8, 1932, conference, headquartered at the Arlington Hotel, began with NPS Director Horace Albright paying tribute to the late Stephen Mather, followed by Louis C. Cramton, special attorney to Secretary Wilbur, discussing laws and policies related to the parks and monuments spanning sixty years. Subsequent conference sessions "began early and ended late" and covered administrative topics such as "road maintenance, ranger personnel, fire protection, wild-life problems, engineering questions, landscape development, educational work, cooperation with public utility operators, and camp ground developments." A key topic involved professionalizing NPS ranks, something the conference favored pursuing. Director Albright wrote:

Figure 124. NPS Superintendents and wives enjoying Hot Springs National Park between sessions of the April 1932 Superintendents Conference. (Historic Photograph Collection, Harpers Ferry Center, National Park Service)

> *"The chief examiner of the Civil Service Commission, who attended the conference, expressed himself as favoring this step and even went so far as to say that he had often wondered why it was not done. Plans for a new type of examination for ranger positions comparable with the present junior park naturalist examination is now under consideration, and it is hoped that when this is properly worked out, a register of college-trained men and women divided into special groups such as biologists, geologists, archeologists, and historians will be available. It is my belief that if experience is to be substituted for education at all, it must be national-park experience. The Civil Service Commission has assured all possible cooperation in this matter."*[768]

[768] *Annual Report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1932 and the Travel Season, 1932* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1932) , 34-35.

Albright announced a group called "Stephen T. Mather Appreciation" followed through with plans formulated in 1929 to honor the memory of the first NPS director by presenting bronze memorial tablets for installation in nine national parks, two national monuments, and the Washington Office. Plans were underway for seven additional plaques to be placed in national parks, including Hot Springs.[769]

Figure 125. 1932 Superintendent's Conference with NPS officials in front of the Hot Springs National Park Administration Building (HSNP 2916, National Park Service)

Director Albright discussed the deep spending cuts imposed by the Hoover administration because of the national economic depression. He declared: "Of course right now, with an empty treasury, the United States cannot continue a large program of public works; the money supply is not available." He continued, "the national parks, along with other government projects, must operate on slender budgets. Here in Hot Springs this week the field executives of the National Park Service, with their associates from Washington, must cut our summer's work according to the greatly shrunken pattern of reduced appropriations." The men posed for an official photograph in front of the Hot Springs National Park Superintendent's Office to commemorate their nationwide conference.[770] In a KTHS radio address, Albright hailed the centennial of America's first

[769] Ibid., 3, 5-6.

[770] In the official photograph, Back Row (left to right): Peterson, Assistant Landscape Architect; White, Superintendent, Sequoia and General Grant NPs; Hough, Custodian, George Washington Birthplace NM; Freeland, Superintendent, Wind Cave NP; Hadley, Chief Park Ranger, Acadia NP; Gaffney, Chief Policeman, Hot Springs NP; Collins, Superintendent, Lassen Volcanic NP; Dixon, NPS Wildlife Survey; Rogers, Superintendent, Rocky Mountain NP; 3rd Row: Smith, Custodian, Petrified Forest NM; Taylor, Assistant Chief Engineer; Edwards, Assistant Superintendent, Yellowstone NP; Scoyen, Superintendent, Glacier NP; Finnan, Superintendent, Mesa Verde NP; Coffman, NPS Fire Control Expert; Leavitt, Superintendent, Hawaii NP; 2nd Row: Branch, Superintendent, Platt NP; Patraw, Superintendent, Zion and Bryce Canyon NPs; Tillotson, Superintendent, Grand Canyon NM; Eakin, Superintendent, Great Smokey Mountains NP; Kittredge, Chief Civil Engineer; Vint, Chief Landscape Architect; 1st Row: Solinsky,

national park: "We are… celebrating the 100th anniversary of this famous reservation. On April 20, 1832, Congress reserved these health-giving springs and adjoining lands, 2,500 acres in all. So the first park of its kind in the world was established, although the name 'park' was not given to Hot Springs until 1921. The people of this community will formally celebrate the centenary of Hot Springs National Park a little later this month, but we came here for our conference in 1932 with one of the reasons being to call attention to the 100th anniversary of the establishment of this park."[771]

Superintendent Thomas J. Allen sponsored a garden luncheon at the official residence. While their husbands were in conference, Mrs. Allen hosted the wives at bridge. Conferees and wives enjoyed a boat ride on Lake Hamilton followed by a fish-fry sponsored by the Bathhouse Owners Association. One evening, they enjoyed a chamber of commerce-sponsored dinner at the Arlington Hotel.[772]

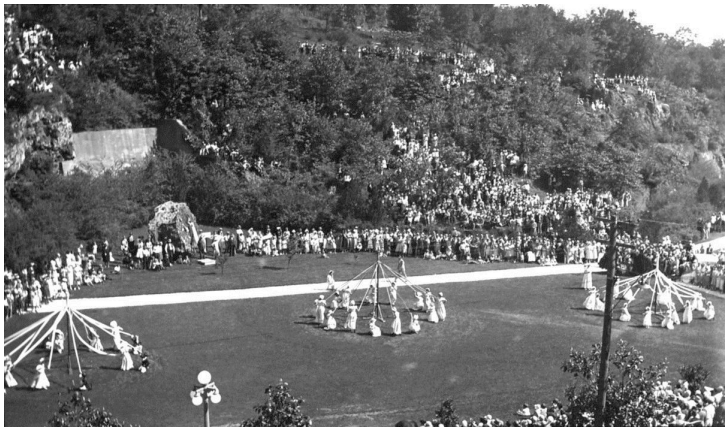

Figure 126. Centennial Maypole dancing on Arlington Lawn, April 30, 1932 (HSNP 5455, National Park Service)

From April 25 to 30, the city of Hot Springs celebrated the national park's centennial. On day one, a local historical museum opened, and on day two, a pageant of local school children portrayed the era of American Indians through Hernando De Soto's visit, the French era, and early American history to the re-designation of Hot Springs Reservation to Hot Springs National Park. Day three was "Bath Day," during which everyone was encouraged to utilize the park's thermal waters.[773] On the fourth day, a parade with 30 elaborate floats and numerous marching bands occurred through the Central Avenue business district followed by a Queen's Ball at the Kingsway (formerly

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Superintendent, Crater Lake NP; Tomlinson, Superintendent, Mount Rainier NP; Thomson, Superintendent, Yosemite NP; Demaray, NPS Senior Assistant Director; Albright, NPS Director; Allen, Superintendent, Hot Springs NP; Pinkley, Superintendent, Southwestern NPs; and Boles, Superintendent, Carlsbad NP.

[771] "Albright Tells of the U.S. Parks Development; Lauds Hot Springs Park," *Hot Springs New Era* 5 April 1932, HOSP 8548-49 Newsclippings Scrapbooks 1924-1945.

[772] Ibid., and "Garden Luncheon for National Park Ladies," same publication.

[773] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 6 May 1932, covering conditions during the month of April 1932. For city employees, it became mandatory as Mayor Leo P. McLaughlin issued an edict: "Whether you need it or not, you are hereby instructed to go to one of the bath houses and take a bath in the hot thermal waters that have made this resort noted throughout the world. You will not only set an example for visitors but will be paying a just tribute to the city's greatest asset and giving proper recognition to the one factor that has been the magnet that for over a century had drawn countless thousands of visitors to Hot Springs." See "Everybody Bathes at Health Resort," *Sentinel Record* 27 April 1932, Box 49, Folder Centennial Celebrations, 1932, MC 534 Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

called Eastman) Hotel to honor the local parade's queen. Day five was Aviation Day, but poor weather forced its incorporation into the last day of celebration. The Air Corps of the Arkansas National Guard put on aerial displays on Pioneer Day when all citizens were urged to dress in garb of 1832 and participate in games and May Pole dances. A Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) plaque dedication ceremony commemorated De Soto's 1541 visit, capped off by a costume dinner and ball in the Arlington Hotel where attendance was estimated at 2,000 people. Superintendent Allen made speeches at nearly all public events.[774]

Figure 127. DeSoto Rock and plaque on Arlington Lawn, 1932 (HSNP, National Park Service)

A capstone to the celebration was an hour-long speech on the floor of the United States Senate by New York Senator Royal S. Copeland who lauded the Hot Springs centennial, declaring, "When the Government took over the Hot Springs of Arkansas it was the beginning of our national park policy." A believer in the healing qualities of the thermal water, Senator Copeland added, "I think the act of Congress a hundred years ago dedicating this great institution at Hot Springs, the first national park, to this work of healing, was a beneficent act on the part of Congress, and in many respects far more important than thousands of other things which we have done and looked upon at the time as very significant." The senator also addressed an issue of great concern to federal authorities as well as local boosters claiming therapeutic values from radioactive thermal waters. The concern became elevated following the death of prominent American golfer Eben Byers who succumbed from cancer, then termed "radiation poisoning," when he consumed massive quantities of a patent medicine made from radium dissolved in water. Senator Copeland denounced the sensational news reports which "caused misunderstandings and aroused unwarranted fear on the part of many who have been making use of radioactive waters." He stressed that Byers had ingested not radon, a gaseous emanation of radium, but radium salts in solution. It was an important distinction, he argued:

> *"To this end I wish to make clear what is found in the natural waters of the Hot Springs and other springs of this country and of the Old World. I want to make clear that their radioactivity is due not to the presence of radium salts in the water, but it is produced by the gaseous emanation of radium known as radon. Because of the confusion of the confusion of*

[774] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 6 May 1932, covering conditions during the month of April 1932. He reported: "Publicity on the celebration was sent all through the country by the local Chamber of Commerce, and the events were covered by Fox Movietone and Hearst Metrotone news reel companies, as well as by the Universal Company without sound." The DAR plaque was mounted on a large tufa boulder and placed on Arlington Lawn. See *Annual Report for 1932*.

> *mind on the part of the public, there has been an unfortunate reaction against all radioactive waters. That is a public sentiment which I sincerely regret."*

He argued that the Hot Springs waters were healthful, not harmful, and backed by the U.S. Government at Hot Springs National Park and the Army and Navy Hospital.[775]

True believers in the thermal waters were undeterred, radioactivity or not. Superintendent Allen reported on "the loafing menace" being somewhat abated in front of the NPS administrative office. Pointed spikes were installed atop the iron railing surrounding the thermal drinking fountain to discourage loiterers from using the railing as a seat.[776] Members of the public increasingly began the practice of filling containers with thermal water from the public fountains and faucets and taking them home for regular consumption.[777] The local custom soon became a popular activity as Thomas J. Allen reported:

> *"The practice of visitors and local residents bringing containers to a hot water tap on the corner of Central and Reserve Avenues at the park office and carrying home hot water from park sources has grown to such an extent and become such a popular custom that it was necessary to change the location of this supply line in order to avoid traffic difficulties as well as to give these people better service. An experimental leading fountain by which three persons can draw water at the same time has been erected on the curb stone on Reserve Avenue near the center of the administrative office building and is proving quite a popular piece of equipment."*[778]

A long-sought goal to reopen thermal springs for public view occurred in June 1932. Assistant Landscape Architect Edward Zimmer reopened two springs (No. 32 and No. 33) behind the Maurice Bathhouse and adjacent to the formal bandstand stairway where a cascade and pool area was constructed with tufa rock deposits. It created the effect of two small thermal cascades falling into a small pool where the water would then

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[775] "Radioactive Waters, Speech of Hon. Royal S. Copeland of New York in the Senate of the United States, Friday, April 29, 1932," *Congressional Record*, Seventy-Second Congress, First Session, 117463—8131, HSNP Library Vertical File: Radioactivity of Spring Water, Misc. Articles 1926-1959. The Byers incident strengthened the hand of the Food and Drug Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture as well as the Federal Trade Commission to clamp down on and eliminate patent medicine producers. Director Albright addressed the issue in his annual report to the secretary: "Much hysterical comment and discussion followed the fatalities occurring in other parts of the country to prominent individuals who had unwisely used manufactured radium water evidently containing actual radium content. Every effort was made to prevent this hysteria from adversely affecting the use of the park's resources, whose power is received from radium emanation rather than from direct radium contact." See *Annual Report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1932 and the Travel Season, 1932* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1932), 49.

[776] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 9 June 1932, covering conditions during the month of May 1932.

[777] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 7 October 1932, covering conditions during the month of September 1932. This is the first mention in NPS records of this local custom.

[778] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 8 December 1932, covering conditions during the month of November 1932.

be drained away using existing sewer lines. Landscaping around the cascade and pool with plantings secured the area.[779]

The same month Hot Springs joined other national parks in offering its own distinct official windshield sticker. The practice began in 1922 in twelve western parks that charged an entrance fee. Rangers gave out five-inch square decals with safety messages on the reverse side to motorists who paid their entrance fee. The decals served as a souvenir designed and issued each specific year in a various different colors. Because most of them featured an animal, they were referred to as "Zoo Windshields" because visitors affixed the assorted park decals to their windshields. The popular practice caught on to such a degree that even parks without entrance fees began lobbying to have their own unique sticker. During the 1920s and 1930s, ten more parks joined in, including Hot Springs, which had a thermal spring designed by Edward Zimmer on its official decal.[780]

The NPS Eastern Division of the Landscape Department spent considerable time in the park studying future development plans for the coming decade. Assistant Chief Landscape Architect Charles E. Peterson issued a memorandum of agreement concerning park development which derived from discussions held during the recent superintendent's conference. He called for a boundary study to be made for expansion but that the balance of North, West, and Sugarloaf mountains were to be incorporated into the national park. NPS developments on Fountain Street should all be removed, including the assistant superintendent's house, greenhouse, pavilion, and shops. When the Imperial Bathhouse lease expires, the building should be demolished and the land retained for park purposes, as the south terminus of the proposed formal promenade and as an approach stairway to the new Army and Navy Hospital. The promenade should parallel Central Avenue behind Bathhouse Row and stretch from Fountain Street to Reserve Avenue. One or two display hot springs should be incorporated into the upper end of the formal promenade. Peterson called for a study on encouraging the city and private property owners to improve the streetscape appearance opposite Bathhouse Row through selective demolition and zoning. Park maintenance operations should be removed to the Whittington Park area, including the shop and greenhouse, and no change in location for the superintendent's residence. The park was encouraged to identify a dedicated horse trail from the Arlington Hotel's horse center to Reserve Avenue and not have combined-use trails. Beyond established roadways and trails, the park should be maintained as a mountain woodland park area. Land identified for housing facilities on the War Department's property was actually excess to their needs but of more use for the park trail system. He recommended seeking authority to take it back from the War Department.[781]

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[779] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 31 May 1932, D30 Roads and Trails 1930-1945.
[780] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 7 July 1932, covering conditions during the month of June 1932. An order for 10,000 was placed along with the recommended design. See also "Remember Zoo Windshields, Anyone?" *Arrowhead: The Newsletter of the Employees and Alumni Association of the National Park Service,* Spring 2001, Vol. 8, No, 2, page 4.
[781] Assistant Chief Landscape Architect Peterson, "Memorandum of Agreement on Hot Springs Park Planning Problems," 11 April 1932, approved by Thomas C. Vint, Thomas J. Allen, and Horace M. Albright, 21 April 1932, D18 Planning Program, 1918-1939. On the final point, Peterson subsequently

Figure 128. Buckstaff Bathhouse, 1934 (HSNP 1851, National Park Service)

The nation's bleak, faltering economy became a primary concern during the summer of 1932. Hot Springs visitation had steadily declined since 1929, but became even more pronounced during 1932 and dropped off almost completely as summer began. Without notice, the Kingsway (Eastman) Hotel abruptly closed on June 20 until November when visitation normally began to rise. Superintendent Allen urged all bathhouses to remain open on Sunday afternoons to take advantage of excursion trains which delivered passengers to Hot Springs at cut-rate fares. The two African American bathhouses, Pythian and Woodmen of the Union, were authorized to close at 1:00 P.M. each day during the slow season.[782]

Although there was no lessening of standards or service, bathhouses struggled to maintain operation during the worsening economic depression. Allen chastised their lack of foresight in failing to establish a reserve fund for lean times in order to withstand sustained losses. So far, all water rents were paid on time, but that was subject to change.[783] There were 509,056 baths given in 1931, compared to 378,510 in 1932, a difference of 130,546 fewer baths given. Hard times only increased the patronage at the Government Free Bathhouse and Clinic. Allen reported a new "class of persons now unable to pay who hitherto had been clients of the commercial houses." The daily average rose from 338 baths given in 1931 to 433 in 1932.

Summer season use at the public campground stayed at near capacity with the swimming pool a popular feature for both campers and Hot Springs citizens. In order to keep the campground from becoming a permanent haven for the homeless, Superintendent Allen promulgated a policy of permitting campground visitors of staying no more than thirty days unless they provided evidence of utilizing the park's thermal waters in which case a prolonged stay was authorized.

Overall visitation figures for fiscal year 1932 revealed an interesting change. Increasingly, travelers were patronizing it as a recreational area and not exclusively as a

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found that "new grading work occupies so much of the land that it is no longer suitable for Park purposes." See Peterson, "Memorandum of Hot Springs National Park Planning Problems," 28 July 1933, D18 Planning Program, 1918-1939.

[782] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 7 July 1932, covering conditions during the month of June 1932.

[783] *Annual Report for 1932.*

health resort. Travel to Hot Springs was up twenty-five percent and an excited Thomas J. Allen reported: "It is very evident that the park and the surrounding Ouachita Mountain region have reached a stage of patronage whereby bath house business is no longer an indication of travel to this resort."[784]

In the summer and fall of 1932, bathhouses began crying for relief. The Fordyce Bathhouse was granted a reduction in tubbage from thirty to twenty-five effective July 1. NPS insisted that quarterly water rents be paid in advance and not curtailed or made up in subsequent quarters. Payments were to be made on time without exception.[785]

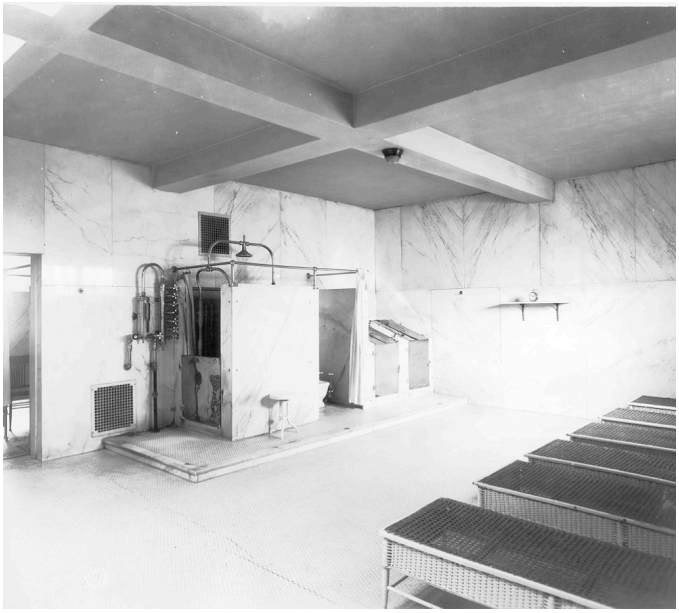

Figure 129. Buckstaff Bathhouse Men's Bath Hall/Pack Room, with cots, vapor cabinets, needle shower, and sitz bath, 1934 (HSNP 5099, National Park Service)

Struggling Woodmen of the Union Bathhouse informed NPS it could not meet the water rental due on October 1 as it was not receiving enough business for its bathhouse or hospital. A sympathetic superintendent proposed treating the fraternal organization similar to the Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital as that of a charitable institution eligible for free thermal water. The idea was backed by USPHS physicians who routinely referred African American patients to it.[786] The idea was shelved when the Pythian temporarily closed due to economic conditions, making Woodmen of the Union the only operating bathhouse for African Americans.[787] The Woodmen of the Union subsequently reduced its tubbage from eleven to five.[788] In October, the Bath House Association petitioned for a reduction in rates from $80.00 per tub to $60.00, calling their situation serious as patronage continued declining. The association secretary declared: "Our problem is so critical that we are decidedly apprehensive regarding our ability to carry on much longer. Prompt relief from some

[784] *Annual Report for 1932.*
[785] Acting Director Demaray to Superintendent Allen, letter, 16 August 1932. On the letter is an approval signature by First Assistant Secretary Joseph M. Dixon.
[786] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 8 September 1932, File 900-02, Hot Springs Public Utility Operators, Supreme Lodge Woodmen of Union Contracts, RG 79, Entry 6, Box 343.
[787] Superintendent Allen to Director Demaray, letter, 22 August 1933, File 900-05, Hot Springs Public Utility Operators Miscellaneous Correspondence, RG 79, Entry 7, Box 1227; and *Annual Report for 1933* which states their contract was "temporarily annulled by the Secretary of the Interior." Water was restored to the Pythian January 1, 1934.
[788] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 6 March 1933, covering conditions during the month of February 1933. This was in compensation for the charitable work the fraternal organization performed.

source is necessary."[789] Thomas Allen pointed out that the government rate was already extremely low and differed little from the rate charged for ordinary city water. He advised the director:

> *"Narrowed down, the situation is simply that the bath house business here is in desperate straits and regardless of the facts that the amount which they may save from the lower water rate will not save them from bankruptcy and that there have perhaps been errors in judgment in their not accumulating emergency reserves in previous years, they now are in very great need of assistance of every kind."*[790]

To add holiday cheer to the bleakness of the national economic calamity, bathhouse managers paid unemployed veterans to place garlands of cedar on all the light standards fronting Bathhouse Row. The lower cluster of lights were covered with red and green shades and a large cedar tree erected at the corner of Central and Reserve Avenue in front of the superintendent's office was decorated with colored lights furnished by the chamber of commerce. It marked the first time Bathhouse Row was decorated for Christmas.[791]

State income taxes on dividends received from bathhouse operations within the national park brought about a request from the Bath House Association asking NPS its position. Specifically, the association requested the government represent it in litigation against the state to settle the income tax issue. In discussions with Interior, Director Albright related that the government could not enter into such a lawsuit.[792] Arkansas' department of revenue continued to insist that dividends of bathhouse stockholders were taxable income under state law and was attempting to collect back taxes due from 1928. The Bath House Association secured its own lawyer to fight the effort.[793]

Relief finally came in April 1933 when Interior granted an across-the-board rate reduction of fifteen percent. Also approved was a willingness to reduce the number of tubs based on patronage requirements and NPS requested each bathhouse assess its own usage based on patronage during the past year.[794] Afternoon operating hours could also be curtailed on Bathhouse Row, but not for establishments connected with hotels.[795] The measures provided some much needed relief. For the Fordyce Bathhouse, it meant a reduction of four tubs, from twenty-five to twenty-one. Those four tubs were physically

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[789] Secretary Omer Wilson, Bath House Association, to Director Albright, letter, 27 October 1932, File 900-02, Hot Springs Public Utility Operators Contracts General, RG 79 Entry 6, Box 336.
[790] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 10 November 1932, File 900-02, Hot Springs Public Utility Operators Contracts General, RG 79 Entry 6, Box 336.
[791] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 7 January 1933, covering conditions during the month of December 1932. The tradition of decorating the Row for various seasonal holidays dates to this time.
[792] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 7 April 1933, covering conditions during the month of March 1933.
[793] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 9 May 1933, covering conditions during the month of April 1933.
[794] Director Albright to Superintendent Allen, letter, 6 April 1933, File 900-02, Hot Springs Public Utility Operators Contracts General, RG 79 Entry 6, Box 336.
[795] *Annual Report for 1933.*

disconnected from the thermal water supply.[796] However, fundamental problems remained for the Fordyce. The previous year, its ownership converted to a stock company held by family members. Issuing of stock permitted it to be pledged as collateral for loans; at least one note was known to be held by the Arkansas National Bank. Because the Fordyce had a history of bad management, the bank stepped in to take an active role in lieu of foreclosure and appointed its own bathhouse manager. This effectively placed the Fordyce Bathhouse under the bank's control. Because the bank president also owned the Imperial Bathhouse, a concerned superintendent alerted the Washington Office of the turn of events as the bank also held mortgages for the Alhambra Bathhouse. Allen pointed out that the 1891 act forbidding duplicate ownership or control of bathhouses was being potentially impacted. He reported: "There is nothing that can be done, but it is quite evident that whether or not the law allows it or the individual houses desire it, the bath house business in this park is rapidly being forced by conditions onto a consolidated basis."[797]

One public utility jumped at the opportunity to assist in the on-going park beautification effort. Southwestern Bell Telephone Company came forward with a plan to eliminate all unsightly overhead telephone wiring in the rear of Bathhouse Row by placing it in underground conduit. The park began similar negotiations with the electric utility company to do likewise.[798]

As the park's new professional manager, Thomas Allen put his expertise into the updated six-year development master plan program which he organized into three sections: major road program, minor road and trail program, and physical improvements. In the first category, Allen called for paving and improving all eleven miles of the mountain road system. He provided estimates for purchase of private holdings, improvement of those roads, and construction of a new ridge road. In section two, he estimated $10,000 to build trails in the park extension areas. For park improvements, he listed a number of needs. The first was $20,000 for construction of a new superintendent's residence, recognizing that the current one remained under NPS control until a replacement could be found. The next project, a public promenade for bathhouse patrons to enjoy physical exercise and fresh air, was programmed in three phases. For use by pedestrians and those in wheelchairs, the promenade's first phase involved excavation and formal design plans. Phase two provided for grading and construction of the walkway and the final phase for building retaining walls, entrances, Stevens Balustrade stone benches, lighting and landscaping. Allen called for an underground lawn sprinkling system to water grass and plants along Bathhouse Row and Arlington

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[796] Director Albright to Superintendent Allen, letter, 6 May 1933, (approval signature same date, Assistant Secretary Oscar L. Chapman); and Superintendent Allen to Manager, Fordyce Bathhouse, letter, 11 May 1933, File 900-02, Hot Springs Public Utility Operators Contracts General, RG 79 Entry 6, Box 336.

[797] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 14 March 1933. Allen subsequently pointed out that the Fordyce was in arrears for two tax years. He warned that the county could announce a tax sale to collect the unpaid taxes and asked what the government might do if the state or county forced such a sale. See Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 30 June 1933, File 900-02, Hot Springs Public Utility Operators Contracts General, RG 79 Entry 6, Box 336.

[798] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 8 December 1932, covering conditions during the month of November 1932.

Lawn. His next priority was a new administration building for the superintendent's office, secretary's office, general clerical room, conference room, police/law enforcement office, and other office/storage space. The basement area would control the thermal water distribution system. Because NPS and other federal offices utilized the city's sewage disposal system, he allocated $82,000 towards construction of the new municipal system. Next came funding to provide a museum area and auditorium in the new administration building complete with necessary furnishings. Funding for incorporating new construction areas into the overall formal landscape design was also identified. In order to replace the antiquated "tall, ungainly, unattractive, and cumbersome" cooling tank, Allen proposed a central efficient cooling system. An unlikely to be achieved wish list item, he called for $2.5 million to reclaim and restore the west side of Central Avenue to natural conditions. Allen programmed $50,000 to acquire 500 acres for park extensions in the three-mountain area, all of which were undeveloped wooded mountain slopes. Construction of Iron Spring Road ($65,000) to connect the Government Free Bathhouse and the public campground would eliminate the circuitous, undesirable route along city streets.[799]

Superintendent Allen wished to emphasize the equal partnership policy to the director in his 1932 annual report, stating: "It is recommended that Hot Springs National Park, despite its small area and absence of spectacular scenic features, be given an equal part in National Park Service programs and development and improvement and also in National Park Service publicity programs." He clarified his recommendation, adding,

> *"The past year has indicated that this policy will be followed in the future as it has been during that year, and recommendation is made merely again to endorse that procedure. Although different in a great many respects from the scenic type of park, Hot Springs fully qualifies through its possession of unusual healing waters as a member of the system, and its very difference from the other areas is its outstanding possession. Certainly no other national park area can give such a lasting service to the nation as does Hot Springs."*[800]

When Edward Zimmer was pulled off Hot Springs projects and reassigned to work on other national park projects, Thomas Allen bitterly complained to the Eastern Division:

> *"For quite a few years past Hot Springs has been treated as more or less of a stepchild and its problems have more or less been postponed until other places were looked after; despite the fact that several trips have been made here by various individuals in the past few years and reports have been submitted on those trips, the work done through them has been largely of a general nature and no definite accomplishments have resulted. This statement is not meant as a personal criticism of anyone, but is rather a statement of a sort of psychology which appears to have grown up in connection with Hot Springs National Park under which*

[799] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 15 May 1932, D18 Planning Program, 1918-1939.
[800] *Annual Report for 1932.*

> *everyone concerned had a general idea of things to be done but the actual detail plan for carrying them out has been continually postponed. That same psychology appears to be still in existence and it now once more looks like we will be treated like the stepchild of the Service."*[801]

After a year in office, Allen did not see much progress beyond developments in the public campground. He wanted final plans for the promenade, park entrances, and roadway projects in order to take advantage of any impending emergency appropriations for construction work. He added,

> *"Hot Springs has too long been neglected in this respect and my understanding of the Director's desire was that he wished this park to be treated equally with other parks. In fact, he has gone so far as to assure the citizens of this region that such would be the case. Should we lose still another year before we can even definitely estimate our future projects, there will be just that much more criticism coming on to the Service."*[802]

Allen alerted Director Albright that a meeting of political partisans in Little Rock had taken place in which Democratic Party leaders were asked to pressure Interior to place a political appointee as superintendent of Hot Springs National Park. He recognized that Civil Service laws prevented such a thing from occurring and local citizens appeared content with the present order and leadership. He concluded, "I expect you realize the same thing as I have learned since being in Arkansas that politics is part of the daily bread and butter of the people of this part of the country and that such movements are not at all to be unexpected."[803]

Indeed, the political landscape of the country was about to change. In a landslide victory, Franklin Delano Roosevelt defeated incumbent President Herbert Hoover in the 1932 presidential election. The election proved to be a milestone event in the history of national parks, recreation, and historic preservation in the United States. Roosevelt followed through on a plan by his predecessor to reorganize the executive branch via executive order. One bureau that benefitted tremendously was the National Park Service which became charged with administering dozens of national monuments scattered throughout various federal departments. For example, the War Department relinquished control of eleven national military parks, two national parks, ten battlefield sites, ten national monuments, four memorials, and eleven national cemeteries effective August 10, 1933. The monuments and parks within the District of Columbia also passed to NPS.

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[801] Superintendent Allen to Assistant Chief Landscape Architect Peterson, letter, 15 December 1932, D22 Construction/Preservation 1917-1932.

[802] Ibid. A response from the Washington Office assured Allen that Hot Springs was receiving equal treatment in light of personnel ceilings for the Eastern Division. It recommended patience, adding that both Vint and Peterson "were a little hurt by your letter when they are trying to give you the very best possible service." See Senior Assistant Director Demaray to Superintendent Allen, letter, 21 December 1932, D22 Construction/Preservation, 1917-1932.

[803] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 3 December 1932, A54 Inspections, Investigations, Etc., 1923-1953.

The move also consolidated the function of federal historic preservation into one agency: the National Park Service.[804]

When Arkansas and the nation's banks all went on a five percent restricted withdrawal basis on February 28, 1933, it caused inconvenience and hardship to park visitors. The action preceded President Roosevelt's declaration of a "bank holiday" and passage by Congress of the Emergency Banking Relief Act where only Federal Reserve-approved banks could operate in the U.S. The crisis abated after several weeks, helped stop bank runs, and lead to subsequent legislation creating the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). In Hot Springs, the chaos occurred during the two busiest business weeks of the calendar year. In a cooperative spirit, visitors were able to remain by being extended credit at hotels, bathhouses, and other establishments. NPS staff was prominent amidst civic committees organized to help relieve the financial concerns of visitors. It waived the requirement for cash in advance for bath tickets; visitors who could not withdraw sufficient funds were re-issued certificates of deposit in desired amounts and those certificates were given to vendors.[805]

Six weeks prior to his inauguration as the thirty-second president of the United States, Franklin Roosevelt proposed to employ a quarter-million men in public works and conservation projects as a means of breaking the cycle of social and economic misery brought about by the Great Depression. One of his primary deputies in carrying out public works programs was his new secretary of the Interior, Harold L. Ickes. A compliant Congress, alarmed by the mounting despair and panic pervading the American public, gave the new president a virtual *carte blanche* and authorized much of Roosevelt's "New Deal" proposals. Thus began the United States' turn away from laissez-faire capitalism to an active course of federal intervention and regulation in not only the economy, but many other areas of American life. During the "First 100 Days," Congress passed and Roosevelt began implementing his strategy to provide immediate relief.

In March 1933, President Roosevelt officially announced the formation of Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) which soon became popularly known as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Four departments of the executive branch had authority over the New Deal program: Labor to select the enrollees; War to handle administrative concerns; and Agriculture and Interior to utilize the manpower. Of these last two departments, two bureaus reaped the greatest benefit from this unemployment relief program: Agriculture's U.S. Forest Service and Interior's National Park Service.

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[804] Executive Order 6166, 10 June 1933, and Executive Order 6228, 28 June 1933, The White House, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Washington, D.C. One peculiar aspect of this action was the abolition of the National Park Service and establishment, albeit temporarily, of the Office of National Parks, Buildings, and Reservations. This unwieldy title was subsequently changed by Congress to the original name. For consistency sake, the name NPS is retained here. See "Reorganization Under President's Executive Order" and "Emergency Conservation Work" in *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1933* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1933), 154-57; and 192.

[805] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 7 April 1933, covering conditions during the month of March 1933; and "Work Out System to Aid Visitors Having Deposits in Local Banks; Medium of Exchange Established," *Sentinel Record* , 4 March 1933, HOSP 8548-49 Newsclippings Scrapbooks 1924-1945.

With six-year development master plans already in place for the national parks, it greatly facilitated swift adoption of New Deal emergency conservation and public works programs. By the end of the 1933 fiscal year, 175 summer CCC camps were in operation throughout the national park system, state parks, and other related areas. Carrying out the new responsibilities and programs, however, would fall to other capable hands. Horace M. Albright, second NPS director, decided to return to the private sector and submitted his resignation effective August 9, 1933. Albright's successor was Arno B. Cammerer.[806]

Figure 130. Civilian Conservation Corps workers repair a park trail, 1933 (HSNP 5522, National Park Service)

The State of Arkansas, recognizing the economic benefits of its own national park and realizing that it may expand in size, passed legislation granting exclusive jurisdiction to the United States over all lands "now or hereafter included in Hot Springs National Park." The law, authored by Thomas J. Allen, went into effect upon the governor's signature on March 25, 1933.[807]

Park roads on Hot Springs Mountain were the first areas to be improved during depression-era work programs. Utilizing funds from regular roads and trails appropriations, masonry rock walls were erected where needed and road banks were sloped and landscaped along with installation of rock guttering. Workers demolished the park's old greenhouse when it was determined unsafe and not worth rehabilitation. The space was cleared and laid out into two horseshoe pitching courts.[808] As the year progressed, public works appropriations under the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) and the Public Works Administration (PWA) became available and road improvement expanded to all park roadways. Hot Springs National Park was granted one ECW/CCC camp of 200 men which was located on private land rented to the government. Authorized for six months, assigned tasks were "forest stand improvement, erosion control, construction of park trails and fire-breaks, and general forestry duties." ECW funds permitted workers to reclaim land in the Gulpha Gorge campground area previously unused because of the persistently overflowing creek. In addition, they

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[806] *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1933* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1933), 153; 155.

[807] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 4 February 1933, covering conditions during the month of January 1933; and *Act 166, Acts of Arkansas, 25 March 1933*. Congress accepted cession of exclusive jurisdiction "now or hereafter included" in the park. See *Act of Congress, 2 June 1937* (50 Stat. 243).

[808] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 6 March 1933, covering conditions during the month of February 1933.

worked to protect the existing tree canopy from further damage from campers. At the swimming pool, a new building was erected equipped with dressing rooms, showers, and comfort stations. When the well began to dry up, a new well was drilled to provide a plentiful supply of water.[809]

For the NPS, ECW/CCC meant the opportunity to develop the long-neglected national parks. NPS Chief Forester J.D. Coffman served as liaison officer among the department's various bureaus and led the programs for the national parks and monuments. Conrad L. Wirth led the new Division of Planning and State Cooperation to handle the public works program. At Hot Springs, the War Department dispatched U.S. Army officers to establish an area headquarters for not only Hot Springs National Park's CCC camp, but fourteen camps in the Ouachita and Ozark national forests. For the NPS CCC camp, it was necessary to lease eighteen acres selected by the Army officers adjoining the city limits on Malvern Road. Twenty-seven men already employed by NPS in public works, were immediately enrolled and set about constructing the camp. Hot Springs resident Albert Annen was hired as camp superintendent under Army supervision. The bulk of CCC enrollees arrived on May 31, 1933, from Camp Pike, Arkansas, fresh from two weeks of conditioning.[810]

Figure 131. Civilian Conservation Corps workers with NPS truck, June 1933 (HSNP 5503, National Park Service)

On Bathhouse Row, implementation of Roosevelt's programs was methodical. In September, Superintendent Allen observed that the bathhouses had not yet displayed the blue eagle window stickers of the National Recovery Administration (NRA). Participating blue eagle businesses certified they stood with the president's program for eliminating "cut-throat competition" by bringing industry, labor, and government together to create codes of fair practices and set prices. Under the NIRA, the NRA encouraged competitors to meet and write "codes of fair competition," intended to reduce "destructive competition" and to help workers by setting minimum wages and maximum weekly hours, as well as minimum prices for services. The Bath House Association drew up a code of fair practices submitted through the superintendent and director to the secretary prior to

[809]Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 4 February 1933, covering conditions during the month of January 1933 (NPS employed forty men on a thirty-hour week and included both races using an existing Civil Service register); *Annual Report for 1933*; and *Annual Report for 1934*. CCC work involved thinning and cleanup of park forests along with elimination of insect-infested trees and dead timber.

[810] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 7 June 1933, covering conditions during the month of May 1933; and "Civilian Corps to be Established in National Park Here," *Sentinel Record,* 25 April 1933, HOSP 8548-49 Newsclippings Scrapbooks 1924-1945.

applying to the NRA. Allen noted: "There is no reason to believe that this code will not be approved and following that every bath house on the Row will display the blue eagle and participate in the President's recovery program."[811]

Other Roosevelt programs eclipsed ECW/CCC for Hot Springs National Park. In August, another NIRA program administered by the Public Works Administration (PWA), announced $85,000 for national park-funded labor. Allen considered it advisable to utilize local labor directly through this source instead of CCC. Allen stated the funding would be used for beautification efforts that had been endorsed by Hamp Williams' Special Planning Committee. While two-thirds would go toward on-going road improvements, the remainder would be utilized to begin excavation for the promenade behind Bathhouse Row and a sewage system and hot waterline to the public bath house at the campground. Under the law, preference for jobs went to military veterans and materials were to be purchased locally.[812]

In August 1933, Thomas J. Allen proposed NPS consider not renewing the Hale Bathhouse's lease when it expired at the end of 1934. Substantial remodeling would be needed or an entirely new bathhouse as the existing structure was too modest in comparison to others on the Row. He recommended the director consider eliminating the Hale lease "as a matter of economic benefit to the remaining houses."[813] The idea came after an evaluation by Charles E. Peterson, chief of the Eastern Division, Branch of Plans and Design. He noted the forty-year-old building lacked a "suitable architectural character," was too small for a modern bathhouse, and might be better suited to combine it with the adjoining Superior Bathhouse. Peterson noted that when the lease was last negotiated, there was discussion that perhaps the lease would not be renewed but a compromise agreement resulted in fundamental alterations to the original building. Current conditions found it to be in bad shape, inside and outside.[814]

Director Cammerer authorized Thomas J. Allen to travel to Washington to meet with Harry L. Hopkins, the president's trusted advisor and head of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). Accompanying him were USPHS officials familiar with the dire issues at Hot Springs. Allen made the pitch to Hopkins for relief funds for the growing numbers of transients unable to care for themselves while visiting the Government Free Bathhouse and Clinic. While funds could not lawfully be channeled directly to the park, FERA could target funds to the state program to provide

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[811] Superintendent Allen to Director Albright, letter, 8 September 1933, covering conditions during the month of August 1933.

[812] "Public Works Fund for Local Park Authorized," *Sentinel Record* 15 August 1933, and "Promenade for Bath House Row is Gigantic Project," *Hot Springs New Era,* 17 August 1933, both in HOSP 8548-49 Newsclippings Scrapbooks 1924-1945.; and *Annual Report for 1934.*

[813] Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 8 September 1933, covering conditions during the month of August 1933.

[814] Peterson, "Memorandum of Hot Springs National Park Planning Problems," 28 July 1933, D18 Planning Program, 1918-1939. Peterson endorsed replacement of the Administration Building: "outmoded in design, out of repair, and inadequate in size." He recommended a new two-story structure to complement design of the new promenade and pledged to commence design drawings.

needed relief.[815] NRA officials in Little Rock increased aid for the Hot Springs area to handle the increased transient burden there. Hot Springs was the first in Arkansas to have its FERA Transient Bureau operating. Estimates prepared by NPS and USPHS for its use proved to be too conservative for the growing need. After registration, visiting transients were given lodging, food, clothing—and, following their course of treatment at the Government Free Bathhouse and Clinic—assistance in returning to their home areas.[816] The FERA services were not advertised and care was taken to restrict it to those truly indigent. Nonetheless, the number of people arriving for the free service grew each month. NPS and USPHS received FERA funding to purchase medical supplies, additional laboratory and clinic assistants, and two additional bathhouse employees.[817]

A milestone in Hot Springs history came in October 1933 when the rebuilt Army and Navy Hospital opened. At $1.5 million, it represented the latest in federal hospital construction. Its exterior appearance, looming over Bathhouse Row on Hot Springs Mountain, was approved in advance by NPS. It coincided the same month with a special day (October 19) named at the Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago: Hot Springs National Park Day. A special trainload of people, including Superintendent Allen, from Hot Springs arrived at the world's fair to participate in the day's festivities which generated considerable publicity for the spa resort city and national park. In the medical section of the Hall of Science, a diorama showed what the federal government offered visitors at the Arkansas national park.[818]

Figure 132. In anticipation of building the Grand Promenade, a laborer jackhammers a tufa dome south of the bandstand, c. 1933-35 (HSNP 5281, National Park Service)

CCC labor excavated for a new dam at the public campground. Workers also placed drain tile for a 15,000 square foot

[815] Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 5 October 1933, covering conditions during the month of September 1933. NRA officials in Little Rock increased aid for the Hot Springs area to handle the increased transient burden there.
[816] Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, 8 December 1933, covering conditions during the month of November 1933.
[817] *Annual Report for 1934.*
[818] Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 10 November 1933, covering conditions during the month of October 1933. NBC radio produced a network program dedicated to Hot Springs National Park and the following day dedicated 15 minutes and a studio orchestra to the Hot Springs delegation to promote the spa resort to a nationwide audience.

marshy area in order to utilize it for visitors. They laid out twenty new campsites and lined them and the new one-way road with boulders. New culverts were also installed.[819] When the six-month period ended, the CCC camp transferred to Moore, Arkansas, and FERA provided the replacement program: Civil Works Administration (CWA). Between 150 and 200 CWA-paid men worked on various national park projects. Allen put them to work immediately constructing a four-mile scenic trail from West Mountain to Sugarloaf Mountain over Rector Heights Ridge, overlooking the Lake Hamilton and Lake Catherine region. They also built a fire trail around West Mountain to protect it from fire originating on private property and opened up a stone quarry on Sugarloaf Mountain.[820]

Commercial bathhouses reached the turnaround point in the Great Depression during November 1933. For the first time since the 1929 crash, the businesses showed an increase over the same month of the previous year. The downward spiral halted when the total number of baths given increased five percent (17,582 in November 1932 and 18,459 in November 1933). Increasing visitation to the area pushed sales up two percent, a trend which NPS hoped would continue.[821] Indeed, it did. The principal winter business season saw a forty-five percent increase over the previous year, and a twenty percent increase over two years previous. Business interests and NPS managers breathed a collective sigh of relief.[822]

Director Arno B. Cammerer became an enthusiastic supporter for the proposed new promenade and ordered preliminary designs. He wanted the promenade to help make the national park "a pleasanter and more attractive place for the guests of the Nation and of the city." His desire was to stay away from "ornateness." Only the Imperial Bathhouse stood in the way of realizing the promenade and he recommended to Secretary Ickes that the Imperial's lease be cancelled when that five-year contract expired. That was still three years away. Eliminating the Imperial would also help increase the earnings of the other bathhouses. Cammerer was concerned about the "rather formal" cascade treatment which he saw as intruding on the green space of Arlington Lawn. The area should be kept as "parklike as possible" and directed the water display and pool be "flat against the wall instead of having a cascade effect." Having testified in favor before the House Interior subcommittee for PWA projects, he anticipated approval of $65,000 for a new administration building and $15,000 for a cluster of utility/maintenance buildings.[823]

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[819] Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 10 November 1933, covering conditions during the month of October 1933.

[820] "Local Jobless Will be Given Work in Park: Civil Works Program to Provide Employment for Many," *Sentinel Record* 17 November 1933, HOSP 8548-49 Newsclippings Scrapbooks 1924-1945. Skilled labor earned $1 an hour, and unskilled labor earned forty cents an hour during a thirty-hour work week. For unstated reasons, however, this changed to twenty-four hours per person per week. See Superintendent Allen to Director Demaray, letter, 7 February 1934, covering conditions during the month of January 1934.

[821] Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 8 December 1933, covering conditions during the month of November 1933.

[822] *Annual Report for 1934.*

[823] Director Cammerer to Superintendent Allen, letter, 29 December 1933, D30 Roads and Trails 1930-1945. He concluded stating, "Please assure our friends in Hot Springs that I, and you, as our representative

Nationwide during its first year, ECW/CCC employed more than 100,000 young men. The Civil Works program for NPS lasted five months—November 28, 1933 to April 28, 1934. For an expenditure of nearly $2.5 million, 12,942 men and 192 women received employment in the national parks and monuments.[824] CWA improved roads and trails within Hot Springs National Park. An old road known as "Opera House Loop," condemned for years as being too steep, narrow, and bending for automobile traffic, was converted to a horse trail. A formal parking lot for twenty-five cars was built east of the observation tower along with a picnic area. CWA workers also performed general trail maintenance and forest cleanup. They used hand tools to excavate 800 feet of promenade alignment, tearing down old retaining walls and using 1500 cubic yard of material as fill in the area. CWA labor also prepared trees for removal or transplanting.[825]

Under Public Works in 1934, the park received funding to begin constructing a new thermal water line from the collecting system to the Government Free Bathhouse and Clinic, a sewage disposal system at the campground, a new maintenance shop area, erection of a new administration building, and first phase of the promenade. PWA funds also became available to pave all park roads and for 27.5 percent of a new sewage disposal system for the city of Hot Springs. The latter represented the government's shared cost for the municipal facility which was to be built on a cooperative basis with NPS retaining control over the construction and maintenance of the system.[826]

Always cognizant of the need to stay on par with other national parks, Hot Springs proudly announced it had joined in publishing its own *Nature Notes* bulletin for "nature education" focusing of the park's natural resources. Acting Naturalist, Park Ranger H. Raymond Gregg issued the first edition in March 1934 and received "many enthusiastic comments." Superintendent Allen reported: "It was distributed to bathhouses, doctors, and principal hotels, and being different from anything previously emanating from this park, appeared to strike a popular chord."[827] Gregg wrote in *Nature Notes* that it represented the culmination of a two year effort to establish a nature education program at the park. He anticipated the program becoming based around the museum being planned for the new administration building, but in the meantime, his time would be occupied with giving lectures, guided walks, and building museum displays.[828]

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on the ground, are exerting every effort to get recognition of these needs so that our administration may be signalized with some outstanding thing, some outstanding improvement for the good of the town for which we so long have been striving."

[824] *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1934* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1934), 165, 169. Civil Works employees ended their activities during the last week of April and "returned to either relief or unemployment lists of the local county. See Superintendent Allen to Director Demaray, letter, 9 May 1934, covering conditions during the month of April 1934.

[825] Superintendent Allen to Director Demaray, letter, 1 May 1934, D22 Construction/Preservation 1933-1944.

[826] *Annual Report for 1934.*

[827] Superintendent Allen to Director Demaray, letter, 9 May 1934, covering conditions during the month of April 1934.

[828] *Hot Springs National Park Nature Notes*, Vol 1, March 1934. A cursory review of available bulletins, which go through November 1934, include various folklore and legends of the area. H. R. Gregg—who

In May 1934, state FERA officials approved NPS requests to fund thirty-seven men to continue promenade grading and fifteen men to demolish the old maintenance shop buildings on Fountain Street. The promenade work uncovered Spring No. 22 and its small flow was temporarily diverted.[829]

DESIGNING A NEW PARK ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

The Washington-based Eastern Division of the Branch of Plans and Design went to work on a new Hot Springs Administration Building with the mandate it conform to a Spanish architectural theme. Chief Architect Thomas C. Vint shared preliminary designs approved by Director Cammerer with Superintendent Allen via mail. Their correspondence reveals two different interpretations of what the director requested. Among other design elements, Allen preferred a flat roof while Vint asserted the prevailing conclusion was the need for a pitched terra-cotta tiled roof, arguing that visitors would be looking down on the building from the elevated promenade and Army and Navy Hospital grounds. Vint recommended going with the design already approved by Cammerer with ornamentation around the doorways and window openings "restrained;" window openings on Reserve and Central Avenue elevations be made slightly larger; and switching the museum from the second to the first floor along with a corresponding shift of office space.[830] When the next set of drawings arrived for review, Allen expressed surprise at the "radical changes" made to the exterior, declaring the windows were smaller and the addition of iron grillwork over window openings emphasized window ornamentation, hardly a restrained treatment. He wrote:

> *"The front elevation with the large windows upstairs and heavy iron grill work and the highly ornamented entrance is not what was agreed to and I do not feel justified in approving it. The building now has a very forbidding cold, uninviting, and unwelcoming appearance. The impression received from the sketch is an altogether different one from the pleasant welcoming feeling the public should get from a park administrative structure. One person aptly described his impressions from this latest sketch by saying it looked like a county jail with lodge rooms upstairs."*

Allen also objected to the building's placement too close to the Lamar Bathhouse, giving it a "shoved-over appearance" from Reserve Avenue.[831] A "stumped" Thomas Vint responded that the window sizes changed because the museum had been moved to the

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one day would become the park's superintendent—was hired as a park policeman and possessed a background in biology and botany. Two other policemen contributed their expertise: Robert Weldon (forester) and William Lix (geologist). See Superintendent Allen to Director Demaray, letter, 18 October 1934, covering conditions during the month of September 1934.

[829] Superintendent Allen to Director Demaray, letter, 8 June 1934, covering conditions during the month of May 1934.

[830] Chief Architect Vint to Superintendent Allen, letter, 12 July 1934, D34 Part 1 Administration Building,, 1933-1935.

[831] Superintendent Allen to Deputy Chief Architect Peterson, letter, 31 July 1934, D34 Part 1 Administration Building, 1933-1935.

first floor where more wall space was required for an area to be lit by artificial lighting. The ornamentations were consistent with the Spanish design approved by Cammerer. As for its location, Vint wrote:

> *"I think it is important to get the building as close to the Lamar, or in other words as far back from Reserve Avenue as the lot will permit. I see this building as a terminal to Bath House Row and at the same time a part of the architectural scheme to the Reserve Avenue entrance to the Promenade. The space it has gained from placing the building as far back from Reserve Avenue as possible will help give an open effect to the Promenade entrance, rather than a right angle stairway from the Reserve Avenue sidewalk."*[832]

Allen responded it was not simply his personal opinion but a collective reaction among other local citizens including architects, businessmen, and "just plain people" raising objections to the design, adding:

> *"You and I have a different understanding of what the Director stated he would like to see. My understanding is that he expressed a desire for a building with Spanish influence or Spanish touch and according to your letters and the ideas expressed in the design you have the impression that he called for a strictly and purely Spanish piece of architecture…. I had hoped to get an office design which would be something new and live in character. Instead I feel that we are getting something dead and something ancient."*

Allen could live with the building if the following three changes were made:

1. *Remove the iron grills from all windows. These are discussed by everyone seeing the plan as being decidedly objectionable. Regardless of the amount of light they may or may not shut off, they are not acceptable as to appearance.*
2. *Remove the horizontal line circling the building between the first and second floors. Architects besides our own park men have declared this line to be fundamentally wrong from an architectural standpoint.*
3. *Increase the windows in the rear elevation.*[833]

To solve the dispute, Arno B. Cammerer directed the preliminary design be submitted to the Fine Arts Commission in Washington, D.C., for approval. Established in 1910 by Act of Congress, the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts was mandated to review and provide advice on matters of design and aesthetics to the president, Congress, and heads of departments and agencies. Deputy Chief Architect Charles E. Peterson

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[832] Chief Architect Vint to Superintendent Allen, letter, 7 August 1934, D34 Part 1 Administration Building, 1933-1935.
[833] Superintendent Allen to Chief Architect Vint, letter, 9 August 1934, D34 Part 1 Administration Building, 1933-1935.

explained to the commission that "the building will occupy a position among more or less sophisticated architecture in contrast to most National Park administration buildings. It has been the aim and achievement of various planning agencies in Hot Springs to have a Spanish type of architecture used where ever possible—particularly in the public buildings." Peterson added two points in contention: "the belt course running between the first and second floors and the wrought iron grill work."[834]

Perturbed, Thomas J. Allen wrote Charles Peterson objecting to his characterization of the local desire for Spanish architecture.

> *"The impressions I have gained from the last three years in Hot Springs have been not at all similar to those stated in that paragraph. To begin with, there are no planning agencies existing in Hot Springs outside of the government itself, and the question which has been quite often asked me in connection with our office design has been 'Why the emphasis on Spanish?' The usual comment is that there never has been anything Spanish nor were the Spaniards ever present except on an early visit and to own the areas, and there is nothing in the entire state development to emphasize Spanish influence." There is little interest in Spanish architecture here outside of the National Park Service and the Fine Arts Commission should be so informed in order to make a fair study of the problem."*[835]

Both Charles Peterson and Director Arno B. Cammerer journeyed to New York City where the seven-member U.S. Commission of Fine Arts met on September 17. Both men explained the project in its local context. Director Cammerer reported: "In general they were quite pleased with the architectural design, making only one suggestion for a change—the improvement of the rear elevation which I understand has already been agreed to. The Commission recommended that if it is not possible to have the decorated entrance doorway, which they liked very much, done in cut stone, it should be carried out in stucco such as in the Spanish Colonial buildings found farther South. Minor suggestions were made as to the choice of the color of the roof tile, and the details of the belt course which the architects will attend to." Cammerer ordered that a contract be let for construction as soon as possible and stated that working drawings would be forthcoming for Allen's approval.[836]

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[834] Deputy Chief Architect Peterson to U.S. Fine Arts Commission, letter 8 September 1934, D34 Part 1 Administration Building, 1933-1935.

[835] Superintendent Allen to Deputy Architect Peterson, letter, 11 September 1934, D34 Part 1 Administration Building, 1933-1935. Peterson admitted to being "a little florid" about the various planning agencies, but cited "Hamp Williams had a fancy diploma signed by the President" as head of a planning commission, indicating Hamp Williams for the reference to "various planning agencies." As for Spanish architecture, he attributed that to Col. John R. Fordyce's interest in De Soto and having public buildings reflect Spanish influence. He also cited two dominating buildings—Arlington Hotel and Army and Navy Hospital—having that influence, in addition to the Quapaw and Fordyce bathhouses. See Deputy Chief Architect Peterson to Superintendent Allen, letter, 14 September 1934, D34 Part 1 Administration Buildings, 1933-1935.

[836] Director Cammerer to Superintendent Allen, letter, 19 September 1934, D34 Part 1 Administration Building, 1933-1935.

Figure 133. NPS Administration Building under construction, November 19, 1935 (HSNP 2800.21, National Park Service)

Glad that the controversy was resolved and work could now proceed, Thomas J. Allen signed the design plans for the new building but with a proviso: "I have not, however, been able to change my opinions as to the elevations of this building, and while I am raising no objection at this time and will raise none in the future, I do not wish my signature of concurrence to be interpreted as a sign that I now think the design is proper. This statement is made merely as a matter of record."[837] Sealed bids for the building were slated for opening on April 2, 1935, with these general specifications:

> *The Administration Building is to be two stories in height and ell-shaped in plan, occupying a ground area of 2850 square feet, and having a cubage of approximately 92000 cubic feet. The work will include reinforced concrete footings and foundations, brick and stucco walls, structural steel floor and roof framing, reinforced concrete floor construction, reinforced concrete and steel stairs, gypsum slab roof covered with terra-cotta tile, recessed copper lined gutters, copper finishings, interior partitions of tile, floor covering of tile and linoleum, plaster wall and ceilings, wood sash and trim, wood cornice, wrought iron grilles and balconies, roll screens and Venetian blinds, together with painting, glazing, plumbing, heating, electrical and air-conditioning work."*[838]

Walter L. Perry Construction Company of Philadelphia, Mississippi, received the contract award on May 21, 1935, in the amount, including alternates, of $72,630. The next day, NPS staff vacated the 1891 converted pump station building which had been used as administrative office space for thirty-seven years. Superintendent Allen and staff relocated to rented office space at the opposite end of Bathhouse Row across Central Avenue on the ground floor of the Medical Arts Building. The temporary quarters were too small for the architects and engineers assigned to park improvement projects; they were accommodated in the new maintenance/utilities buildings. Park policemen

[837] Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter 25 January 1935 (quotation) and Allen to Cammerer, letter, 22 September 1934, both in D34 Part 1 Administration Building, 1933-1935.
[838] Superintendent Allen, Administration Building Announcement, 2 March 1935, D34 Part 1 Administration Building, 1933-1935.

remained in a temporary wooden building next to the promenade and former administrative office site. A 200-day construction period began on May 27 with demolition of the old superintendent's office which was encircled by a board fence incorporating the contractor's office and storage sheds as part of the enclosure. A number of unexpected delays occurred, including during demolition when thermal water began filling areas where hand operation had to be employed and workers could not long endure the high temperatures. The two hundred day period expired on December 12. Time extensions brought the construction to an end on February 10, 1936. NPS staff left the Medical Arts Building for their new permanent office.[839]

NPS Chief Engineer Frank A. Kittredge personally inspected the Grand Promenade project and alerted the director to his concerns. He believed the landscape feature should naturally follow the contour of the mountainside, with light cuts and fills, not with built grades of twenty-seven to thirty-two feet wide and massive masonry retaining walls. He was shocked by the estimate for its construction, ranging from $1 million to $600,000. He wrote:

> *"The whole project [should] blend with the natural slope. It would eliminate the exotic masonry construction which would always look foreign, and which would always bear the appearance of an effort to build monuments. At the same time such construction would save several hundred thousands of dollars. I fear the Service will be liable to censure if we proceed to build a 27-foot-wide causeway, retained by massive masonry, to be used as a place for strolling, superimposed on this now beautiful and natural mountain slope, at so great a cost."*[840]

Kittredge followed up with another letter declaring: "I hate being a wet blanket to such monumental development, but I have in mind your admonition that you expect us (all of us) to guard yourself and the Service against mistakes. I feel that the construction of this promenade as planned and estimated, and with the contemplated destruction and change of the mountainside would be a mistake hard to explain or live down."[841]

Kittredge's admonition foretold bad news for the Grand Promenade. Prior to taking the plans before the PWA administrator, Director Cammerer first presented the plans and photographs of the area to Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes for approval. Ickes said no. A perplexed director reported "He was not at all favorable to it at the present time for several reasons which I will not enumerate here. I invited him to go to Hot Springs with me sometime soon to get acquainted with the whole park layout

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[839] Acting Resident Landscape Architect Ralph W. Emerson and Acting Resident Engineer Biron L. Horton, *Final Construction Report, Administration Building, Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas,* [no date: 1936], D34, HOSP 6371, Letter Document Box 5; and Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 7 June 1935, covering conditions during the month of May 1935. The Medical Arts Building was completed in 1929 and became the tallest building in Arkansas until 1960 when the Tower Building in Little Rock opened. Built to house medical offices, the Art Deco structure is sixteen stories high.
[840] Chief Engineer Kittredge to Director Cammerer, letter, 9 January 1935, D30 Roads and Trails, 1930-1945.
[841] Ibid., 30 January 1935.

and its history and I hope he will do so. For the present," Cammerer advised, "there is no chance of getting this favorably recognized as a project and it is of course not within my intentions to present it knowing the Secretary's feeling toward it." He ordered planning activities for it halted and authorized available funds to put the area in "presentable form."[842] A shocked superintendent responded,

> *"I trust that the Secretary's present action does not mean that all hope is lost and that we cannot later on present this project again. If that is so, then we will have a very critical local situation on our hands, as the public has become enthusiastic over this project and will not be inclined to give it up without a struggle. It is the one thing that I have strongly felt would go a long way toward establishing in the public mind the governmental aspect of this park as distinguished from the municipal aspect, and in use it is one item which would get a continual and concentrated service and tie in very closely to the medical and health aspects of this resort."*[843]

Cammerer reassured Allen that his discussion with Ickes was on an informal basis, and that the secretary had not killed the project, just chose not to submit it as a PWA project at the present time. He hoped to get Ickes to Hot Springs to convince him of its merit, but in the meantime wanted to see about reducing its overall high cost.[844] In an attempt to camouflage the scar along its excavated route, park maintenance workers transplanted a large amount of shrubbery from Whittington Park under the direction of Assistant Landscape Architect Emerson. It would be a temporary arrangement until the stalled Grand Promenade received dedicated funding.[845]

Superintendent Allen reported that fiscal year 1935 represented a continuation of slow economic recovery for the bathhouses with each month showing an increase over the previous year, sometimes as much as fifty-four percent. Overall, the annual increase was twenty-four percent. Renewal contracts were signed with Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital (ten years), but the Fordyce contract (twenty years) was held pending agreement on certain remodeling issues. A contract for the Hale Bathhouse was placed on an annual renewal basis depending on the owners "ability to install more modern facilities."[846] Financing proved to be a stumbling block for bathhouse interests. John R. Fordyce was unsuccessful in securing Reconstruction Finance Corporation funds to retrofit the Fordyce Bathhouse to install facilities for underwater treatments of extreme arthritis cases and muscle-reeducation following infantile paralysis. He went so far as to get a

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[842] Director Cammerer to Superintendent Allen, 5 February 1935, D30 Roads and Trails, 1930-1945.
[843] Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 12 February 1935, D30 Roads and Trails, 1930-1945.
[844] Director Cammer to Superintendent Allen, letter, 15 February 1935, D30 Roads and Trails, 1930-1945.
[845] Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 8 November 1935, covering conditions during the month of October 1935.
[846] *Annual Report for 1935.* The Fordyce contract was subsequently approved through December 31, 1954. See *Annual Report for 1936.* Owners of the Hale Bathhouse were unable to secure financing to remodel. See Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 26 February 1934, C3823 Hale Bathhouse.

letter of endorsement from Secretary Ickes, but to no avail for outside financing.[847] It was not until the end of 1936 that Fordyce moved ahead and requested permission to install a single Titus Portable Hydro-Massage Whirlpool Bath[848] and employed the services of a physiotherapist to administer to its patients. Beginning January 1, 1937, both the Maurice and Fordyce Bathhouses began paying $80 per annum for use of thermal water for these special hydrotherapy pools.[849] However, the Fordyce did not follow through until 1939 when it finally installed its original choice: Hubbard-Currence Tub in a room formerly used for mercury rubbing and gave the first hydrotherapy bath there on March 9.[850]

Heavy use of the Government Free Bathhouse and Clinic continued to tax the NPS and USPHS staff. Allen's annual report noted: "Too much cannot be said about the splendid cooperation given us through the clinic and its directing officer, Surgeon O. C. Wenger." Also of great assistance was the FERA-funded local Transient Bureau established to take care of people coming for the free baths and treatment, primarily of venereal and other diseases. Allen reported: "Had not the Transient Bureau been permitted to operate in this community, we would have been under a tremendous handicap and a serious situation would have developed in its effect upon the regular visitors to the park and those patronizing the commercial bath houses and hotels." The Transient Bureau established a large transient camp adjacent to the park boundary to house and care for homeless visitors. Males were accommodated in the camp, while female free bathers and their families were kept in contracted boarding houses throughout Hot Springs. By March 1935, there were 400 male transients in the camp which was adjacent to the public campground making it necessary for Allen to issue an order to keep them out of the public campground. Attempts to eliminate advertising of the free camp and services proved futile as news articles about the situation literally brought hundreds of new applicants within a number of weeks streaming into the city. Records showed that people from all states in the Union, Canada, and the U.S. Panama Canal Zone were represented, with only twenty-six percent being from Arkansas. The growing social welfare issue was indeed a national one.[851]

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[847] Initially, it was to be a Hubbard-Currence Underwater Therapy Tank. Col. Fordyce to Superintendent Allen, 13 July 1935; Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, 18 July 1935; Col. Fordyce to Secretary Ickes, 31 July 1935; Secretary Ickes to Col. Fordyce, 15 August 1935; and Superintendent Allen to Col. Fordyce, 27 August 1935—letters in John R. Fordyce Collection, HSNP. Ickes wrote: "The National Park Service of this Department has been interested in developing the use of hot springs waters for such physio-therapeutic treatment, and would look on the incorporation of such facilities at Hot Springs with sympathetic interest and approval."

[848] Assistant Director Hillory A. Tolson to Superintendent Libbey, letter, 12 February 1937. John R. Fordyce Collection, HSNP.

[849] Director Cammerer to Superintendent Libbey, letter, 1 December 1936; Director Cammerer to Assistant Secretary Oscar L. Chapman, memo, 8 December 1936; Superintendent Libbey to Col. Fordyce, letter 29 December 1936, all in John R. Fordyce Papers, HSNP.

[850] Superintendent Patraw to Director Cammerer, 11 April 1939, Monthly Narrative Report for March 1939. While the Maurice water rental charge was $400 for its therapeutic pool, the Fordyce rate was set at $140 per annum. See Superintendent Patraw to Director Cammerer, memo, 25 February 1939.

[851] *Annual Report for 1935.*

FERA paid $75,000 to construct the transient camp on the outskirts of Hot Springs. It consisted of nine dormitories, a hospital unit, recreational building, and a combination kitchen and cafeteria for a capacity of 800 men.[852] There were soon triple the amount of people, an estimated 3,000 transients clamoring to be accommodated. Along with banning loitering in the public campground , Allen reported: "Great care is being taken to see that the transients do not bother park visitors on the Hot Springs Mountain trails and adjacent roads. As soon as they do, action will be taken to prevent the use of the trails by the transients. There is no reason why these persons should give trouble unless they are improperly controlled through the camp authorities."[853] With a growing number incidents of public drunkenness, disorderly conduct, and petty crime, it soon became necessary for him to order that anyone receiving free bathhouse and clinic privileges who were arrested for violating regulations or laws of the park, city, or county be immediately discharged. A federal officer attended municipal court each morning to write down the names of everyone convicted. Those names were then checked against records at the Government Free Bathhouse and Clinic and at the Transient Bureau. The order was posted in the camp and the Government Free Bathhouse and Clinic and the number of incidents and misdemeanors fell precipitously. All violators were escorted out of town by the local police force.[854]

While the park lacked a public nature education program, it continued using the existing workforce to supply such services. Policeman H. Raymond Gregg served as acting Park Naturalist and issued the monthly *Nature Notes* to a receptive public. This germinated the earliest natural resource and interpretation program at Hot Springs. Gregg began leading guided walks along the trail system and lecturing to clubs and scouting organizations. Park staff educated in biology, botany, forestry, and geology also delivered weekly radio programs on KTHS focusing on the area's natural history and wildlife. They began installing inexpensive metal signs along park trails calling attention to various geological, botanical, and other natural features. A pleased superintendent noted, "The response to this work, small though it may have been compared with other parks, has been extremely gratifying and has shown the need for more definite and greater development of it."[855] The May 1935 issue of *Nature Notes* reported the April 11 dust storm that enveloped the area, in which Gregg wrote: "Residents and visitors at Hot Springs National Park experienced the worst dust storm ever to occur locally. It represented the southeastern fringe of the devastating dust clouds then sweeping over the West and Mid-West. For weeks, these blighting blasts continued to spread the specter of ruin and death over the stricken areas to the west of us." Noting a year of success, Gregg and local supporters met in the superintendent's office on December 30 to form an association to promote interest in nature and the natural sciences. The Hot Springs Natural History Association would also sponsor publication of *Nature Notes* and promote

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[852] "Transient Camp Here Virtually Ready to Occupy," *Sentinel Record* 24 February 1935; and "Allen Acts to Curb Criminals Among Transients in City: Park Head Bans Clinic, Free Baths to Offenders," *Sentinel Record* 25 July 1935, both in Box: HOSP 8548-49 Newsclippings Scrapbooks, 1924-1945.
[853] See Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 8 April 1935, covering conditions during the month of March 1935.
[854] Ibid.
[855] *Annual Report for 1935.*

NPS educational services. Inaugural association members were Thomas J. Allen, W. H. Deaderick, and Francis J. Scully.[856]

In his annual report, Allen recommended that the Grand Promenade construction project be resumed "in the immediate future as a development feature seriously needed by the visitor." He also recommended for the first time in the same report that Hot Springs National Park required a fundamental expansion of its authorized boundary. The park, he wrote, "is badly in need of a proper extension of its area. There is a fine undeveloped region adjoining us on the west and north which is naturally a part of the park area. The existing park is too small for proper development." He urged that recommended additions be acted on quickly for the public benefit.[857] NPS and Interior concurred. In his annual report to the secretary, Director Cammerer officially endorsed expanding the boundary to include all of West and Sugarloaf mountains which "would permit the protection of an adequate biotic unit and the development of bridle and foot-path system for the recreational benefit of visitors to the springs."[858] Expansion of Hot Springs National Park to the shores of Lake Catherine, however, was not to be. The area previously offered to NPS by Harvey Couch of the Arkansas Power and Light Company was under study to become a unit of the state park system.[859]

Visitation to the park continued to increase. One particular impetus to this came in February 1935 when the state legislature and governor approved legalized horse racing in the state—primarily at Hot Springs' Oaklawn Park.[860] In early 1934, despite horse racing being against state law a group formed called Hot Springs Business Men's Racing Association, refurbished the racetrack, and held a successful fair and clean three-week meet. It would thereafter draw thousands of people to the area each season and bring much-needed revenue to the city.[861]

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[856] *Nature Notes, Vol. 2,* No. 5 (May 1935) for quotation, and No. 12 (December 1935). Other "Dust Bowl" storms were reported on March 16 and 26, 1935; March 24-26, 1936; April 25-26, 1937; and January 18-19, 1938. See Park Ranger Ohlfs to Resource Management Files, memo, 1 March 1988, N4215.

[857] Ibid.

[858] Director Arno B. Cammerer, National Park Service Report to Secretary Harold L. Ickes, *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1935* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1935), 203.

[859] Malcolm McComb, state inspector for the NPS State Park Division assisted in the study and creation of Lake Catherine State Park. See Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 5 July 1935, covering conditions during the month of June 1935; and "Lake Catherine," *Progress Report of the Arkansas State Planning Board, November 1936* (Little Rock, Ark.: Parke-Harper Company, 1936), 64. The donated tract comprised 2,500 acres with five miles along the lakeshore created by Remmel Dam.

[860] Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 9 March 1935, covering conditions during the month of February 1935. The effort brought jubilation in Hot Springs. Its mayor, Leo P. McLaughlin, had long pushed for legalization. When the Century of Progress exhibit for Hot Springs was being developed, he wanted it to contain pictures of race horses. Laughlin also believed the chamber of commerce should "extensively advertise the 90-day divorce law, this to be done in a manner so as to not lose sight of the fact that the hot water is the foundation and background of Hot Springs." See "Horse Racing and Easy Divorces Urged as Spa Advertisement," *Memphis Commercial Appeal,* 11 September 1934, Box: HOSP 8548-49 Newsclippings Scrapbooks, 1924-1945.

[861] Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 7 March 1934, covering conditions during the month of February 1934. While delivering an economic boost for a new industry, it at times affected the bathhouse interests as Libbey reported in April 1938: "The excessive cost of accommodations during the

As early as 1934 and again in 1935, NPS and Interior began pressuring the Postmaster General to act concerning the name of its local post office. Superintendent Allen noted: "Recommendation has again been made to change the name of the local post office from Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas, to Hot Springs, Arkansas, and recommendation has been approved by the Director and the Secretary's office and forwarded to the Post Office Department, reviving the original recommendation of the same nature made a year ago but not acted upon."[862] The request continued to meet deaf ears as no action was taken to remedy the issue which caused considerable confusion.

DIRECTOR ARNO B. CAMMERER VISITS, 1935

Arno B. Cammerer made his first visit as NPS director October 7 through 10, 1935, traveling through after an inspection tour of western parks with the Senate Committee on Public Lands. Commenting on the progress made over the past five years since his last visit, he expressed pleasure and amazement at the changes, commenting: "I find Hot Springs progressive and alert, and there is really a wonderful spirit here." Expressing his desire for an extended stay, he added: "I have enjoyed a real rest during the few days I have been here. It is my present intention to return here during the winter and spend three weeks. I believe you will have a wonderful winter season." In between his inspection tours, Cammerer enjoyed a fishing trip to Lake Hamilton. He promoted completion of the stalled Grand Promenade project and the cascade proposed for Arlington Lawn, believing the steaming waterfall would be a great asset to the resort. To reporters he declared: "The government has spent $450,000 on the Hot Springs National Park, in addition to $80,000 for administrative purposes, and the improvements have made this a most attractive resort. I am more pleased with it than at any previous time." He stated a government photographer would be sent to capture the park's scenic beauty for promotional purposes and added that the new administration building, when complete, would be the finest of

Figure 134. Completed NPS Maintenance Complex, 1935-41 (HSNP 5647, National Park Service)

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period of the race meet undoubtedly caused hundreds, or probably thousands of legitimate bathers and health seekers to leave Hot Springs," resulting in a 34,044 fewer baths given than the previous month. See Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, letter, 18 May 1938, covering conditions during the month of April 1938.

[862] Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 8 April 1935, covering conditions during the month of March 1935.

any in the national park system.[863] In a speech to the local Rotary club, the director endorsed a thorough analysis of the Hot Springs waters, including their radioactivity. While that remained a controversial subject to many, the director said the analysis would "show the waters to be of even greater value than has heretofore been accredited to them." Cammerer was introduced by former superintendent Martin A. Eisele, long time Hot Springs resident. The director said the U.S. government should honor Eisele by having his image on a postage stamp "as a tribute to Hot Springs as a health resort as well as a tribute to Mr. Eisele."[864]

Figure 135. Lamar Bathhouse Attendant Lucille Kotland assists bathing woman, c. 1934 (HSNP 1532, National Park Service)

Woodmen of the Union Bathhouse succumbed to the economic depression and announced their bathhouse would close at the end of November 1935. The fraternal organization for African Americans arranged to utilize space in the Pythian Hotel for their hospital facilities and transfer their business license to the Phythian Bathhouse. Superintendent Allen recommended that any potential merger between the two organizations be approved.[865]

The future of the transient camp came into doubt in November 1935 with a meeting between the principal parties in Little Rock. Superintendent Allen and USPHS Surgeon O.C. Wenger from Hot Springs met with W. R. Dyess, Arkansas FERA and WPA chief, and USPHS Assistant Surgeon General R. A. Vonderlehr. The largest such camp in the nation, Hot Springs had the only such Transient Bureau operation remaining in the U.S. Dyess revealed that FERA funding would carry the camp as far as July 1, 1936, and the state wanted USPHS to take charge

[863] "Bright Outlook for Resort, Says U.S. Park Chief: Arno B. Cammerer Finds 'Wonderful Spirit' in Spa," *Arkansas Gazette,* 10 October 1935, Box: HOSP 8548-49 Newsclippings Scrapbooks, 1924-1945.
[864] "More Improvements Planned at Hot Springs," *Hot Springs New Era,* 10 October 1935, Box: HOSP 8548-49 Newsclippings Scrapbooks, 1924-1945. Cammerer anticipated dedicating the newbuilding at Christmas and spending three weeks taking a full course of baths then. Construction delays, however, prevented him from spending a prolonged holiday in Hot Springs. The analysis had already been accomplished and results published with the finding that the thermal water's radon emanations were not harmful to humans. See Herman Schlundt, "The Radioactivity of the Spring Water on the Hot Springs Reservation, Hot Springs, Arkansas," *American Journal of Science,* Vol. 30 (July 1935) 45-50.
[865] Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 9 December 1935, covering conditions during the month of November 1935.

of supervising all medical requirements and activities. While Vonderlehr stated the agency could do so, he backed away from accepting responsibility for the administration and domiciliary care of the camp.[866]

THE MEINECKE REPORT, 1935

Principal Pathologist E. P. Meinecke evaluated Hot Springs following a visit to inspect its forested areas. Meinecke, employed by the Department of Agriculture's U.S. Forest Service, Office of Forest Pathology, Bureau of Plant Industry's field laboratory in San Francisco, served as NPS's technical advisor relative to fungal diseases and pathological conditions affecting park trees and forests.[867] Meinecke went far beyond his mandate on forest pathology, however, when he issued his twelve page illustrated critique. He said there were two national parks in "serious danger of losing their National character and of becoming irretrievably a part of the cities depending upon their establishment." Platt National Park was more of a city park for Sulphur, Oklahoma, and at Hot Springs National Park the same condition was "even more plainly apparent… that it may already be too late to try to remedy the situation." He recommended a "daring program of reconstruction and acquisition… [to] bring back the National Park atmosphere" at Hot Springs. Because most visitors arrived from urban areas unfamiliar with NPS or national park values to seek up-to-date treatment and accommodations, few realized a distinction between city and NPS property. "If the Government enters at all into his field of vision," Meinecke opined, "it will be mainly though the gigantic Army and Navy Hospital, and not through the modest buildings of the National Park Service."[868]

Meinecke wrote that the city appreciated and took advantage of having landscaped and wooded areas close-by for use of its citizens and regarded the national park as its own, although managed and developed at considerable cost by NPS. It naturally expected even more development and concessions from NPS, tying park administrations ever closer with city interests. "Without exaggeration," he wrote, "it may be stated that today both the city and its guests take a strongly proprietary attitude towards the National Park. Through a kind of easement the Government is losing its ownership in the Park while being saddled forever with the continued and increasingly costly upkeep and maintenance." Resistance to the present conditions would be fruitless, he added, and "The city is growing and the springs are becoming more and more popular. The damage has already gone too deep, and in a short time it is the Park Service, as represented at Hot Springs, which will be overwhelmed and submerged."[869]

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[866] Ibid.
[867] *A Forestry Policy for the National Parks; Tree Disease Control*, Approved May 6, 1931, Horace M. Albright, Director, from Historic Files, NPS Office of Park Planning and Special Studies, Washington, D.C. in Lary M. Dilsaver, ed., *America's National Park System: The Critical Documents* (Lanham, Md: Rowman and Littlefield, 1994), 96.
[868] Principal Pathologist E. P. Meinecke, *The Reconstruction of Hot Springs National Park*, 10 January 1935, 1, HOSP 7184.
[869] Ibid., 2.

Figure 136. Horseback riders coming through Gulpha Gorge Campground gate, 1930s (HSNP 10426, National Park Service)

Meinecke described existing conditions in unflattering terms. Park buildings were "completely overshadowed and crushed by the Army and Navy Hospital on one end and by the imposing Arlington Hotel on the other." Architecture of the bathhouses was of "questionable taste" and fronted by a sidewalk bordered with a line of young magnolia trees which were not in good health. Several had already died leaving gaps which interrupted the avenue-character they were meant to provide. The trees were rooted in poor soil in a narrow, shallow strip of ground between the sidewalk and street and above the creek arch. "There is no hope for these trees in the long run," he wrote, "and it will be impossible except by the very expensive process of filling the gaps with larger and larger trees, to maintain the unbroken character of an avenue." For the uninitiated, "the drive through Central Avenue to the Arlington Hotel nowhere gives one the feeling that the United States is here maintaining one of its representative establishments. The impression is rather than of a watering town with not enough vision to make the best of its real opportunities." He criticized the crowded, narrow streets choked with cars. Reconstruction needed to focus on both ends of Bathhouse Row to demonstrate a real government presence. "If he is to be made to feel that at Hot Springs he is a guest of the United States and of the Park Service," he declared, "these two end points of Central Avenue must be treated monumentally and lavishly, in keeping with the expectations of a highly sophisticated and splendor-loving public. The treatment of Central Avenue itself must, logically, follow the decorative planning of its two ends." [870]

The forested area behind Bathhouse Row had been horribly abused. Poor soil produced unremarkable trees, shrubs, and plants to which

> *"The public avails itself of this native garden in the most destructive manner. Flowers in large quantities are gathered, and the flora has already become impoverished. Of wild life there is little left. Dogs and cats have free access to the mountains. The whole of Hot Springs and*

[870] Ibid., 3.

> *North Mountains is crisscrossed with roads and trails for horseback riding and walking, and everywhere the public has made short cuts over the steep slopes. Erosion of a destructive form is everywhere in evidence."*

Meinecke said that Hot Springs Mountain was "in deplorable condition" and should it be left unprotected, restoration would be impossible. Potential for a catastrophic fire remained real and could leave the area without a green cover for decades. Despite the confusion of trails and roads, the park lacked a comprehensive system of graded and graduated walks. The Oertel system of graduated exercise had been abandoned and the under-construction Grand Promenade would be helpful to those in wheelchairs. More needed to be done, he declared, because "The principle of exercise on walks graduated as to steepness and distance is so poorly represented in the United States that an opportunity is here offered for the introduction on a large scale of a curative system unique in this country."[871]

Meinecke's reconstruction plan had two objectives: "introduction of a definite and unmistakable National Park atmosphere and the protection and restoration of the badly misused forests and native flora." In town, he advocated a monumental and highly ornamental treatment of the "South Plaza" with the new architecturally distinct NPS administration building. For the "North Plaza" adjacent to the Arlington Hotel, he resurrected the nineteenth century concept of a "rich, double colonnade of strong character over the broad sidewalk along Central Avenue in front of the bathhouses." The ornate colonnade idea had been suggested previously and rejected as impractical. He wanted it to replace what he perceived as a doomed "Magnolia Row," a natural feature the public had already come to identify with and appreciate. He recommended highly formal gardens and the waterfall for Arlington Lawn to continue the monumental effect. Meinecke proposed to reserve both Hot Springs and North mountains "exclusively for promenades and walks for the immediate curative use of the health-seeking public and to develop West Mountain and Sugarloaf, connected and enlarged by purchase of suitable land, for longer excursions by car or saddle animals."[872]

Recreation on Hot Springs and North mountains, reserved for foot travel, would mean the eradication of all roadways, or perhaps narrowing portions of existing roads to paths or promenades for a "comprehensive Oertel system or for longer walks." He believed the distances were so short that the use of automobiles was unnecessary. As for the observation tower, "an unusually ugly structure and quite out of place," it should be demolished or at least shortened to protrude not far beyond the tree canopy. To protect the area from encroachment or indiscriminate use, the entire area needed to be fenced and the area planted with more ground cover, shrubs, and trees. He opined, "The vegetation on these two mountains is far too much influenced by man to make a slavish imitation of the wild forest advisable or even desirable. The objective should rather be to show what

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[871] Ibid., 4.
[872] Ibid., 7-8.

intelligent massing of particularly attractive plants can accomplish with the use of purely native material."[873]

Meinecke had a number of closing observations and recommendations. He expressed a dim view of Whittington Park as "obviously not Park Service material" and of no value other than as a nursery site. If retained, it could be converted back into a lake or simply used as a bargaining chip in a potential land exchange. He called the Gulpha Gorge Campground "unsatisfactory" because of its swampy and erosion-prone nature and believed that camping and picnicking needed to be separated. Foot and horse trails should also be separated and not combined use. He criticized the traditional practice to refer to the park's protection force as policemen and not as park rangers. Visitors oftentimes were unaware of the difference between city and park police. He advised, "There is a great deal in a name. At Hot Springs the fundamental trouble lies just in this lack of comprehension by the public of the governmental and Park Service nature of the Park, and the designation of Park Service employees as policemen strongly and disadvantageously supports this attitude." Finally, he advised NPS to be the dominant partner at Hot Springs:

> *"A growing city with all its legitimate aspirations and also with its political instabilities is notoriously inclined to overreach itself unless checked. The ideal set-up between City and Park is that of a partnership for mutual benefit in which the Government logically is the dominant member. But this dominance must express itself in active leadership in the modern development of the town and its surroundings in which both parties have a common interest."*[874]

The Meinecke report did not catch Thomas J. Allen by surprise. Calling it a "very strong document," he told Director Cammerer "Hot Springs has, I will agree, long been in a stage where strong documents seem necessary, and I am quite in accord with Dr. Meinecke's impression that something radical should be done with this particular park." What it lacked was a comprehensive plan of general development and because of ECW/CCC and PWA activities throughout the service, no such plan had been conceived. Allen disagreed that the park was being subjugated to the city because of a sustained effort to educate local citizens about NPS objectives and policies. He also noted the magnolia trees were an integral part of Bathhouse Row adding, "Dr. Meinecke is undoubtedly right in saying that they can scarcely be expected to grow to very large size, but in my opinion, if these trees never grow any larger than they are at the present, they will be worth while retaining, and the idea of a Magnolia Row at that location will be worth retaining." Allen also disagreed on the appearance of the bathhouses believing them to be distinctive architecturally from city buildings and appreciated so much by visitors. He disliked the concept of monumental fountains and the colonnade. On the subject of road closures, he thought eliminating the winding route on the front slope of Hot Springs Mountain was a good idea. While he appreciated Meinecke's suggestions and believed they would be taken into consideration during a general development plan,

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[873] Ibid., 9.
[874] Ibid, quotation p. 12; and 11.

he believed any improvements would have to be accomplished by NPS as it would be far beyond the city's means.[875]

Convinced that hydrotherapy was the future hope of his park's thermal water bathhouse industry, Superintendent Allen requested authorization to investigate its implementation throughout the U.S. He had already written the Garland County Medical Society expressing disappointment that registered physicians in Hot Springs had demonstrated little interest in the Maurice's experimental pool installed two years previously and the "extremely gratifying results" obtained there. Nationally, physicians were reporting similar findings at medical conferences and in journals and Hot Springs National Park should be in the forefront of hydrotherapy.[876]

Director Cammerer authorized Allen's travel to study and report on hydrotherapy centers, equipment, and methods, something which received increasing publicity thanks to President Franklin D. Roosevelt's association with Warm Springs, Georgia, now the site of his Summer White House. Allen visited a New York City clinic operated by Dr. John Currence that utilized Hubbard tubs where the water temperature was gradually increased until the patient felt relief. Only at that individual's required temperature were exercises performed in the underwater tank. He studied the operation along with the massaging, laboratory work, examinations, and exercising outside of the water. Also in New York, he visited the Society for the Relief of Ruptured and Crippled Children and the New York Hospital where both had a large pool similar to the Maurice therapeutic pool except only partially sunk beneath the floor. This permitted the physiotherapist and technicians to assist patients without being themselves submerged. Both featured elaborate hoist mechanisms to assist patients in and out of the water. From there, he proceeded to Saratoga Springs and visited Saratoga Spa where he was pleased to see that they had modeled their programs on experience gained at Hot Springs National Park, but catered to high-paying patrons. He then went to Buffalo, New York, but hospitals there had no hydrotherapy departments. At Cincinnati, two hospitals did have hydrotherapy pools for children.

It was in Chicago that Allen found the most concentrated activity and interest, particularly centered at Northwestern University and University of Chicago with Hubbard tubs and small pools with plans for further expansion. He reported there was growing interest in this field and NPS needed to become equipped to handle underwater treatments or fall behind the rest of the nation. Should that occur, he warned "the waters of the park will not be offered to the public in their best and most useful manner."[877]

During fiscal year 1936 PWA workers employed through the Bureau of Public Roads reconstructed and realigned West Mountain road. They widened the road and installed a better drainage system over a distance of 3.5 miles. Unfortunately, the Bureau

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[875] Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 2 February 1935, attached to HOSP 7184.
[876] Superintendent Allen to Dr. Gaston A. Hebert, Secretary, Garland County Medical Society, letter, 27 June 1935, A18 Registered Physicians, 1933-1956.
[877] Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, letter, 4 December 1935, A22 Warm Springs Foundation, 1929-1935.

of Public Roads had to delay turning over the area to NPS because during heavy rainfall events some of the road banks were prone to landslides.[878] Regional Geologist Charles Gould found that a quarter-mile area slumped causing tons of material to break loose and slide down the bank or washed down gullies. He recommended remedial measures be taken in the form of a retaining wall of rough stone be erected and fill added, held in place by honeysuckle, wisteria, and huckleberry.[879]

Congress authorized a minor boundary extension for identified parcels within the city adjacent to park entrances. This included Lot 11 of Block 101; Lot 5 of Block 185; Lot 6 of Block 186; Lots 5, 6, and 7 of Block 187; and Lots 1, 2, 3, 6, and 15 of Block 188, provided they be acquired for not more than $15,000 with funds already appropriated.[880] Congress subsequently amended this act three years later by adding $8,000 to the $15,000 authorized acquisition limit. It also authorized the secretary to accept donations of land or interests in land within city limits.[881]

Congress amended the Act of March 2, 1911, and increased penalties on those swearing false oath in order to secure the privilege of free baths. A false indigent oath could result in not less than $25 or more than $300 and also imprisonment for up to sixty days. Congress also added the provision that the indigent bather must be suffering from ailments for which bathing in the thermal water would either afford relief or affect a cure.[882] Heavy use of the Government Free Bathhouse and Clinic began to decline during 1936. The average daily bathing rate declined from 522 to 306 with 159,835 total baths given. Improved economic conditions and USPHS efforts nationwide to treat venereal cases at their point of residence assisted this decline. Also in 1936, long-time USPHS clinic manager Dr. O. C. Wenger transferred to a post in St. Louis and was replaced by Dr. K. W. Morris. USPHS stood ready to continue operation of the transient camp from the Transient Bureau at the end of the fiscal year, accepting unmarried females and domiciling them in a separate dormitory at the camp which now was being called Camp Garraday.

At the national level, NPS reaped the benefits of the various New Deal emergency recovery organizations which helped it operate and improve the expanded national park system. On January 15, 1935, administration of Emergency Conservation Work in the national parks and monuments formerly handled by the chief forester was absorbed into the Branch of Planning and State Cooperation administered by Assistant Director Conrad L. Wirth. Wirth, manager of the state ECW program, now handled all ECW/CCC activities for NPS. His division of the country into various regions provided the impetus for a similar fundamental reorganization of NPS. Following a council meeting of superintendents in Washington, Director Cammerer decided to proceed with a plan for

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[878] *Annual Report for 1936.*
[879] Regional Geologist Gould to Acting Regional Director Maier, memo, 16 June 1936, Letter Box 15, HOSP 15193.
[880] *Act of Congress*, *15 June 1936* (49 Stat. 1516)(16 U.S.C. sec. 361c). Public Law 684 intended that "adequate entrances may be developed." See *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1936* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1936), 110.
[881] *Act of Congress*, *10 August 1939* (53 Stat. 1341)(16 U.S.C. sec. 361c, 361c-1 note, 361e).
[882] *Act of Congress, 26 June 1936* (49 Stat. 1979)(16 U.S.C. sec. 371).

the secretary's approval to decentralize in favor of a regionalization of the bureau. There were four NPS regions with offices in the following cities: Richmond, Virginia (Region I); Omaha, Nebraska (Region II); Santa Fe, New Mexico (Region III); and San Francisco, California (Region IV). The regional offices directly supervised NPS field personnel and equipment; oversaw funding; approved designs; and supplied technical expertise. Areas within each NPS region were further subdivided into district offices containing field inspectors who, in addition to certifying projects, gave advice on designs and plans. The seven ECW regions were reduced to the four recommended NPS regions, but the third ECW region with an office in Oklahoma City temporarily remained there instead of moving to Santa Fe as proposed in the nationwide plan. Arkansas, which fell under the purview of Region III, was served by acting Regional Director Herbert Maier and Assistant Regional Officer (Coordinator) Milton J. McComb, and ECW District A Office Assistant Regional Officer E. A. Pesonen, all located in Oklahoma City. The regionalization plan remained on hold pending secretarial approval.[883] It did not begin until after the close of fiscal year 1937 and was implemented in August of that year.[884]

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING DEDICATION, 1936

Director Arno B. Cammerer arrived early to dedicate the new NPS Administration Building telling reporters, "I am in love with Hot Springs and its people and of course like to have an excuse to be here." The director planned to stay beyond the March 5, 1936, festivities in order to take the baths and rest.[885] In his dedication speech, Cammerer declared: "It is said that before the coming of the white man, the Indians used the water from these hot springs as communal property. If that is true, it was the fore-runner of the national park idea that reserved and set aside great scenic and

Figure 137. Hot Springs National Park Administration Building and Army-Navy Hospital, 1936 (HSNP 10156, National Park Service)

[883] See *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1936* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1936) 100-103; and "Changes Made in Regionalization of National Park Emergency Conservation Work," *Park Service Bulletin*, Vol. 6, No. 5 (July 1936), 15-17, Box 312, Horace M. Albright Papers 2056, University of California, Los Angeles. Region III had five states: Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. District A Office served Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. District B Office served New Mexico and Arizona.

[884] *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1937* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1937), 35.

[885] "U.S. Parks Director Here: Program Thursday Planned," *Hot Springs New Era,* 4 March 1936, Folder: National Park Dedication, 1936, Garland County Historical Society, Hot Springs, Ark.

historic areas of national distinction for the health, recreation, inspiration and enjoyment of people." He said the building represented a direct expression of that idea and would be hereafter used for public good. He continued:

> *"Today, the appeal of Hot Springs is much wider than that of a health resort alone. The park is coming rather to rank with those spas of Europe where people go for healthful rest periods at the end of busy enervating periods.*
>
> *"This building is another symbol of the nation's confidence in Hot Springs National Park. The location of the structure has been an important factor in the attempt to seize its greatest opportunities of usefulness and public service, and to weld the various architectural and landscape elements into an eventually acceptable unit. It will fit in harmoniously with the proposed entrance to the future promenade to the east and the main entrance to the great hospital building further east. The choice of Spanish architecture was made only after most careful consideration. It was felt that the traditional visit of DeSoto was of sufficient human interest to be reflected in the architectural treatment. Moreover, the Spanish architecture was evolved to meet human needs in a warm, clean atmosphere, similar to the climate of this region. The design and plan was approved and commended by the National Commission of Fine Arts."*[886]

Not part of the dedication ceremony was the Mather memorial plaque received from the Stephen T. Mather Appreciation Committee effort. Answering a Washington Office inquiry, Allen confirmed Hot Springs' Mather plaque had yet to be dedicated because there were two proposals on where it should be displayed: the new Administration Building or the Grand Promenade. The Branch of Plans and Designs wanted the large bronze plaque to be incorporated into the Grand Promenade for greater visitor accessibility and prominence. Superintendent Allen asked for guidance on how to proceed

Figure 138. Close-up of a Stephen T. Mather Appreciation Plaque, originally cast for placement in all the existing national parks at the time of the first NPS director's death. (Historic Photograph Collection, Harpers Ferry Center, National Park Service)

[886] "National Parks Director Pays Tribute to Resort; Greater Plans Prepared," *Hot Springs New Era,* 5 March 1936, Folder: National Park Dedication, 1936, Garland County Historical Society, Hot Springs, Ark.

since the Grand Promenade project was stalled but the new office building and museum was open and able to accommodate it.[887] An answer came three years later when the bronze Mather memorial plaque assigned to Hot Springs National Park was temporarily installed in the Administration Building information office. Its inscription read: "Stephen Tyng Mather July 4, 1867 - January 22, 1930. He laid the foundation of the National Park Service, defining and establishing the policies under which its areas shall be developed and conserved unimpaired for future generations. There will never come an end to the good that he has done."[888]

Figure 139. Museum room with exhibit cabinets in place, 1936 (HSNP 5604, National Park Service)

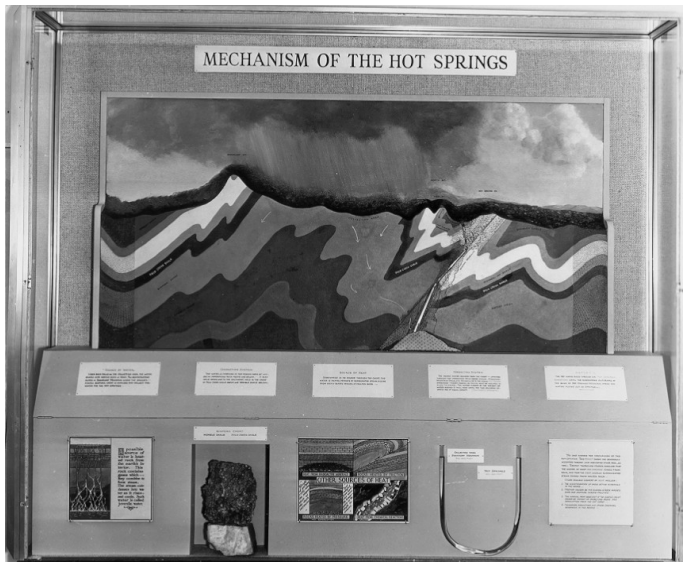

Figure 140. First museum exhibits: "Mechanism of the Hot Springs," June 1937 (HSNP 6762, National Park Service)

In 1936, leases for the Superior and Hale bathhouses were continued via miscellaneous annual permits. NPS wished both would either substantially remodel, combine, or be replaced by new, modern state-of-the-art bathhouses. Also, the lease for operation of Hot Springs Mountain Observatory Company expired and was surrendered November 30, 1935, a victim of the Great Depression. (As NPS debated tearing down the observation tower, park managers decided to issue a reprieve until conditions improved. It negotiated a five-year lease which went into effect on January 1, 1941.[889])

[887] Superintendent Allen to Assistant Director H.C. Bryant, letter, 17 April 1936, D66 Signs, 1923-1949.
[888] Superintendent Patraw to Director Cammerer, 11 January 1940, Monthly Narrative Report for December 1939.
[889] *Annual Report for 1941.*

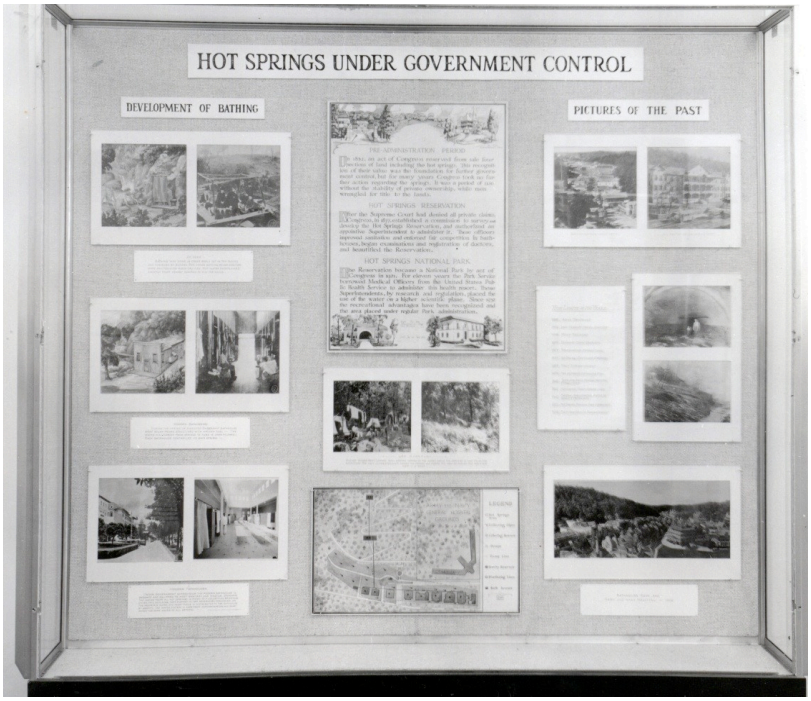

Figure 141. First museum exhibits: "Hot Springs Under Government Control," June 1937 (HSNP 6770, National Park Service)

Increased visitation during the year put a strain on the Gulpha Gorge Campground and its swimming pool. It filled to capacity during the warm season. Influxes of automobile trailer houses and house cars made it extra crowded and demonstrated to NPS the need to expand it. Visitation increased with those traveling to centennial events for 1936 Arkansas statehood as well as to the Texas Centennial Exposition in Dallas. The diorama exhibit for Hot Springs National Park utilized at the Chicago Century of Progress Exposition was displayed in the Transportation Building at the Dallas world's fair. At Hot Springs, local school children performed a pageant entitled "Arkansas Through the Years" on Arlington Lawn at the end of Bathhouse Row.[890]

[890] *Annual Report for 1936.* A new lease for the observation tower was issued September 9, 1936, through the end of 1941. See *Annual Report for 1937.*

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Great Depression Continues

FIRST SUPERINTENDENCY OF DONALD S. LIBBEY, 1936-1938

In April 1936, Thomas J. Allen received orders from Director Cammerer transferring him to serve as superintendent at Rocky Mountain National Park, effective the following month. Cammerer selected Donald S. Libbey, from the Washington Office's Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) program, as his replacement. Libbey arrived on May 11 and had five days to confer with Thomas Allen before Allen left Hot Springs on May 16. On May 14, the chamber of commerce and civic clubs held a farewell banquet in the ballroom of the Arlington Hotel for Allen and welcomed the incoming superintendent. On May 25, both men took the oath of office at their respective national parks.[891]

Figure 142. Superintendent Donald S. Libbey (second from left) with chamber of commerce and U.S. Public Health Service officials in front of Hot Springs National Park Administration Building, May 1936 (HSNP 1510, National Park Service)

FIRST FAMILY VISITS HOT SPRINGS, 1936

Allen was gone for less than a month before being summoned back to greet two very important park visitors: President Franklin D. Roosevelt and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. Traveling through Arkansas, Texas, and Indiana during the second week in June 1936, the first family arrived at the Missouri Pacific Railroad depot on the morning of June 10 accompanied by the Arkansas Congressional Delegation: U.S. senators Joe T. Robinson and Hattie W. Caraway and seven U.S. representatives. The first lady immediately left the train for the Arlington Hotel where she was guest of honor before a patriotic breakfast with 500 Arkansas women. In the president's immediate party were Jesse Jones, chairman of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation; Carl A. Crowley, solicitor of the U.S. Postal Service; Charles A. Jones, general manager of the Home Owners Loan Corporation;

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[891] Superintendent Allen to Director Cammerer, 5 May 1936, covering conditions during the month of April 1936; and Superintendent Donald S. Libbey to Director Cammerer, letter, 4 June 1936, covering conditions during the month of May 1936. Martin Eisele, former superintendent, served as toastmaster. Prior to his Washington Office experience, Libbey was park naturalist and assistant superintendent at Crater Lake National Park. See Donald L. Libbey, "Memorial to Donald Smith Libbey (1892-1959)," *The Record*, Vol. 22 (Hot Springs, Ark.: Garland County Historical Society, 1981), 16.

Brooks Hays, Arkansas Democratic Party committeeman; Marvin H. McIntyre and Stephen T. Early, presidential secretaries; and Col. Edwin M. Watson and Capt. Paul Bastedo, military and naval aides. In addition there were numerous national newspapermen, photographers, and movie photographers.

As the first presidential visit in Hot Springs history, Mayor McLaughlin had issued a proclamation for a half-holiday and ordered all businesses to close during the morning hours, to include closing the main streets and forbidding any parked cars along presidential routes. Superintendent Libbey likewise ordered all Bathhouse Row establishments to close as well.

President Roosevelt was assisted by a U.S. Secret Service agent to walk out to the rear platform of the presidential railcar where he was greeted by Governor J. M. Futrell and Mayor Leo P. McLaughlin. From there, the president left by motorcade to the Army and Navy Hospital to greet patients and hospital staff. From the hospital, the motorcade proceeded on the mountain drive behind Bathhouse Row onto Fountain Street and to the Arlington Hotel where Mrs. Roosevelt and superintendents Allen and Libbey joined the official party and proceeded onto the sidewalk at Arlington Lawn. Superintendent Libbey officially greeted the president before joining the first lady in her automobile. Former superintendent Allen joined the president after Mayor McLaughlin left the president's car. There they viewed three scenes from "Arkansas Through the Years," a pageant by schoolchildren which had been presented there on June 3. The 75-piece U.S. Marine Band also played "Hail to the Chief."

Figure 143. President Franklin D. Roosevelt shakes hands with Hot Springs National Park Superintendent Donald S. Libbey as Thomas J. Allen, Jr., looks on at Arlington Lawn on June 10, 1936. (Historic Photograph Collection, Harpers Ferry Center, National Park Service)

With Central Avenue jammed with people, the motorcade proceeded down the sidewalk to the Fordyce Bathhouse. The president and first lady toured the bathhouse with Col. John R. Fordyce, Lillian Fordyce, superintendents Allen and Libbey, and manager B. L. Neimeyer. The president spoke to six children who suffered infantile paralysis and compared treatments to those given at Warm Springs. Libbey reported:

> *"The President was very much interested in the accommodations and bathing procedure, the chemical content of the water, the receipts from bath houses and future development plans for the park. Mr. Allen rode with the President and Mrs. Roosevelt from the bathhouses on a tour of inspection of West Mountain and on over the recently paved Malvern highway leading to Couchwood, the summer home of Harvey C. Couch, where the official party were guests of Mr. Couch at luncheon. At this point Mr. Allen and Superintendent Libbey paid their respects to the President and Mrs. Roosevelt and returned to Hot Springs."*[892]

Allen had the opportunity to explain Hot Springs National Park and its issues while riding with the Roosevelt's. Upon his return to Rocky Mountain National Park, he thanked Director Cammerer for the experience, declaring: "I want… to express my appreciation for the privilege of representing the Service at that time, and I want also to acknowledge the fine spirit of Superintendent Libbey, not only in concurring in my return to Hot Springs for the occasion, but in permitting me to more or less take the limelight from him in his own park."[893] Allen also had the opportunity to hire away a valuable Hot Springs employee when H. Raymond Gregg, acting park naturalist, transferred to the park naturalist position at Rocky Mountain National Park. H. W. Lix then became acting park naturalist, leaving behind his park police duties.[894]

Figure 144. Bathhouse Row after a light snow, Superior Bathhouse at left, November 22, 1937 (HSNP 1836, National Park Service)

Donald Libbey, beginning his first superintendency, proved to be a quick learner and had a number of recommendations to make in his first annual report. The first, to ensure it maintained its identity as a national park, Hot Springs had to expand into the

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[892] Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, letter, 3 July 1936, covering conditions during the month of June 1936 (quotation); "Day to Remember June 10, 1936: Franklin Roosevelt Only President to Visit Resort While in Office," *Sentinel Record,* 8 June 1958, Group II: Series 9: Hot Springs Vertical Files, ca. 1900-1984, Box 49, Folder: Centennial Celebrations, 1936, MC 534 Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville; and Wendy Richter, "Arkansas' Centennial: President Franklin D. Roosevelt Visits Spa in 1936," *The Record*, Vol. 27 (Hot Springs, Ark.: Garland County Historical Society, 1986), 83-89.

[893] "President and Mrs. Roosevelt Enjoy Hot Springs Tour," *Park Service Bulletin,* Vol. 6, No. 6 (July 1936), 3-4.

[894] Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, letter, 8 September 1936, covering conditions during the month of August 1936.

undeveloped area to the west and north to "round out the natural features and add much to the area available for trails, bridal paths and a scenic motor road. Maintaining its present small size would make it impossible to provide recreational outlets for visitors." Second, the Grand Promenade must be completed for a much-needed public use area behind Bathhouse Row. Third, he called for an outdoor amphitheatre away from traffic noises for park interpretive and naturalist programs, complete with projection equipment for illustrated lectures. Finally, he required picnic facilities and fire pits for the campground.[895]

One of Libbey's first issues involved the placement of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) plaque concerning De Soto on a large tufa boulder located on Arlington Lawn, something which "rather commits the Service to the statement that De Soto did visit this area." Libbey favored moving the boulder with plaque adjacent to the proposed cascade first, or to a place along the promenade. He also suggested if an outdoor amphitheatre was ever built, it could be placed in conjunction with it and help alleviate the over use and abuse of public gatherings at Arlington Lawn.[896]

The first technical team dispatched from the Oklahoma City district office occurred in July 1936. Two wildlife technicians and the regional forester inspected the park, diseased trees on Hot Springs Mountain, the West Mountain road, and new museum exhibit installations.[897] The following month, Works Progress Administration (WPA)-funded National Youth Administration laborers working under direction of an NPS foreman, cleared a fire break around Sugarloaf and parts of West Mountain boundary areas. The on-going drought conditions made this effort an important part of fire abatement with NPS on alert to prevent fire migrating from private lands onto federal property. Other drought issues involved water restrictions from the municipal supply, something that threatened the growth and maintenance of nursery beds in Whittington Park. Crafty maintenance men used gasoline-powered pumps to take water from the creek to irrigate the nursery plots as well as to fill a water tank and sprinkle trees and planting beds elsewhere.[898]

Construction of the new Gorge road by Garland County using WPA labor in late 1936 alleviated use of local back roads through a poor urban neighborhood. Following the east side of Gulpha Creek, the road vastly improved the former route for location and specification. It connected the campground to Grand Avenue and on to U.S. Highway 70

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[895] *Annual Report for 1936.*

[896] Superintendent Libbey to Acting Assistant Director Verne E. Chatelain, letter, 22 June 1936, D66 Signs, 1923-1949. For the present he recommended moving it temporarily to the southwest of where it was on Arlington Lawn, adding "This recommendation is dependent upon the Service agreeing to the character of the inscription, the type of marker and decision that historical records establish the fact that the placing of a DeSoto marker is advisable."

[897] Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, letter, 7 August 1936, covering conditions during the month of July 1936.

[898] Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, letter, 8 September 1936, covering conditions during the month of August 1936.

to Little Rock. It also helped alleviate some of the congested conditions on Central Avenue by providing an alternate downtown route.[899]

Ownership of the Kingsway Hotel changed in November 1936 following the death of its owner. Interests in the Majestic Hotel bought controlling stock in the venture and subsequently changed its name back to its historic one: Eastman Hotel and Baths.[900]

In his second annual report, a disappointed Don Libbey described the park as containing "four disconnected areas" and declared that during fiscal year 1937 "an effort was made to restore to Hot Springs National Park a major portion of the original area which has been unfortunately lost through private acquisition." Lands encompassing West, Sugarloaf, Indian, North, and Hot Springs mountains—an area of 4,763 acres—were included in House of Representatives bill 5763. Introduced on March 18, 1937, by Rep. John L. McClellan, H.R. 5763 had received an unfavorable report from the Bureau of the Budget, something Libbey lamented, stating "acquisition of the additional area would permit Hot Springs National Park to be a representative area and supplement the health-giving and health-restoring mineral waters and the facilities appertaining thereto."

Final acceptance of the park Administration Building did not occur until March 9, 1937, because the contractor had to repair the roof, install additional flashing, and do other alterations in order for it to conform to original specifications. Landscaping the grounds around the building also began that summer as contractors demolished the Imperial Bathhouse and graded the area for the Grand Promenade approach off Reserve Avenue. Installation of permanent museum exhibits by the NPS Museum Division, Branch of Research and Education, on the first floor of the Administration Building preceded a June 20 opening to the public.[901] Nearly 500 people lined up to see the new exhibits.[902] The museum room had a logical, chronological floor plan with fifteen separate exhibits as follows:

1. Geological History
2. Mechanism of the Hot Springs
3. Rocks, Minerals and Fossils
4. Indians and Natural Resources
5. Caddo Culture
6. De Soto
7. Frontier History
8. Development of Bathing -- Park Administration
9. Local Plant and Animal Ecology
10. Interesting Local Plants
11. Interesting Local Animals
12. Hot Water Biology – Plants and Animals

[899] Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, letter, 11December 1936, covering conditions during the month of November 1936.
[900] Ibid.
[901] *Annual Report for 1937*.
[902] Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, letter, 16 July 1937, covering conditions during the month of June 1937.

13. Hot Water Biology – Environmental Relationships
14. Scientific Studies
15. Topographic Arkansas Map

The Hot Springs Natural History Association distributed the official museum guide to a larger audience as the first installation of their *Natural History Journal.* Sponsored by NPS and issued quarterly, the publication replaced the monthly *Nature Notes* bulletin. The association, which offered memberships for a $1.00 annual fee, had as its mission to "stimulate interest and encourage scientific investigation and research in the fields of botany, zoology, geology, history, ethnology and related subjects bearing on the Hot Springs, Arkansas, region."[903] With a professional museum in place and to add interest to the exhibits, John R. Fordyce donated a collection of Indian stone hammers, arrowheads, and other artifacts.[904]

Attention remained focused in 1937 on the park's road system. The Bureau of Public Roads still had not turned over the West Mountain road to NPS because major landslide areas had not been corrected. Realignment of roadways in the slump areas were being studied along with upgrading the roadway's drainage system. Realignment of both Hot Springs and North Mountain roads were also being considered. Planners suggested making both a one-way loop system to "prevent strangers from getting lost in the maze of existing roads" along with abandoning the tortuous route up the west slope of Hot Springs Mountain.

Considerable concessions activity occurred in 1937. NPS held back delivering a lease to the Majestic Bathhouse because for four years it had still not been remodeled. By the end of fiscal year 1937, however, the improvements were in progress. The contract for the Fordyce Bathhouse was delivered after it agreed to enclose the rear area with stucco to hide an unattractive view caused by its cooling tanks. The Fordyce also agreed to cover an unsightly cooling tower on its roof within a sixty-day period when conditions improved and at the request of the superintendent. Five separate thermal water leases were requested during the year by different operators but those applications were not accepted because the existing tubbage remained far in excess of actual public demand. There were an additional authorized thirty-five tubs which remained unused while economic conditions slowly continued to improve. All lessees were put on notice that all authorized tubs be put back in operation for the next fiscal year.[905]

Camp Garraday, the local transient camp and medical center, continued in operation by USPHS. That agency was willing to continue operating it and seek

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[903] *Hot Springs National Park Museum Guide,* published in 3rd Quarter 1937*, Natural History Journal,* No. 1*,* Hot Springs Natural History Association, HOSP 7252. Threre are two variations of the room's layout, depending on how the exhibit cabinets were to be arranged. In order to "fill the long-felt need for ready-reference material" in the Division of Public Relations in the Washington Office, an index of *Nature Notes* was compiled by WPA workers under the direction of Hazel Hunt Voth. See *A General Index to Hot Springs Nature Notes* (Berkeley, Calif.: Works Progress Administration/National Park Service, 1938).
[904] Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, letter, 16 April 1937, covering conditions during the month of March 1937.
[905] *Annual Report for 1937.*

continued congressional appropriations if the NPS would accept ownership of the sixty-acre camp. While the memorandum of agreement was being studied in Washington, the president of the Dyess Colony, the private corporation that owned the camp, declared NPS would not be offered title unless a permanent arrangement and appropriations were secured by USPHS, thus placing the camp's future in question.[906]

National attention focused on the City of Hot Springs when the Arkansas State Police raided the various private gaming clubs on January 15, 1937. Photographing gambling equipment prior to seizing it, all the illegal items were destroyed by fire on January 30. A special state committee of the Arkansas House of Representative convened hearings and received testimony from local citizens and city and county officials in an investigation of prevailing conditions in the 18th Judicial District. The majority report called for the impeachment of the circuit judge, but, by a seventy to twenty vote, the House inexplicably voted to drop the investigation. An incredulous local committee immediately began lobbying Superintendent Libbey, the governor, and other state officials calling for the Federal Government to take control over the "wide open" city contiguous to the national park. By the end of February, the uproar had ended and the entrenched illegal gaming system remained safely in place at Hot Springs.[907]

Assistant Director Conrad L. Wirth made his first visit to Hot Springs National Park on October 2, 1937, as part of the concluding sessions of the Southwest Regional Conference on State Parks. Accompanying Wirth were Acting Region III Director Herbert Maier and Region II Director Thomas J. Allen, Jr. The conference convened at Petit Jean State Park and then went on to Lake Catherine State Park and Hot Springs National Park before enjoying a chamber of commerce sponsored dinner at the Arlington Hotel.[908]

Civilian Conservation Corps workers from CCC Camp SP 9, Lake Catherine State Park, began performing work details at Hot Springs in November 1937. Because the Lake Catherine camp had yet to be constructed, the men traveled from an existing camp at Friendship, Arkansas. The daily travel time back and forth curtailed the effective working time for the enrollees but they nonetheless commenced work on four projects: preparing and transporting rich top soil, moving and planting trees and shrubs, horse trails maintenance, and seed collection.[909]

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[906] Ibid., and Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, letter, 8 September 1936, covering conditions during the month of August 1936. The name "Garraday" was a rough combination of two last names of men for whom the camp was named: Chancery Judge Samuel W. Garratt and Garland County and Probate Judge Charles H. Davis. See Audrey Wenger McCully, "The United States Public Health Service Venereal Disease Clinic and Government Free Bath House, 1919-1936," *The Record,* Vol. 22 (Hot Springs, Ark.: Garland County Historical Society, 1981), 102.

[907] Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, letters, 16 February and 15 March 1937, covering conditions during the months of January and February 1937. Superintendent Libbey assured the director that no NPS employees were involved in the investigation or participated in illegal gaming.

[908] Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, letter, 15 November 1937, covering conditions during the month of October 1937.

[909] Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, letter, 13 December 1937, covering conditions during the month of November 1937.

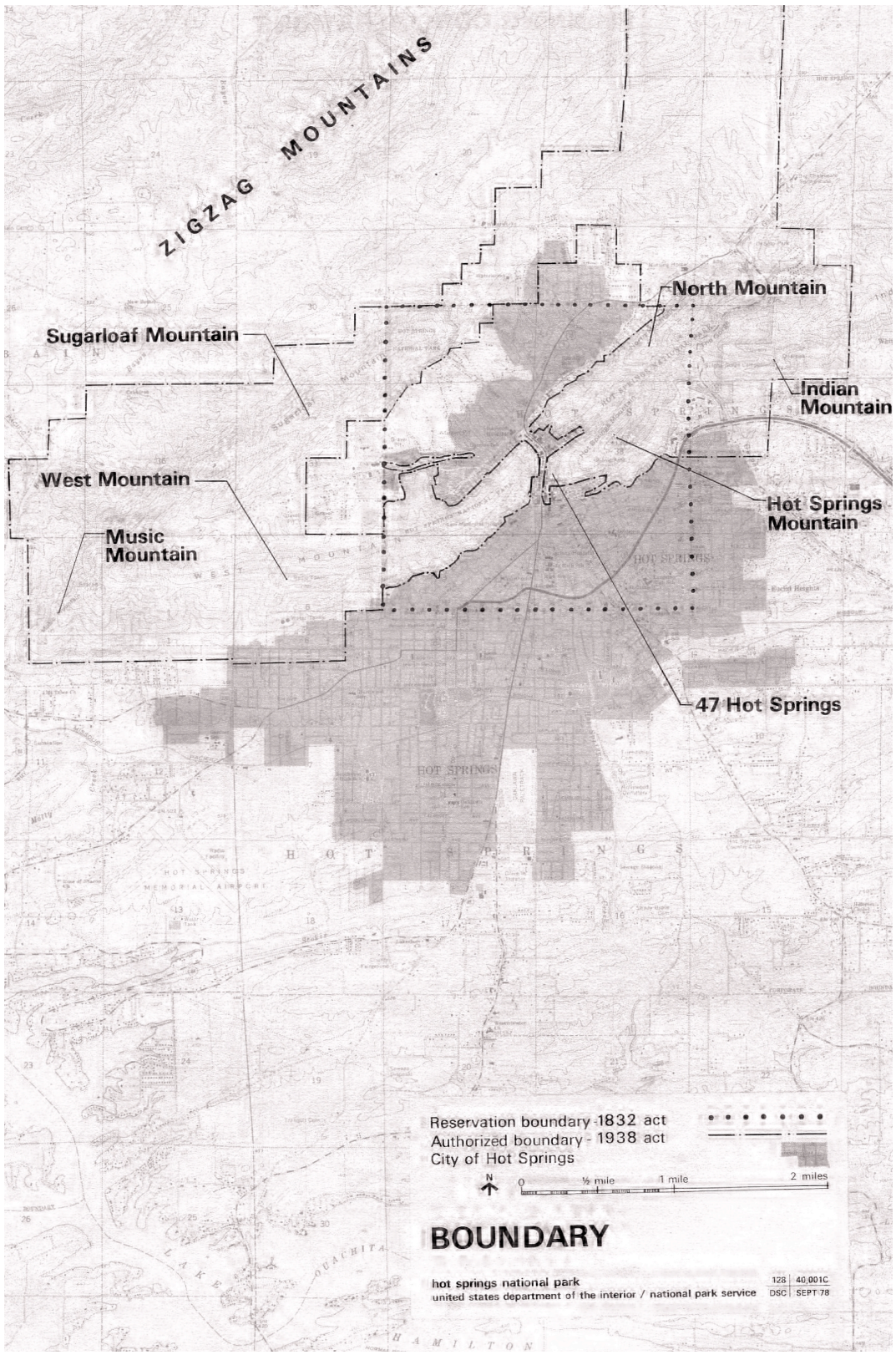

Figure 145. Hot Springs Reservation Boundary (1832) on 1938 Hot Springs National Park Boundary Expansion Map. (National Park Service)

Congress authorized the long-sought boundary expansion on June 23, 1938, finally agreeing to passage of H.R. 5763. As Director Cammerer explained, the act made "possible acquisition of land to protect the watershed for the probable source of the hot springs from the denudation regarded as inevitable if the West Mountain-Sugarloaf Mountain extension remains in private hands."[910] While Congress authorized park expansion, it did not fund it. The only addition of land in 1938 came from condemnation purchase when 5.815 acres were added to bring the total national park area to 989.805 acres.[911] The measure nonetheless authorized an extension of 4,763 acres and would at last connect the three separate components of Hot Springs National Park with a common boundary. The act included certain streets and lots within the city as well as Fountain Street and its environs in order to provide a suitable entrance to Hot Springs and North Mountains. The latter was deemed essential to eliminate undesirable developments on private property that had sprouted between federal property and the Park Hotel. The same act granted the city the right to acquire small tracts of land along the south edge of Whittington Park in order to straighten Whittington Avenue. Section 3 of the act provided "There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for the acquisition of lands described in Section 1, hereof, such sums as the Congress may, from time to time, determine." Specifically mentioned in Section 1, were tracts vested in the General Land Office, namely, Lots 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14, of Block 188; and Lots 1 through 6 of Block 189. Lots 1 and 2 of Block 189 contained the NPS maintenance utility shops and service area.[912]

NPS installed a ventilation chamber and automatic exhaust fan to the north side of the Administration Building during fiscal year 1938. This allowed the ventilation and exhaust of the basement pumping chamber that operated the thermal water distribution system. Workers subsequently installed the small parking area and completed landscaping around the building.

Following demolition of Imperial Bathhouse, the area received proper grading and temporary development of an approach from Reserve Avenue marked with an official NPS sign for the Grand Promenade entrance. Workers labored to remove the "hump" on the bluff behind Arlington Lawn but occasional breakdowns of the jackhammer caused delays. It proved difficult to pierce the massive tufa rock interspersed with deposits of manganese, hematite, limonite and goethite. Superintendent Libbey alluded to growing public acceptance of this new landscape feature in his 1938 annual report while acknowledging continued opposition by others who preferred the area behind Bathhouse Row be used for parking by bathhouse patrons or even for a by-pass for congested Central Avenue. The superintendent affirmed his role in educating the public as to the preferred and final use of the area as a promenade for park visitors.[913]

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[910] *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1938* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1938), 27.
[911] Ibid., 28.
[912] *Annual Report for 1938*; and *Act of Congress, Public Law 715,* 24 June 1938 (52 Stat. 1038).
[913] *Annual Report for 1938* and Superintendent Libbey, "Memorandum for the Superintendent [sic]," 9 September 1938, Monthly Narrative Report for August 1938. Undergoing a format change, the report should have stated "Director."

The museum continued to enjoy regular visitation during its first year in operation. Hundreds of requests to donate materials for display were received but because most did not fit the scope of existing exhibits, the offers were politely declined. A new item was added to hang prominently in the room during 1938: a portrait of General Andrew Jackson. Donated by the Historical Committee of the Garland County Centennial Committee, it was Jackson, who as seventh president, signed the act establishing United States Hot Springs Reservation in 1832. The presentation ceremony took place on the 102nd anniversary of the date Congress accepted Arkansas's admission to the federal Union.[914]

Bureau of Public Roads workers realigned West Mountain road below the slide area to a more natural grade in an attempt to avoid more sloughing which had occurred over the past three years. They installed a grouted rubble guttering and rock rampart with concrete reinforcement to hold back fill on the hillside. During the fall, winter, and spring of 1937-38, CCC men assigned to Lake Catherine State Park installed topsoil seeded with wild flowers and other indigenous plants as well as planted shrubs and trees to give the area a more natural appearance. Planners moved ahead on a proposed new approach from Fountain Street to the Hot Springs and North mountains road system for a one-way loop. Already, the concrete road with its difficult, sharp curves was used for one-way traffic going up the mountain and the adjacent Canyon Street road closed to all vehicular traffic.[915]

In response to requests from three lessees—Fordyce, Maurice, and Levi Memorial Hospital—to either install new or refurbish existing therapeutic pools, Superintendent Libbey recommended a committee be established to study the need for underwater therapy and therapeutic pool facilities. While economic conditions continued to show improvement, no other lessees had shown a similar interest nor had any interest stepped forward to operate an exclusive hydrotherapy bathhouse as NPS desired.

Always operating in the shadows, the drumming evil came into the limelight in April 1938. Evidence that small hotels and boarding houses routinely violated section 23 of the official regulations, prompted Don Libbey to hold hearings for more than two weeks and demonstrated that ten operators of small hotels were guilty of employing drummers to steer customers to their establishments. Libbey issued an order banning guests from all ten hotels from using government regulated thermal water facilities for sixty days. He then issued a follow-up official memorandum to all bathhouse managers placing that order on temporary hold pending the director's and secretary's approval and the good behavior of those cited violators. Libbey reported it was intriguing to note that the solicitation of visitors at railroad depots, bus stations, and on the city streets had all but ceased as the hearings progressed and the penalty announced.[916] The affected operators appealed to city administrators to amend the 1916 ordinance to allow them to

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[914] Ibid., and Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, letter, 9 July 1938, covering conditions during the month of June 1938. A direct descendant of the former president presented the portrait to Superintendent Libbey.
[915] Ibid.
[916] Ibid., and Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, letters, 18 May and 10 June 1938, covering conditions during the months of April and May 1938.

solicit for business outside the areas where incoming visitors arrived at the depots or bus stations. The compromise reached was, according to Libbey, "through sufferance they will be permitted to meet trains, carrying signs in their caps or hats, or placards, but that they must not shout the name of their establishment or indiscriminately approach or solicit incoming visitors to stay at their hotels." He reported that there existed a "better spirit of cooperation" between the city and his office "than has occurred for a number of years."[917]

The issue of ownership of Camp Garraday was finally resolved in 1938. Now called the Hot Springs Transient Medical Center, the Dyess Colony, Inc., transferred title to the land and buildings to the county court of Garland County. During the past session of Congress, a House resolution authorized the USPHS to supply and maintain the Hot Springs Transient Medical Center at Hot Springs National Park. Libbey expressed dismay that the resolution specified Hot Springs National Park, another instance where the local post office having the same name as the national park caused confusion and opposition among local citizens. Libbey inserted into his annual report his relief that USPHS would continue operating the camp and medical center, stating: "It seems fortunate that the Service and this park have not acquired title to the lands and buildings occupied by the Hot Springs Transient Medical Center, and for further administrative reasons, it appears preferable that the title to the land and buildings rest with the local county authorities."[918]

In his annual report recommendations, Libbey called for an appropriation at minimum to acquire the Fountain Street area to develop a suitable entrance to the mountain roadway system. The second priority land acquisition Libbey called for covered the high mountain ridge connecting West and Sugarloaf mountains where timber cutting for pulp-wood mills was already underway. His next priority recommendation was for the Grand Promenade to be completed along with an "appropriate Community House, or 'Kure'' as they were known in Europe, with the display cascade across from the Arlington Hotel. The most imperative park need was construction of a central hot water cooling system which had a dual purpose: deliver cooled water to bathhouses with its gaseous content intact, and eliminate the danger of contamination from the old cooling and storage tanks, thereby eliminating the constant administrative need to check for water purity. Removal of unsightly cooling tanks behind several bathhouses on the Row would assist in the beautification effort all along the promenade. The proposed cooling system should also have an adequate metering to measure accurately the supply delivered to each lessee. He also called for an outdoor amphitheatre, fresh water supply for West Mountain with the reservoir base to be used for observation lookout purposes, additional picnic facilities, and more recreational uses for Whittington Park. Finally, he recommended

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[917] *Annual Report for 1938.*

[918] Ibid. The resolution originated as H.R. 8970, "To Provide For the Continued Operation and Maintenance of the Hot Springs Transient Medical Center and Infirmary Located at Hot Springs National Park Arkansas Under the Supervision and Control of the Public Health Service of the Treasury Department." Former Hot Springs Superintendent Martin Eisele lead local opponents of the bill, seeing it as a wedge for USPHS "to take over all activity at Hot Springs National Park" from NPS. See Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, Confidential Letter, 26 February 1938, File No. H.R.8970, RG 79, Entry 7, Box 1199.

ranger's quarters for the Whittington Avenue and Prospect Avenue entrances to West Mountain for protection and additional administrative control to those areas.[919]

Figure 146. Standing in 1938 in front of the Administration Building, (L to R) Chief Clerk H.H. Asbell, Superintendent Donald S. Libbey, Assistant Superintendent George Bolton and Secretary Helen Jackson (National Park Service)

In May 1938, the Arkansas Utility Commission ordered Hot Springs Street Railway Company to remove all streetcar tracks from city streets in favor of establishing bus service. Removal of streetcar tracks meant the possibility of unsightly parking meters installed on the federal side of Central Avenue. For Whittington Park, it meant removing ties, rails, and utility poles carrying both wires for the trolley and lighting in that western part of the city.[920] WPA workmen started the removal in September and they maintained the city's curbing on the east side of Central Avenue which was on NPS land. Utility poles carrying the street lighting and an extension carrying power and other lines for the utility company were mounted in existing curbing. Following a request to bathhouse managers, NPS and the Bath House Association jointly denied permission to install parking s. Negotiating with the local utility company, Libbey pressed to either have the electrical lines re-routed or buried with a continuing special use permit. The company agreed to bury lines behind Bathhouse Row, park administration building, and Army and Navy Hospital.[921] The last street car rails came out of Central Avenue in November and the following month, the overhead wires in the magnolia trees of Bathhouse Row were gone.[922]

Figure 147. Four visitors register at the information desk inside the Administration Building as a ranger looks on, c. late 1930s (HSNP 2741, National Park Service)

[919] *Annual Report for 1938.*
[920] Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, letter, 10 June 1938, covering conditions during the month of May 1938.
[921] Superintendent Libbey, "Memorandum for the Superintendent [sic]," 15 October 1938, Monthly Narrative Report for September 1938. Undergoing a format change, the report should have stated "Director."
[922] Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, 12 January 1939, Monthly Narrative Report for December 1938. Regular electrical lines, however, remained in place.

Vestiges of the nineteenth century past were discarded when the official terminology for the local NPS police force became standardized with the rest of the bureau. In June 1938, Chief Policeman Montgomery Prichard and Park Policeman Tom D. Wilson were re-designated to chief ranger and park ranger, respectively. The remainder of the park protection force also attained NPS park ranger status.[923]

In July 1938, a detail from CCC Camp SP-9 installed 1,200 feet of a six-inch sewer line connecting the public campground to the city's sewage disposal system and allowing removal of the old settlement beds. This completed connecting all national park facilities to the system, constructed in 1935 in part by a federal grant covering 27.5 percent of its total cost.[924]

Figure 148. Superintendent's Residence on Reserve Avenue, 1938 (HSNP 10858, National Park Service)

By 1938, the annual training school for bath attendants had become an institution. For more than a quarter century, the fall training course commenced in October with registered physicians, members of the Federal Registration Board, USPHS physicians, and certified bathhouse employees participating in the classroom instruction. The school accepted high school graduates or the equivalent through a battery of coursework followed by a written examination. Those who passed were placed on a list of certified eligible candidates for bathhouse employment, subject to regular physical examinations. Mangers of bathhouses could then select employees, as needed, from the official list.[925]

NPS considered readjusting prevailing bathhouse rates as the national economic environment continued to improve. It recommended a two dollar increase for the Fordyce Bathhouse, but the Bath House Association persuasively argued for a single

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[923] Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, 9 July 1938, covering conditions during the month of June 1938. It is unclear why these two individuals were specifically mentioned unless they were the last two to be converted to the new position designation. It became effective June 1, 1938.

[924] *Annual Report for 1939.*

[925] Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, 12 November 1938, Monthly Narrative Report for October 1938. Of eighty-two candidates in October 1938 enrolled, only thirty-one successfully passed the course to become certified bathhouse attendants (subject to probationary period). See "Brief Summary of Achievements and Unusual Events, Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas," July 1938- June 1939, attached to *Annual Report for 1939.*

dollar increase, raising the rate for a course of twenty-one baths from $21 to $22 effective February 1, 1939. As the most elaborate of the bathhouses, the Fordyce, despite its ownership's protests, remained at the top of the rate scale on the Row.[926]

AGREEMENT WITH THE BATH HOUSE ASSOCIATION, 1938

Agitating for years to have a say in their collective economic fate, the Bath House Association succeeded in negotiating a fifteen-point memorandum of agreement with its federal benefactor. Promulgated on September 20, 1938, Director Cammerer recommended and Assistant Secretary Oscar L. Chapman approved the agreement for the use of the hot water at Hot Springs National Park on October 31 and November 7, 1938, respectively, which read as follows:

> *1. It appears to be to the best public interest, in the economical use and conservation of the supply of hot water and to eliminate the possibility of the overdevelopment of bathhouse facilities, that the bathhouses using the hot waters originating on the area of Hot Springs National Park should be located thereon. Therefore, it will be the policy of the Service to grant no additional leases for the use of the hot water off of the area of the park and to reduce the usage of hot water by bathhouses not located on the Federal area whenever it can be done without impairing the integrity of the rights or equities of existing contracts.*
>
> *2. Since existing leases now authorize facilities far in excess of any actual or reasonable anticipated requirements, no additional leases will be granted either on or off the Federal area until this situation is changed. Further, in the extension of existing leases, no additional tubbage will be granted.*
>
> *3. Bathhouses holding leases for the use of hot water and operated exclusively as such, i.e., not in connection with a hotel, sanitorium, hospital or other public service, shall be authorized to draw it patronage from all sources. This classification includes the Fordyce, Buckstaff, Maurice, Lamar, Quapaw, Hale, Ozark, Superior, and Alhambra Bathhouses.*
>
> *4. The large hotels enjoying hot-water leases shall not advertise to the public that they bathe other than registered guests, nor shall the business setup be such as to make the service readily available to other than regular, registered guests. This classification includes the Arlington, Majestic, and Eastman Hotels.*

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[926] Superintendent Libbey to Director Cammerer, 12 January 1939, Monthly Narrative Report for December 1938; and "Brief Analysis of Fiscal History of Fordyce Bathhouse," compiled May 1962, John F. Fordyce Papers F759, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

5. The small hotels (hotels with inadequate rooms to supply usage for the bathhouses) enjoying hot-water leases shall be permitted to bathe other than registered guests, but at the conclusion of current leases, further study will be made and consideration given to the requirements set forth in Section 4 above. This classification includes the Moody Hotel and Bathhouse, and the Rockafellow Hotel and Bathhouse, which are now operating under leases which expire in 1950. In the event the operation of the bathhouses in small hotels shall become separate and distinct from the operation of the hotels in question, no inside connections between the hotels and bathhouses shall prevail.

Figure 149. Government Free Bathhouse manager and staff at Spring Street entrance, 1938 (HSNP 1503, National Park Service)

6. New contracts issued to sanataria or hospitals shall limit usage of the bathhouse facilities to regular patients, in accordance with the principles set forth in Section 4 above. The Ozark Sanatorium and St. Joseph's Infirmary are organizations with hot-water leases coming under this classification.

7. The Pythian Bathhouse will furnish bathing facilities of all kinds exclusively to Negroes.

8. The Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital has the use of the hot water by an appropriate act of Congress and is permitted to use the hot water in accordance with the provisions of that act.

9. The Government Free Bathhouse has the use of the hot water by an act of Congress. Indigents permitted the facilities of the Government Free Bathhouse shall enjoy such bathing privileges, or service, in accordance with the provisions of such act of Congress.

10. Bathhouses are established primarily for applying the use of the hot waters. The sale of such commodities as are ordinarily furnished and are readily available from the merchants of the city of Hot Springs shall not be permitted in the bathhouses.

11. Hot-water facilities supplied to private rooms in hotels shall be subject to the same rules and regulations applying to similar facilities in bathhouses operating subject to lease. It will be the policy to authorize no additional uses of the hot waters in hotel rooms.

12. When a contract for the use of the hot water from the Federal area is once lapsed or abandoned, no contractual equity remains and no consideration will be given to the reviving of such contracts. When the operation of a bathhouse is extended after the termination of a contract by a miscellaneous service permit, the issuance of such service permit will in no way revive the terminated contracts.

13. The rules concerning the use of the hot water, as promulgated by the National Park Service, shall be applied uniformly in all bathhouses. However, bathhouses operated in connection with hospitals, and sanataria shall be permitted, under exceptional circumstances, to render normal bathing facilities at periods other than the prescribed bathing hours.

14. Changes in approved rates for facilities rendered by the several bathhouses, and rules and regulations pertaining to the operation of bathhouses, shall not be made effective until after due and timely notice has been given to the bathhouses and an opportunity afforded for a full discussion of such changes and the recommendation of the Superintendent of the park has been received.

15. Applications for the granting of new leases in extension of existing leases should be made sufficiently in advance of the effective date of the new lease to enable the bathhouse operator to fully comply with all the requirements of the Service incident to the granting of the new lease contract.[927]

[927] "Memo of Policies" (Memorandum Outlining Policies in Connection with the Granting of Additional Leases for the Use of Hot Water and Other Incidental Arrangements at Hot Springs National Park), D. S. Libbey, Superintendent, signed 20 September 1938.

SUPERINTENDENCY OF PRESTON P. PATRAW, 1939-1943

The park changed superintendents at the end of 1938 when Donald S. Libbey transferred to Glacier National Park. Preston P. Patraw, former superintendent at Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks, entered on duty January 1, 1939, and became the eighteenth Hot Springs superintendent.[928]

Figure 150. Preston Patraw walking on stepping stones in Gulpha Creek, October 1939 (HSNP 17295, National Park Service)

In fiscal year 1939, 16.681 acres were added to the park by transfer and purchase. This resulted in a total area of 1,006.436 acres.[929] These areas included portions of city streets (Brook, Gem, Boulder, Terrace, and Eagle) and were adjacent to an area to be formally developed into an entrance to roads on West Mountain from Whittington Avenue. The parcels were deeded by ordinance from the city of Hot Springs.[930] A Development Outline, released June 1, 1939, stated that the park's area encompassed approximately 1,075 acres, and that it might grow to "some 4,750 acres" as authorized by Congress. Proposed land acquisition extensions per the approved Master Plan were in six areas prioritized as follows: Lot 11 of Block 101; Lot 6 of Block 188; Blocks 196, 195, and 27; western extension connecting West and Sugarloaf mountains; extension in vicinity of Gulpha Gorge; and northern extension. Three other extensions, not authorized by Congress, were desired: a portion of Block 89 on Central Avenue opposite Bathhouse Row for parking and other visitor uses; all or portion of Block 130 for a plaza for the park Administration Building and visitor parking; and all of Block 190 for a residential area for park employees.[931]

The 1939 Development Outline contained a number of items that did not come to fruition. For Bathhouse Row, it called for the elimination of the "so-called main entrance" or grand entrance and reconstruction of the area in accordance with general promenade plans. It envisioned eliminating the Hoke Smith and Stevens fountains. The War Department under agreement was to take over the existing residence and provide funding or build a new superintendent's residence on either Block 196 or Block 27. A residential area for park employees was envisioned for Blocks 188, 189, and 190 for six separate houses with garages. Behind Bathhouse Row, a "Kure-hall," or physical therapy

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[928] Superintendent Preston P. Patraw to Director Cammerer, 10 February 1939, Monthly Narrative Report for January 1939.
[929] "Lands Added to the Federal Park System," in *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1939* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1939), 295.
[930] "Brief Summary of Achievements and Unusual Events, Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas," July 1938- June 1939, attached to *Annual Report for 1939.*
[931] Hot Springs National Park Development Outline As of June 1, 1939, D18 Planning Program 1918-1939.

department building was to be erected based on European models. The outline also called for the demolition of the Hot Springs Mountain observation tower and did not provide for a new one. In Whittington Park, the existing residence and garage would be demolished following development of the proposed employees' residential group.[932]

The ill-fated West Mountain road suffered more landslides on April 17, 1939, when six inches of rain fell within twenty-four hours. The Public Roads Administration's local office again mobilized to ameliorate the damage, something it had struggled with since the road was supposedly completed in 1936. Finally, in October 1940, all repairs were completed and the paved road turned over to NPS.[933]

Thirty-six full-time employees were on the payroll in fiscal year 1939. In the administrative division, personnel consisted of the superintendent, assistant superintendent, chief clerk, stenographer-clerk, and junior clerk-stenographer-inspector. The latter position was created June 1, 1938, by reclassifying a position formerly encompassing duties of an inspector—that position transferred to the USPHS and involved making inspections of the women's side of the Government Free Bathhouse. The new administrative position remained exclusively for NPS administrative duties. The Protection division consisted of the chief park ranger and four subordinate park rangers. During the busy visitor bathing season February, March, and April, protection rangers followed a forty-eight-hour work week, falling back to a forty-four-hour work week during the remaining nine months. Expected to provide coverage twenty-four hours a day, the small protection force called for a new ranger position to be added. During the past year, two seasonal lifeguards were established to oversee increased use of the public campground swimming pool. Construction, Maintenance, and Repairs division had eighteen employees: principal foreman, assistant foreman, auto mechanic, maintenance mechanic, gardener, four handymen, and nine laborers. Short-term laborers were also employed to help grade the Grand Promenade and to perform road and trail maintenance. Finally, the Government Free Bathhouse division employed a manager, stationary engineer, and six attendants.

A new Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) program began in November 1939, employing a junior foreman, clerk, and 131 laborers. They obliterated the abandoned roadway section of Canyon Street and restored the area to natural conditions before building a bridle path around Whittington Park. Part of the new horse trail followed the former route of the street railcar route. Their next task was to remove the slope behind the utilities buildings to extend that area for maintenance division purposes. PWA funds were subsequently used to replace an underground cable carrying electric service along Central Avenue from Reserve Avenue to Fountain Street and installing new lights and metal standards.[934]

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[932] Ibid.

[933] "Brief Summary of Achievements and Unusual Events, Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas," July 1938- June 1939, attached to *Annual Report for 1939*; and Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, 8 November 1940, Monthly Narrative Report for October 1940. The local Public Roads Administration office closed and relocated to Vicksburg, Mississippi.

[934] "Brief Summary of Achievements and Unusual Events, Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas," July 1938- June 1939, attached to *Annual Report for 1939.*

Leases were renewed with the Hale and Superior bathhouses for twenty-year periods and an off-park bathhouse closed. The Superior had previously undergone substantial renovations and the struggling Hale completed its reconstruction per NPS demands prior to contract renewal. A proud Superintendent Patraw declared he had eight modern bathhouses along Bathhouse Row that had either been built or remodeled within the past two decades. At midnight, July 31, 1939, thermal water supply was terminated at the Rockafellow Bathhouse. In disarray since its principal investor died, the Rockafellow's future remained in doubt as the estate went through probate.[935]

The Arkansas Supreme Court issued a ruling on a case the Buckstaff Bathhouse had on appeal on April 10, 1939. The case involved application of the state social security tax and other taxes on bathhouse interests. The court ruled against those interests and stated that taxes could be assessed on all federal concessioners.[936] Appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, the high court upheld the state court's decision.[937] Arkansas then filed suit to collect state income taxes from the bathhouses, won in local chancery court and state supreme court, prompting bathhouse operators to file for application for writ of certiorari in the U.S. Supreme Court.[938] On May 1, 1940, Row bathhouses reached agreement with the city to pay the 1940 occupation tax whereby they would be relieved of paying for a number of previous years.[939] The high court accepted application by the Superior Bathhouse Company for a writ of certiorari in the state income tax matter in October 1940. On February 3, 1941, it upheld the state supreme court and ruled that the exclusive jurisdiction act reserving to Arkansas the right to levy personal property taxes on property in private ownership on federal land was sufficiently broad to include state income tax and other forms of local taxation.[940]

CCC Camp NPS-2 constructed on the site of a proposed fish hatchery on Lake Hamilton was assigned to Hot Springs National Park to be shared with the Arkansas State Game and Fish Commission. The company transferred from SP-1, International Peace Garden, North Dakota to Hot Springs, Arkansas, on November 17, 1939, led by project superintendent Gilbert G. Lawson.[941] Twenty-five men performed the first task

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[935] Superintendent Patraw to Director Cammerer, 10 August 1939, Monthly Narrative Report for July 1939.
[936] Superintendent Patraw to Director Cammerer, 11 May 1939, Monthly Narrative Report for April 1939.
[937] Superintendent Patraw to Director Cammerer, 11 January 1940, Monthly Narrative Report for December 1939.
[938] *Annual Report for 1940.*
[939] Superintendent Patraw to Director Cammerer, 8 June 1940, Monthly Narrative Report for May 1940. Patraw reported this strategy was used in case they won in the U.S. Supreme Court, "it will automatically preclude the applicability of the city occupation tax, but if the United States Supreme Court decision is not favorable to them they might have been sued by the city for collection of the occupation tax for the past several years, beginning from the time the occupation tax went into effect."
[940] Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, 8 November 1940, Monthly Narrative Report for October 1940; and *Annual Report for 1941.*
[941] Superintendent Patraw to Director Cammerer, 12 December 1939, Monthly Narrative Report for November 1939.

beginning December 4 by working on cut and fill areas along West Mountain road and duties in the park nursery.[942]

Bad publicity of any kind was anathema to the Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce, but a four-part series of articles in the summer of 1939 revealed to a national audience the depth of corruption which permeated the Hot Springs community. *Liberty Magazine*, a weekly general interest publication second only in circulation to the popular *Saturday Evening Post*, published an expose on the "unholy alliance" between law enforcement and criminal elements in the city including "gangsters, racketeers, confidence men, and bookies" and how the FBI infiltrated and exposed them. It detailed how the police and court systems protected and encouraged this corrupt system through pay-offs, voting fraud, and jury-tampering. The local government sanctioned or looked the other way as slot-machines, card games, and other types of illegal gambling occurred in private clubs, houses of prostitution operated freely, and an array of vices thrived in this wide-open seemingly lawless city.[943] While the national park was a zone kept free of vice, the city had gained reputation as one of the few gambling meccas in America. With the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, former bootleggers turned their interest to gambling ventures. As legalized gaming was in its infancy in Las Vegas, Nevada, the big thriving well known underworld gambling centers in the United States in the 1930s through 1950s were Hot Springs, Arkansas, Newport and Covington, Kentucky, and the east coast of Florida.[944]

According to one local resident, there were two principal local industries: "the legal one was applying healing water to the sick and the illegal one was gambling." Gambling casinos operated opposite the Arlington Hotel at The Southern Club on Central Avenue, the White Front, and Kentucky Club. Chicago gamblers regularly arrived in fancy new cars and adorned in fine clothes. The small city had a "curious sense of separateness" as the two local industries coincided on a daily basis. This duality also applied to the two races coming together out of economic necessity but living very separate lives. African Americans, the clear underclass guaranteed by the Jim Crow system, were largely poor, ill fed, clothed, and housed, with the men more evident by operating elevators, janitors in casinos, hotel porters, bathhouse attendants, garbage collectors, waiters, kitchen help, and yard men. Black women were either domestics or washerwomen. Their children attended segregated schools with the separate Langston High School never interacting with the all-white Hot Springs High School, even on the

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[942] Superintendent Patraw to Director Cammerer, 11 January 1940, Monthly Narrative Report for December 1939.

[943] Frederick L. Collins, "Hell in Hot Springs: Exposing the Unholy Alliance Between Law and Lawlessness in a Quiet Southern Resort," *Liberty Magazine*, 22 July 1939, Accession 7765 Pamphlet, State of Arkansas Archives, Arkansas History Commission, Little Rock.

[944] Commission on the Review of the National Policy Toward Gambling, Final Report, *Gambling in America* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), 170, Special Collection, Lied Library, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

football field. Segregation represented a caste system with blacks restricted to live in "tumbledown sections next to poor white neighborhoods."[945]

Erecting an historical marker to commemorate the site where the state capital re-located during the Civil War came to the forefront in spring 1940. A committee of local historically-minded ladies from the Arkansas State Pioneers Association called on Superintendent Patraw to urge NPS to mark the site where Governor Rector's home and bathhouse stood because it was there that he moved important state records when federal troops threatened to take Little Rock in 1862. The Rector's house stood on the Arlington Lawn until the 1880s when it was demolished to make way from the first Arlington Hotel. Patraw supported the idea because of its historical significance and recommended the plaque be installed. Director Cammerer concurred and recommended to the association that it be a simple inscribed bronze plaque mounted either on a pedestal of chiseled or native stone. He further directed that the marker be passed by the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts for final approval.[946]

The decline in free baths in 1939 by 13,364 began a downward trend which continued in 1940 when 10,409 fewer baths were given. Officials forecasted this trend would probably continue as improved economic conditions meant more people were employed and able to pay for their baths. Another reason was thought to be that improvements in medical services throughout the country obviated the need to come to Hot Springs. As USPHS clinics proliferated, more venereal disease patients remained in their own localities for treatment. While free baths were on the decline, paid baths were on the upswing. Patraw attributed the increase in bathhouse patronage to the "European situation, retaining in this country Americans formerly patronizing foreign spas." His reference to the growing crisis in Europe would soon have dramatic impacts on NPS and his own park operations.[947] Improved economic conditions brought word from the Washington Office that Interior had improved increasing the tubbage rates of bathhouse operators from $80 to $120 per tub per annum, effective April 1. Patraw succeeded, however, in gaining a reprieve from the increase until October 1, 1940.[948]

Another change in the NPS directorship occurred at mid-year when Arno B. Cammerer, whose cardiac troubles were exacerbated by long work days and clashes with the irascible Secretary Ickes, announced his resignation effective August 9, 1940. Reverberating to Hot Springs, Patraw signaled his disappointment "and the regret was shared by the citizens of Hot Springs, who feel that throughout his service Mr. Cammerer

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[945] Shirley Abbott, *Womenfolks: Growing Up Down South* (New Haven, Conn.: Ticknor and Fields, 1983), 4-11, 75-76, 183-84. Abbott was born and raised in Hot Springs and relates her experiences there prior to World War II.

[946] Superintendent Patraw to Director Cammerer, 30 April 1940, and Director Cammerer to Rep. W. F. Morrell, letter, 20 May 1940, both in D66 Signs and Markers, 1923-1949.

[947] *Annual Report for 1940.* E. W. Norris, chief medical officer in charge of the USPHS clinic at the Government Free Bathhouse, transferred to Baltimore in July 1939 and was succeeded by Dr. Austin V. Deibert.

[948] Superintendent Patraw to Director Cammerer, 11March 1940, Monthly Narrative Report for February 1940.

took an intimate, personal, sympathetic interest in the affairs of Hot Springs."[949] Secretary Ickes subsequently appointed Newton B. Drury as Cammerer's successor, effective August 20, 1940.[950]

CCC Camp NP-2 performed a water control project in Whittington Park. Their goal was to lend Hot Springs Creek traversing the park a more naturalistic appearance while at the same time eliminating persistent erosion. CCC workmen labored to install boulders along the creek's bed and course. A similar exercise of lining the waterways on North Mountain also occurred.[951] Water quality first became an issue in August 1940 when tests conducted by USPHS revealed bacteriological contamination of Gulpha Creek, which supplied water to the swimming pool in Gulpha Gorge Campground, prompting NPS to close it for the year.[952]

President Roosevelt's national defense program began to manifest itself in October 1940 as the nation prepared for conflict as war raged in Europe and Asia in what looked to become a second world war. At Hot Springs, NPS concurred in War Department plans to construct temporary barracks on the Army and Navy Hospital grounds. The barracks were needed to accommodate an expected influx of seventy medical officers and 250 enlisted men to be duty-stationed there for medical corps training. Also as part of the national defense program, NPS gave authorization to the local draft registration board to utilize the park's carpenter shop for an October 16 registration drive. A total of 198 local men registered for the draft and seven park employees also fell within draft age limits.[953] The maintenance utilities area also became host to a local women's unit of the Red Cross Motor Corps as a training school in emergency repair and principles of driving, with the park mechanic volunteering as an instructor.[954]

The year 1941 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the National Park Service. The agency was born just as the nation entered the First World War. Emerging from the Great Depression, the Second World War was now well underway, but NPS had mushroomed in size and scope, and myth-making by historians and agency officials was as well, epitomized by a diorama in the Interior Museum in Washington of the so-called Washburn-Langford-Doane expedition visit to the Yellowstone country and a pivotal discussion held around a campfire the night of September 19, 1870.[955] The myth-making

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[949] Superintendent Patraw to Director Cammerer, 9 July 1940, Monthly Narrative Report for June 1940. Cammerer subsequently became regional director of Region I, but ill health continued to plague him. Cammerer died from a heart attack on April 30, 1941.

[950] *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1940* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1940), 204.

[951] Ibid.

[952] Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, 10 September 1940, Monthly Narrative Report for August 1940. The full name "Gulpha Gorge Campground" was now favored over the "public campground."

[953] Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, 8 November 1940, Monthly Narrative Report for October 1940.

[954] *Annual Report for 1941.*

[955] *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1941) 278. A picture of the diorama appears in the secretary's report.

pointed to this event as the germination of conservation in America, the birth of the national park ideal, both of which directly led to the creation of Yellowstone National Park. As historians rose to ascendancy within the bureau, the long-held fact of Hot Springs Reservation as the first national park was cast aside in favor of the now-debunked Yellowstone campfire myth. This revision of history slowly gained prominence. It became manifest as early as March 1942 when the Development Outline for Hot Springs National Park was rewritten. Under "Park Origin" it now read as follows:

> *The local popular opinion and claim that Hot Springs is the first national park or reservation to be established in the system of national parks is not in accordance with the facts, because in its early reservation (1832) there was no idea of park or public use, it being reserved then merely 'for future disposal of the United States.' It was not until after the Act of March 3, 1877, five years after the Yellowstone Act, that a permanent reservation was made here, and by the Act of June 16, 1880, that the reservation was 'forever reserved from sale and dedicated to public use.' It can justly claim to be the second reservation established in the family of national parks.*[956]

"Excellent patronage" characterized pay bathhouse usage in 1941 with an 8.5 percent increase over the previous year. April and May set all-time records for the number of baths given, and the first six months of the year approached that set in the record year of 1926 (430,770 / 436,022). Corresponding high visitor use of Gulpha Gorge Campground, observation tower, and museum followed. Overall park use increased fifteen percent with 200,386 estimated visitors, compared to 174,090 in 1940. A casualty of modern development, the campground swimming pool had to be closed repeatedly during the summer when water quality tests conducted by USPHS and the state health department revealed pollutants in the water. Park management was faced with the choice of either chlorinating the water or abandoning the popular pool altogether. (The pool was drained and permanently abandoned on July 9, 1941.[957]) Declining patronage at the Government Free Bathhouse and Clinic continued to trend downward with 10,056 fewer free baths given during the year.

To augment growing visitation use, the long-standing practice of having an acting junior park naturalist ended when the incumbent, Park Ranger Henry W. Lix, was promoted into a full-time permanent position. With this approved position, the park's nascent interpretive program could begin to grow and demonstrate solid accomplishments. (In April 1942, Lix accepted a transfer to Great Smoky Mountains National Park and his position lapsed[958]).

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[956] *Development Outline—General Information, Hot Springs National Park*, March 1942, 2, D18 Planning Program, 1940-1952.
[957] *Annual Report for 1942*.
[958] *Annual Report for 1942.*

The five-year land acquisition program came to a successful end in 1941. Handled by Washington Office realty officers, new land additions came with the donations of 2.75 acres and condemnation purchase of 1.50 acres for two new park entrances to the West Mountain drive at Prospect and Whittington avenues, bringing the national park's area to a total of 1,010.686 acres.[959]

With federal agencies like CCC, FERA, and Public Roads Administration performing ongoing park projects, the park's own maintenance crew continued to perform its own regular maintenance and repair activities. This extra assistance, however, would soon come to an end. The FERA program terminated on January 28, 1941, having accomplished the complete reconstruction of the trail system, extending the park's utility compound, obliterated abandoned roadways, installed a new West Mountain water system, and made improvements to the Gulpha Gorge Campground and swimming pool. Manpower at CCC Camp NP-2 based at Lake Hamilton began experiencing manpower shortages as many of the young men accepted employment opportunities through the national defense program. Nonetheless, CCC crews made improvements to mountain roads and trails, landscape improvements at Whittington Park, campground swimming pool, and boundary fencing.[960]

The Hot Springs Bath House Association urged NPS for a rate hike in the fall of 1941. In a November 13 meeting held in the conference room of park headquarters, the association membership met with Patraw and three members of the Washington Office's Park Operations Division: Chief Charles L. Gable, W.A. George, and J.A. Vanden Heuvel. Gable asked the bathhouse managers to state their reasons why a rate increase was justified as he would have his staff members present begin an audit and produce a report to present to Director Drury for discussion. Any proposed change in rates would have to first pass the association's approval. Gable explained there might also be the possibility of a water rent increase and bath attendant's fees. In response to rumors that Patraw was about to be transferred, one association member urged NPS to keep a superintendent in place "at least four or five years… that just as the superintendent was beginning to understand the bathhouse business and take hold of things, he was transferred."[961]

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[959] *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1941* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1941), 311; and *Annual Report for 1941*. Part of the acquisitions involved city street sections declared abandoned by the city council. This included sections of Boulder, Brook, Terrace, Gem, and Eagle Streets.

[960] *Annual Report for 1941*.

[961] Minutes of meeting of the Hot Springs Bath House Association and National Park Service, 13 November 1941, at Hot Springs National Park headquarters, A22 Bathhouse Association 1931-1951. The water rent, set at $80 per tub per annum, went to $30 per tub per annum plus 3.2 cents per bath. All bathhouses except two approved the new rate. It went into effect as each bathhouse executed amendments to their contracts. See Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, 8 May 1942, Monthly Narrative Report for April 1942.

CHAPTER TWELVE

National Park Service Goes to War

The December 7, 1941, Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor brought the United States into World War II on the side of the Allied Powers. Immediately, the nation mobilized and National Park Service saw visitation decline, activities curtailed or deferred, and the bureau rapidly adapted to war-time changes while giving to the war programs its properties and personnel. It recognized the role the national parks would play for the nation at war by providing relief in programs of rehabilitation, both physical and mental. Following the formal declaration of war, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes issued an order on December 16 calling on all Interior bureaus "for full mobilization of the Nation's natural resources for war… upon a basis best suited to serve our military and naval forces without waste, and with a view to saving all that we can of such resources for future generations." Service-wide, 125 permits were issued by Interior to the War and Navy Departments and other war agencies to make use of NPS lands, buildings, and facilities. First-aid courses and ambulance service training were given in nearly all NPS areas. While visitation figures nationwide dropped nearly thirty percent, use of parks by military personnel reached 650,000 during fiscal year 1942. Restrictions on rubber and gasoline soon brought shortages and use of transportation equipment for the military limited travel opportunities. NPS and concessioners refrained from promoting or advertising. At the park level, special reduced rates went into effect for members of the armed forces. Superintendents received delegated authority to adjust rates and services to accommodate local war-time conditions.

World War II meant the end of an incredible nine-year period of national park development which not only saw the nationwide system of parks more than double in number but benefit from employment programs that built visitor facilities and infrastructure. The war also meant sacrificing for victory. In the nation's capital, it became necessary to construct temporary war buildings on the National Mall, West Potomac Park, the President's Park, Washington Monument, and the George Washington Memorial Parkway. On December 19, 1941, Bureau of the Budget Director Harold D. Smith issued a directive ordering the Washington offices of NPS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Office of Indian Affairs to relocate to Chicago, Illinois, in order to provide additional office and housing space to the burgeoning war agencies. By the end of fiscal 1942, a rental agreement was in place to house the central offices of those Interior bureaus in Chicago's Merchandise Mart building, leaving only a small office in Washington, D.C., to manage the National Capital Parks, District of Columbia Zoning Commission, and the National Capital Park and Planning Commission. In terms of personnel, more than 300 NPS employees, regular and CCC, joined the armed forces, and

150 others transferred to war-related agencies. It resulted in the termination of ECW/CCC on June 30, 1942.[962]

Figure 151. Workmen lay bricks on a sand base along the Grand Promenade, early 1940s (HSNP 10790, National Park Service)

At Hot Springs, word from the Region III Office came on February 21 that CCC Camp NP-2 would close by the end of the month, in conformance with the CCC director's general order to close all camps whose programs were not tied to national defense. However, delays by the Army in closing down the camps resulted in NP-2 continuing operation until March 15. Closing with such abrupt notice resulted in a dilemma on how to complete jobs in progress. While the boundary fencing was nearly complete, almost $4,000 in materials had just arrived for the Grand Promenade project and was stockpiled onsite. CCC workers were able to install sub-surface drains, backfill, and install the concrete curbing before beginning brick surfacing. Superintendent Preston P. Patraw estimated another three months were needed to complete all essential park projects. Fortunately, a small detail of enrollees from Lake Catherine State Park CCC Camp resumed work on the promenade on May 21. They worked in the national park until July 1 and their camp disbanded on July 15. CCC constructed and installed informational and directional signs along the newly reconstructed trail system. Park crews resumed work on the promenade laying the remainder of brickwork. Under contract, the Public Roads Administration oversaw and completed work on the Whittington Avenue and Prospect Avenue formal entrances to West Mountain.[963]

Effects of war-time shortages hit the bathhouse industry as well. Enrollment in military service caused revision of the official list of registered physicians. More than a quarter of these men were now listed separately designating them as on leave of absence due to military service. A manpower shortage was also being felt among bathhouses as induction into the military and employment at nearby defense industries lured away

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[962] Director Newton B. Drury, "National Park Service" in *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1942* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1942), 159-63, 178-180. Located on the near north side, Chicago's Merchandise Mart opened in 1930 as the largest building in the world with four million square feet of floor space. Designed to be a "city within a city," the art deco building was surpassed in size by the Pentagon in 1943.

[963] *Annual Report for 1942*; and Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, 11 March, 11 April, and 11 August 1942, Monthly Narrative Reports for February, March, and July 1942.

attendants and masseurs seeking higher wages. Essential supplies became an issue when the bath mitt and bath thermometer were enrolled on the restricted list. Difficulty in obtaining adequate supplies of daily fresh linens became an irritant when curtailed truck deliveries were imposed on commercial laundries.[964]

The Rockafellow Bathhouse, closed since August 1939, reopened on February 22, 1942. The estate emerged from probate and the new owner undertook required repairs under a new lease.

Secretary Ickes approved a new regulation restricting the taking and use of thermal water from the public fountains. NPS imposed restriction on the amount that could be taken at one time. The secretary also approved a code of hours and wages for regulation of bathhouse employees that became effective August 1, 1941. The superintendent's office undertook an audit of wages and hours in order to ensure compliance. The ten-hour workday was reduced to eight hours and mandatory weekday plus weekends became a 5½ day work week.

Superintendent Patraw took full advantage of the delegation of authority to lower rates for military personnel. At Hot Springs Mountain Observatory, he instituted a reduced rate of fifteen cents for admittance to the tower of all personnel in uniform effective April 22, 1942. He also permitted patients and staff of the Army and Navy Hospital the same privilege. [965]

Park employees invested in war bonds and stamps through the Defense Savings Program. By the end of fiscal 1942, they had invested a total of $5,158.95. Also to assist the war effort, the park conducted a scrap rubber and metal drive. It collected and disposed of 773 pounds of rubber and the following quantities of metal: brass and copper 167 lbs., lead 1,596 lbs. aluminum two lbs., bronze 504 lbs., iron 25, 083 lbs., and steel 1, 928 lbs., for a total of 29,280 lbs. contributed. (The scrap drive continued each month and by the end of October, the park had contributed 79,725 lbs. to the war effort.[966])

A memorandum of agreement was negotiated with the medical school at the University of Arkansas to operate an arthritis clinic using the thermal water at Hot Springs. NPS assigned space inside the Government Free Bathhouse for the arthritis clinic for indigent patients. The school proposed to use hydrotherapy to treat arthritis patients and permission to install one Hubbard tub and a small pool.[967] However,

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[964] *Annual Report for 1942.* The loofa sponge was required for manufacturing filters. The bath thermometer, invented by former Medical Director Harry Hallock, was in short supply from the Taylor Instrument Company. See Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, 8 May 1942, Monthly Narrative Report for April 1942.

[965] Ibid.

[966] Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, 6 November 1942, Monthly Narrative Report for October 1942.

[967] *Memorandum of Agreement Between National Park Service and Arkansas University School of Medicine*, 8 July 1942, signed by Abe Fortas, Under Secretary of the Interior, and Byron L. Robertson, Dean, Arkansas University School of Medicine, A22 Arkansas Medical School Clinic, 1940-1947. The school supplied its own personnel, supplies, and materials for the clinic's operation. Upon termination, it agreed to restore the building space to its original condition.

because of the wartime shortage of personnel, no action was taken to implement the agreement and it was allowed to lapse. The clinic never opened and the idea died.[968]

The park's chief clerk, Manley W. Allen, accepted a request from the director's office in July 1942 to transfer to the new Washington headquarters office, which was relocating to Chicago. Allen went there to serve as the chief of the bookkeeping section in the accounts division.

The same month, NPS Director Newton B. Drury made his first official park visit. He arrived at Little Rock by airplane on July 26, and Preston Patraw met him and drove to Hot Springs. Drury conducted a one-day "good cross-section inspection of the park and its activities," touring the mountain road system, observation tower, maintenance utility area, Gulpha Gorge Campground, Government Free Bathhouse and Clinic, Grand Promenade, and the Ozark, Quapaw, Fordyce, Maurice, and Rockafellow bathhouses. He met with bathhouse managers in the superintendent's office and then was honored at a banquet organized by the chamber of commerce at the Arlington Hotel. In attendance was more than eighty prominent business and professional leaders of Hot Springs in addition to the directors of Arkansas State Parks and the State Planning Board. Patraw then drove Drury back to Little Rock in the evening of July 27 where he caught the midnight train to Chicago.[969]

Patraw reported his surprise that park visitation remained relatively steady and at such consistently high levels despite shortages and travel restrictions. While tourists who stopped at Hot Springs on their way to other points of interest were now missing, the allure of the relaxing baths were attracting people in the region who wished to escape the "war fever" prevalent in most other parts of the country. He reported, "It is felt that Hot Springs National Park is serving very creditably a need that is directly connected with the demands of a nation at war, in that it offers relaxation and relief from nervous strain to those who are actively engaged in war work."[970]

MILITARY HOT SPRINGS REHABILITATION CENTER ESTABLISHED, 1942

As a resort haven for a nation fully mobilized for war, Hot Springs became ever more important when the War Department, on October 19, 1942, took possession of the Eastman Hotel and Bathhouse to serve as an annex to the Army and Navy Hospital. The U.S. Army Medical Corps purchased the hotel to bring the hospital's bed capacity to 1,500. The military immediately undertook extensive repairs and remodeling to transform the Eastman into a hospital to serve war casualties, including a skywalk connector rising above Reserve Avenue physically joining both buildings. NPS cut-off

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[968] H.C. Chenault, M.D., Vice President for Medical Education and Hospitals, University of Arkansas School of Medicine, to Superintendent Boles, letter, 23 October 1947; and Boles to Chenault, letter, 2 December 1947, both in A22 Arkansas Medical School Clinic, 1940-1947.

[969] Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, 11 August 1942, Monthly Narrative Report for July 1942. Hot Springs received its own large Class 3 airport which underwent construction in 1942-43, and opened in early 1944. See *Annual Report for 1943.*

[970] Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, 12 October 1942, Monthly Narrative Report for September 1942.

the thermal water line to the bathhouse and cancelled the Eastman's contract, pending a request from the Army to utilize the hot water in the annex bath department. World War II proved to be a boon for American health spas. The U.S. Army Medical Corps created

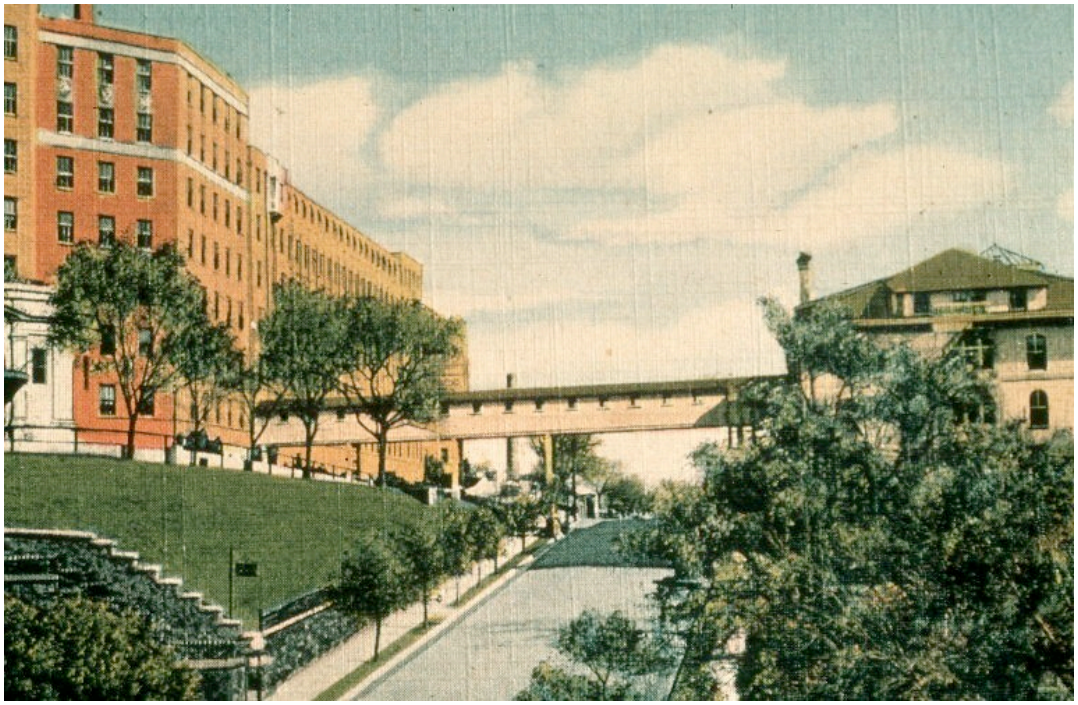

Figure 152. U.S. Army-built skywalk over Reserve Avenue connecting Army-Navy Hospital to Eastman Hotel Annex, 1943 (Postcard, HSNP 4198, National Park Service)

two water-therapy hospitals—at Hot Springs, Arkansas, and White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. The U.S. Navy also utilized local mineral waters at a hospital it founded at Glenwood Springs, Colorado. This followed on the heels of the American Medical Association's Committee on Health Resorts recognizing that chronic diseases most treated at spas included heart and circulatory disorders (thirty-one percent), rheumatic conditions (twenty-four percent), and gastrointestinal maladies (eighteen percent). Military medical experts believed that rehabilitation of wounded or long-serving soldiers suffering these ailments might be improved with hydrotherapy.[971]

With declining numbers of transients and others seeking services at the Government Free Bath House and Clinic, USPHS decided to scale back its operations at Camp Garraday. Meetings with Patraw in October 1942 revealed that USPHS no longer wished to operate the USPHS Medical Center there and urged NPS to take title to the land, held by Garland County, as an addition to the national park. Patraw concurred and forwarded the recommendation to the director.[972] Because the existing deed provided that at any time ownership of the thirty-two acres was desired by the government,

[971] *Annual Report for 1943;* and Janet Mace Valenza, *Taking the Waters in Texas: Springs, Spas, and Fountains of Youth* (Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 2000), 25.

[972] Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, 6 November 1942, Monthly Narrative Report for October 1942. Involved in the discussions were Patraw, U.S. Public Buildings Commissioner W. E. Reynolds, and Dr. Austin B. Deibert, medical officer in charge, USPHS Medical Center.

Garland County would sell and convey it in fee simple for one dollar. Drury agreed and application was filed in Garland County court to have the land deeded to the federal government.[973]

Patraw elaborated on the decline in indigent bathing at the Government Free Bathhouse and recommended drastic changes. He documented the precipitous drop in bathers since 1932 as follows:

1932	107,623	1937	88,071
1933	105,828	1938	78,755
1934	163,812	1939	66,025
1935	125,689	1940	54,813
1936	86,880	1941	49,003

He pointed out that the 49,003 baths given in 1941 represented less than one-half of those given in any year from 1927 to 1935, inclusive, and the drop during the first eight months of 1942 represented a twenty-five percent decline from 1941. He attributed this to improving economic and employment conditions which necessarily reduced the number of people eligible for free baths. Restrictions on private and public transportation and rationing of tires and gasoline were very likely to continue for the duration. Patraw concluded that the volume of business only required operating half of the bathhouse. "We propose," he wrote, "as soon as arrangements can be made for disposition of surplus personnel of the Free Bathhouse, to operate only the colored men and colored women's side of the house, by bathing white men and women on the morning shift and colored men and women on the afternoon shift. The white side of the bathhouse is twice as large as the colored side. By this reduced operation, the number of attendants can be reduced from the present six to four and a large saving in heating and lighting expense can be effected by closing the other side of the house."[974]

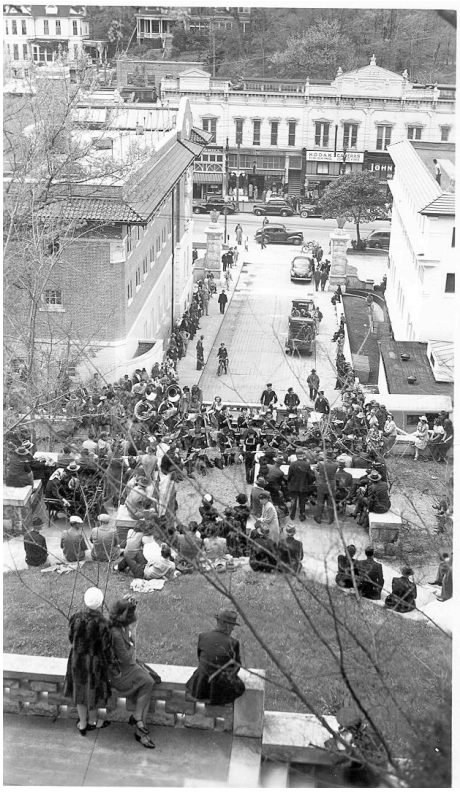

Figure 153. U.S. Marine Band concert at Stevens Balustrade formal entrance, c. 1940s (HSNP 1613, National Park Service)

Lack of patrons and a physiotherapist in charge of the "Deep Bath" pool at the Fordyce Bathhouse brought a request to suspend its operation. The Fordyce had been utilizing the

[973] Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, 8 December 1942, Monthly Narrative Report for November 1942.
[974] Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, 26 September 1942, Library Vertical File: Government Free Bathhouse.

physiotherapist employed at the Maurice, but now that man was leaving for military service. Demand for the service had decreased to three per day and sometimes only once daily. NPS approved the request effective October 1, 1942.[975]

Superintendent Patraw put his imprint on park planning in a March 1942 update of the official Development Outline. Patraw proposed that the combination laws be repealed in order for one corporation to take control of the eight pay bathhouses within the park to result in "greatly improved efficiency of service, economy of operation, and consequent benefit to public use." He believed the bathhouse business was now over-developed and the 462 tubs in use were too many. Hot Springs needed a physical therapy institution specializing in deep-pool underwater therapy with Hubbard tubs and other facilities to treat orthopedic and other physically crippling cases. Should ownership be consolidated along Bathhouse Row, one of the bathhouses could be remodeled to serve such a use. He repeated the persistent call for scientific and medical evaluation of the thermal waters and called for it to be under the direction of a national accredited agency such as the National Research Council. Finally, he stated that Hot Springs' classification as a national park had become a "deterrent to its logical development." Recognizing the applicability of preservation and protection principles common to national parks, he declared "the major development theme here should be spa therapy rather than primitive landscape and biotic preservation. Either this principle should be accepted or the national park category should be changed to a more appropriate nomenclature which will foster rather than impede its logical development."[976]

As a non-essential, non-defense federal bureau, NPS was reduced to a minimum operating basis. While the Bureau of the Budget and congressional appropriations committees concurred on maintaining nucleus staffs of landscape architects, engineers, and historians in the director's office and four regional offices, the remainder of the workforce faced substantial reductions. Every position was analyzed for its

Figure 154. Government automobile at the entrance to West Mountain Drive, March 31, 1942 (HSNP 1400, National Park Service)

[975] Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, 30 July 1942; and Director Drury to Byron Neimeyer, Manager, Fordyce Bathhouse, 1 September 1942, both in Fordyce Bathhouse records.

[976] *Development Outline—General Information, Hot Springs National Park*, March 1942, 4-5, D18 Planning Program, 1940-1952. Patraw spelled out his vision for the future in a lengthy memorandum. He argued consolidation would relive the superintendent's office of a considerable amount of work and oversight, allowing the elimination of one position. One large institution would replace the eight individual Row bathhouses and provide the latest advances in hydrotherapy, heliotherapy, electrotherapy, and mechanotherapy, as well as employ expert supervisors and professionally trained operators. See Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, confidential memorandum, 20 Mary 1942, RG 79, File 900-05, No. 2 Hot Springs Public Utility Operators, Miscellaneous Correspondence.

essential need in wartime. Entire programs were mothballed, including the Historic Sites Survey, Historic American Buildings Survey, land acquisition, and the U.S. Travel Bureau. All park construction projects halted. Relocating the director and his staff to Chicago disrupted work during August and September 1942, but banishment from the nation's capital soon became problematic. Operating the relocated Washington Office far removed from Interior, Congress, Bureau of the Budget, and loss of interaction with other Washington-based agencies and conservation organizations demonstrated that the move was both inefficient and uneconomical. Rectifying the issue awaited the war's closure and a return to normalcy. However, fiscal year 1943 saw 334 NPS employees join the military bringing the overall total to 600, and another 500 employees transferred to war agencies.[977]

SUPERINTENDENCY OF JOHN W. EMMERT, 1943-1944

At Hot Springs, the nationwide reduction in NPS personnel and operations cut deep into staff and budget at a time when the national park enjoyed increased use by the public. Fiscal year 1943 was the best on record concerning number of baths given. For ten days in March, all available thermal water was used by the bathhouses causing NPS again to consider instituting more precise metering. The Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital completed an addition to house its bathhouse and installed a new physiotherapy pool, further straining the park's thermal supply. While automobile travel continued to decline, rail and bus travel increased. Fortunately, rationing boards were prone to issue extra gasoline allotments to those holding a doctor's certificate prescribing the healing thermal waters. Military personnel from the Army and Navy Hospital, Camp Robinson near Little Rock, Fort Smith's Camp Chaffee, and other nearby installations were making increased use of the national park. They drilled on Reserve Avenue, recreated on Arlington Lawn, trails, and roadways, and trained in the picnic area on Hot Springs Mountain. Increased patronage, however, soon taxed a park staff that had to pare its roll of permanent employees from thirty-six to twenty-four. Two joined the military, four retired, two went into defense work, one resigned, three were terminated, and vacancies

Figure 155. John W. Emmert, April 15, 1943, *Hot Springs New Era*

[977] *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1943* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), 217-19. By Director Drury's order, all employees were placed on the 48-hour week schedule effective January 2, 1943. See Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, 4 February 1943, Monthly Narrative Report for January 1943.

went unfilled. Especially hard hit was the protection division where one park ranger went on military furlough and two others were drafted into vital defense work. The superintendent reassigned two maintenance laborers to temporary guard positions and made several short-term emergency hires to cover periods of heavy visitor use. Compounding the confusion, Preston P. Patraw accepted a transfer to the director's office as finance officer effective March 15, 1943. A month later, John W. Emmert, assistant superintendent at Yellowstone National Park, took Patraw's place. [978]

Superintendent Emmert instituted a revised plan of operation that had been proposed by his predecessor at the Government Free Bathhouse and Clinic beginning June 21, 1943. Emmert, however, switched the half of the building to be closed, but maintained strict Jim Crow racial segregation. Designed to reduce operating costs with fewer personnel, the African American side was closed, while the Caucasian side accommodated both races, with whites in the mornings and blacks in the afternoon. This followed a continued five percent annual decline in free baths with most patrons now coming from Arkansas and adjoining states. Meanwhile, the closed side underwent a retrofit under a plan to utilize it because of its improved circulation and layout following refurbishment. In the USPHS clinic, Dr. Austin V. Deibert was succeeded by Dr. W. E. Graham as medical officer in charge.

Emmert soon demonstrated his managerial abilities by instituting weekly staff meetings where division leaders met to discuss park issues. This was the first time the top manager regularly solicited input from his subordinates. He also established a park safety committee on June 18, 1943. With the superintendent as chairman and division heads as members, the committee held regular monthly meetings on the

Figure 156. A popular visitor war-time activity was attending regular military concerts at the Stevens Balustrade, March 23, 1944 (HSNP 1603, National Park Service)

[978] *Annual Report for 1943.* Bathhouses were reporting manpower shortages affecting their operations with maids, porters, and bath attendant helpers difficult to find. See Acting Superintendent Bolton to Director Drury, 10 April 1943, Monthly Narrative Report for March 1943. Emmert traveled to Chicago enroute to Hot Springs and received a detailed briefing on his new park assignment from Preston P. Patraw. After arriving, Emmert experienced the requisite greeting luncheon by bathhouse managers and other officials held at the Arlington Hotel. See Superintendent Emmert to Director Drury, 12 May 1943, Monthly Narrative Report for April 1943.

last Friday of each month with an agenda to keep the workforce accident free. In the face of wartime austerity, morale remained high. Hot Springs National Park employees invested $6,359.40 in war bonds through a payroll allotment plan during fiscal year 1943.

Following termination of the Lake Catherine State Park CCC Camp on June 15, 1942—thus ending all Roosevelt-inspired work programs—the park maintenance crew undertook to complete brick surfacing of the Grand Promenade behind Bathhouse Row. They bricked the Grand Promenade from the south entrance to a point where a ramp from the main formal grand entrance entered the promenade, a distance of 370 lineal feet. They also installed two drinking fountains—one at Reserve Avenue entrance to the Promenade and one adjacent to the Superior Bathhouse. The latter site was also where the bronze plaque furnished by the Arkansas State Pioneers commemorated the temporary Civil War state capital site. Workers also corrected the adverse acoustical conditions in the Administration Building by adding acoustical treatments to the walls of the upper hallway and conference room.[979]

Emmert joined the Recreation and Hospitality Committee of the Arkansas Economic Council in January 1944, and soon became embroiled in a controversy. Presented with the council agenda at his first meeting, one of its primary goals was to support and encourage the improvement of Hot Springs National Park. The council, attached to the executive office of the governor, endorsed extending the national park to the shores of Lake Hamilton and potentially to the new lake, Ouachita, to be created from the Blakely Mountain Dam impoundment. Already within the boundaries of the Ozark and Ouachita National Forests administered by the U.S. Forest Service, it potentially represented the greatest single recreation area in the central United States, and the Arkansas Economic Council wanted NPS involved in the developing forested area.[980] Expansion was on the mind of the Hot Springs Bathhouse Association, too, as it contemplated purchasing land between West Mountain and the lake area with an offer to donate the land to NPS for road and recreational development. Their justification was that now that they were making money, an investment into additional recreational space would be a long-term investment in the Hot Springs bathing industry.[981] Emmert and his superiors quickly moved to discourage such a scheme to include the shoreline of an artificial lake or lakes into the national park. They were also concerned about reigniting friction with the U.S. Forest Service by any perceived NPS attempt to carve land out of that conservation agency's holdings. They agreed to hold to decisions made during the

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[979] *Annual Report for 1943*. This memorial fountain and plaque near the Superior was dedicated on February 17, 1943, with an unveiling ceremony presided over by Acting Superintendent Bolton was also was a luncheon guest of the Arkansas State Pioneers Society at the Arlington Hotel. See Superintendent Patraw to Director Drury, 10 March 1943, Monthly Narrative Report for February 1943.

[980] Superintendent Emmert to Regional Director Minor R. Tillotson, Region Three, 28 January 1944, with attachment, "Progress Report of the Recreation and Hospitality Committee of the Arkansas Economic Council," A22, Arkansas Economic Council, 1943-1946.

[981] Superintendent Emmert to Regional Director Tillotson, 7 February 1944, A22 Arkansas Economic Council, 1943-1946.

past decade to restrict park expansion to the immediate grouping of the Hot Springs mountain range area.[982]

Emmert worked to maintain effective bathhouse operations. He accompanied a committee from the Hot Springs Bathhouse Association to Little Rock to conference with C. S. Christian, regional director of the War Production Board on May 4, 1943. They hoped to secure a priority rating for bathhouse operations. Christian ruled that bathhouses on government property could be classified in the same category as hospitals and could utilize this preference rating in purchasing supplies. The move greatly facilitated purchases in categories on restricted purchase and rationing lists.[983] In order to assist bathhouses retain their employees, Emmert issued a statement to the local U.S. Selective Service board when it began calling married men with families for military service. He made the case that these men were essential to continued successful bathhouse operations and successfully won deferments.[984]

Hot Springs continued to serve as a mecca for those seeking rest and recreation in wartime America. An all-time record breaking 900,413 baths were given in 1944 and each month saw unprecedented increasing numbers averaging twenty-six percent. NPS estimated 223,392 visitors enjoyed the national park, a 24.3 percent increase from 1943. This necessitated an on-going program of education and supervision of bathhouses, including installation of meters on all thermal water supply lines to ensure a sufficient supply. Metering determined that with good economy an average bath should require less than 150 gallons of water, including sitz, vapors, showers, and other auxiliaries. Superintendent Emmert pressed to have the USGS survey the park for additional thermal water outlets, but was advised to defer such a survey until such time as an acute shortage loomed. NPS also gained Bathhouse Association agreement to plumb all bathhouses to use city water for showers if the need arose. Should a shortage occur, NPS could close and seal valves shutting off thermal water in shower facilities and mandate the use of city water.[985]

Lengthy negotiations with the War Labor Board resulted in bath attendants and helpers receiving an increased wage rate, their first since 1918. The board and secretary of the Interior also approved effective June 1 an increase in rates for baths. It raised the existing rates $1.25 for a twenty-one course bath, fifty cents for a ten course bath, and

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[982]Regional Director Tillotson to Superintendent Emmert, 4 March 1944; Emmert to Tillotson, 24 March 1944; Libbey to Tillotson, 7 November 1944; and Superintendent Libbey to Joe Martin, Chairman, Recreation and Hospitality Committee, Arkansas Economic Council, letter, 12 October 1944, all in A22 Arkansas Economic Council, 1943-1946. NPS policy was to seek only minor changes to facilitate park administration and to complete the circular roadway system.

[983] Superintendent Emmert to Director Drury, 11 June 1943, Monthly Narrative Report for May 1943. NPS denied a request from the Fordyce Bathhouse to install a laundry in its basement. See Superintendent Emmert to Manager Byron L. Neimeyer, letter 3 June 1943, Fordyce Bathhouse Records.

[984] Superintendent Emmert to Director Drury, 9 November 1943, Monthly Narrative Report for October 1943.

[985] *Annual Report for 1944*; and Superintendent Libby, Memorandum to the Files, 19 October 1944, A22 Hot Springs Bathhouse Association, 1931-1951.

five cents for a single bath, a move that was designed to cover the wage rate and cost of living increase.[986]

The Army and Navy Hospital continued its on-going training activities, adding more than 200 Women's Army Corps (WACS) during fiscal year 1944 receiving class instruction in medical technician work. With completion of the municipal airport, each day saw large transport planes bringing wounded soldiers to the hospital for treatment. In their off-duty hours, these men and women made extensive use of national park trails, roads, and facilities. The increased public and military use of the park put extra burden on a diminished NPS staff. Park rangers nonetheless conducted a regular schedule of campfire programs and nature hikes in addition to contacts with museum visitors. The hard-pressed staff continued demonstrating its patriotic duty by purchasing $7,582.50 worth of war bonds during fiscal 1944, a 19.2 percent increase over the previous year despite a twenty percent decrease in personnel.[987]

Heavy African American patronage at the segregated Pythian Bathhouse saw a doubling of its patronage in 1944. NPS acted to amend its contract to add five tubs in order to alleviate over-crowded conditions there. It advised the owners that its contract, up for renewal at year's end, would only be approved if the bathhouse was extensively remodeled and enlarged. NPS inspections revealed the Pythian as dingy, dirty, and always congested causing the fear that "serious trouble" could result in African American patrons abandoning it in favor of the racially off-limits Bathhouse Row establishments. Waiting in the wings was the Good Samaritan Mutual Benevolent Association, a Negro organization that wished to open its own bathhouse in the old Woodmen of the Union Building on Malvern Avenue.[988] NPS twice denied its application for a contract in fiscal year 1945.[989]

REGIONAL MILITARY REDISTRIBUTION AND RECREATION CENTER, 1944-1945

Hot Springs and its national park were selected as one of five locations in the continental United States to serve as regional military redistribution and recreation center for returning overseas veterans. In the summer of 1944, a War Department team scoured thirty states and twenty cities for hotel space with adjacent resort areas to accommodate its program of returning veterans, composed of officers, enlisted men, WACS, and Army nurses returning stateside from overseas service. Reporting first at ports of debarkation, then to reception stations near their homes for a twenty-one-day furlough, the soldiers

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[986] *Annual Report for 1944*; and "Increase in Spa Bath House Rate Approve by WLB," *Sentinel Record,* 1 June 1944. Emmert stated the meters would help reduce waste and save approximately thirty percent of thermal water normally used for a single bath. See "Meters Installed in Bath Houses to Save Water," *Sentinel Record,* 1 June 1944.

[987] *Annual Report for 1944*. As victory approached, employees invested $10,975 in war bonds in fiscal 1945, a 44.7 increase over the previous year. See *Annual Report for 1945*.

[988] *Annual Report for 1944*; and Assistant Superintendent Bolton to Superintendent Emmert, 29 April 1944, File 900 Part 2 (1944), Concessions, Public Utility Operators, RG 79, Entry 7, Box 1222.

[989] *Annual Report for 1945*. NPS also denied a request from massage operators for an increase in massage fees "after which the Service made an exhaustive study of the situation and ruled that a raise in such fees was not justified."

reported back to the redistribution center serving the region of their furlough. Hot Springs served the area of the west central states. To accommodate them, the military "borrowed" the following four Hot Springs hotels: Arlington Hotel, for enlisted men and women; Majestic Hotel, for operating personnel, house clinics, and as an overflow for returnees from the Arlington; Park Hotel, for commissioned military officers; and De Soto Hotel, for administrative office space and medical clinics. Returnees were to spend fourteen days each at the station, receiving a complete physical examination, dental and physical therapy treatments as needed, and afford the opportunity to bring individual military records up to date. The greater part of each day was devoted to rest and voluntary participation in a broad range of recreational activities. Meeting with classification personnel and through interviews, each solider was then reassigned wherever the Army deemed he or she might benefit the most from that individual's experience and qualifications. No more than 1,500 returnees were assigned to Hot Springs during any two week period, with reassignments averaging a rate of 2,500 a month. NPS concurred with a reduced rate in the bathhouses of the Arlington and Park hotels for Army personnel and their wives. The U.S. Army took control of the four hotels on September 1, rapidly converted them to military use, and saw the first returning veterans arrive on September 5, 1944.[990]

Figure 157. Soldiers from Camp Chaffee unload in front of Buckstaff Bathhouse, May 30, 1944 (HSNP 1546, National Park Service)

All area recreational opportunities were made available to the rotating array of veterans assigned to the Hot Springs Army Ground and Service Forces Redistribution Station. Commanding Officer Col. John P. Wheeler stated, "Arrangements have been made so that they will be permitted to use the nine-hole golf course located on the infield side of the Oaklawn Race track. Transportation to and from the lakes for fishing, swimming and picnicking as well as the necessary equipment will be offered. Stage shows, dances, movies, archery, horseshoes, riding, softball and other activities are also planned…. We'll try to give them whatever recreation they want. They deserve the best."[991] The infusion of Army veterans on a rotating basis transformed downtown Hot Springs into an area "as military-minded as any military installation," complete with

[990] "Hot Springs One of Five Cities Selected for Army Program After Inspection of Hotels in 30 States," *Sentinel Record,* no date [circa August 1944]; and "Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas, September 1, 1944," U.S. Army news release, K34 News Media—Publicity, 1938-1956.

[991] "Officers Arrive to Get Redistribution Program Under Way," *Sentinel Record,* 15 August 1944. The men and women were of "high caliber" having served a long tour of duty, performing with a character and efficiency rating of excellent or better in order to participate in the rotation program.

Reveille, Taps, and other daily events signaled by a bugler in front of the Army and Navy Hospital. The sound could be heard for miles. The new environment inspired a commendable volunteerism among the populace to do whatever tasks were necessary to assist returning veterans. United Service Organizations (USO) included Hot Springs on its entertainment tours and nationally-known performers came regularly to entertain troops, patients, and the local citizenry.[992]

SECOND SUPERINTENDENCY OF DONALD S. LIBBEY, 1944-1946

John W. Emmert did not see the transformation of Hot Springs into an Army redistribution center. Director Newton B. Drury decided to implement an exchange of superintendents, sending Emmert to Glacier National Park and returning Donald S. Libbey from there to Hot Springs. Emmert's sixteen-month tenure at Hot Springs ended August 31, and Libbey's second Hot Springs superintendency began on September 1, 1944.

Figure 158. Superintendent Libbey stands to the left of Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson at Hot Springs Municipal Airport, c. 1945 (HSNP 2206, National Park Service)

The highlights of 1945 included Victory in Europe (VE) Day on May 8 and Victory Over Japan (VJ) Day on September 2. Preceding these monumental events was the death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt at Warm Springs, Georgia, on April 12, 1945, and the swearing-in of Vice President Harry S Truman as thirty-third president of the United States. As the planet reeled from the results of World War II, National Park Service struggled to recuperate from the effects of war. Diminished in personnel and budget, its administrative headquarters banished to Chicago, the bureau struggled to accommodate the onslaught of Americans eager and suddenly free to leave behind wartime restrictions and go on vacation to their national parks.[993] During fiscal year 1945, Hot Springs experienced a 9.3 percent decrease in the number of baths given (816,279) due to the discontinuation of the Majestic Hotel Bathhouse and an acute

[992] Bonnie L. Edens, "Vanished Landmarks and Nostalgia," *The Record,* Vol. 27 (Hot Springs, Ark.: Garland County Historical Society, 1986), 135. A casualty of the War Department appropriating four of the largest resort hotels was that the city could not book any conventions, a fifty year practice that saw as many of 100 organizations enjoying annual meetings at Hot Springs. See "Hot Springs Convention Ban Break 50-Year Record," *Sentinel Record,* 16 January 1945.

[993] Director Newton B. Drury, "National Park Service," in *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1945* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1945), 207-209. Most travel restrictions were lifted in August 1945.

housing condition because of the Army's appropriation of the four large hotels. Conditions became so severe that the Office of Price Administration established a local rent control office in November 1944. A national ban on horseracing went into effect in January, necessitating the cancellation of the spring meet at Oaklawn Park for the duration, a factor which also helped deflate visitation figures. However, intensive use of Hot Springs National Park by the military continued with Arlington Lawn used for weekly Army medal presentation ceremonies, parade and inspection of redistribution station officers and enlisted men, and regular concerts by the station's Army field band. The Army tour bus made daily stops at the NPS museum to see the exhibits and hear a short interpretive talk delivered by a park ranger. Superintendent Libbey wrote: "On the whole, Hot Springs National Park feels that it is making a major contribution to the war in lifting the morale of these returning veterans and aiding in their readjustment and reassignment. It is believed also that the publicity that will result from these people getting to see and learn something about Hot Springs National Park will be reflected in even greater visitation after the war."[994]

Budget and personnel limitations required discontinuing regularly scheduled campfire programs and guided nature hikes early in fiscal year 1945. For the same reason, the temporary assignment of two maintenance laborers as guards for night duty continued for the war's duration.

Secretary Ickes accepted title to thirty-two acres for Hot Springs National Park containing the Camp Garraday medical center operated by USPHS. Final acceptance of the deed occurred on July 28 and NPS entered into a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Public Health Service to continue operation of its indigent medical center there. NPS deputized a USPHS employee as a park ranger to police the area and the two agencies cooperated on the maintenance and operation of the compound. Meanwhile, talks were underway for the USPHS to enlarge its facilities and to construct a proper road system.

The Army and Navy Hospital began operation of Eastman Annex Bathhouse on August 4, 1944, utilizing an NPS thermal water supply line. The main hospital's bathhouse continued to receive its supply from a thermal well on hospital property. For the Eastman Annex, the War Department agreed to pay a per-gallon rate determined by a meter installed in the basement pump room of the park administration building. With this new supply, Eastman Annex Bathhouse averaged four to six thousand baths per month.[995]

Superintendent Libbey again pressed the Arkansas Power and Light Company to remove the electric power lines from the front of Bathhouse Row. He reminded the company of discussions from the mid-1930s and Preston P. Patraw's request in 1941 for the removal of the same lines. Libbey voiced NPS desire to restore the magnolia trees along Central Avenue in the near future which required the company remove its overhead lines. He pointed out that the electric lines, which were perched atop metal poles that also accommodated the city's street lights, were "a constant source of injury to the magnolia trees, particularly during periods of wet weather, sleet, and ice." He argued that

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[994] *Annual Report for 1945.*
[995] Ibid.

their presence caused a safety hazard when wet tree branches came into contact with the power lines and asked the company to find an alternate route. This became particularly pressing as a primary post-war project provided for the improvement of the row of trees planted in the curb area between the walkway and the downtown street.[996]

With American troops returning from Europe and Asia at a rapid pace in August 1945, the War Department projected closing the redistribution station by November 15 and relinquishing the four spa hotels to their private owners. The move prompted the city to again seek resumption of the profitable convention trade which had halted due to wartime travel restrictions and the local housing dilemma. To accommodate American former prisoners of war held by the Japanese, the Hot Springs Army Ground and Service Forces Redistribution Station kept operating until November 20. Many of the men required hospitalization for longer periods of time.[997] By the end of November, the 15-month Army exercise which had processed 32,368 returnees, came to an end.

Nationwide travel restrictions were lifted in August 1945, and the "floodgates of travel opened immediately after VJ-Day" with Americans breaking all previous monthly attendance records visiting their national parks. However, the personnel ceiling placed on NPS remained at 1,575, eased only by a $357,650 supplemental appropriation in January 1946. It permitted restoration of former employees to the rolls as they were released by war agencies, industries, or from the armed forces. At the same time, a standard forty-hour work week went into effect for all federal employees. Because NPS had a forty-eight-hour week, this new requirement resulted in a one-sixth reduction in employee work-time. Loyal NPS employees nonetheless volunteered their time without compensation to ensure smooth park operations. The personnel shortage, particularly acute in areas with seven days a week operations, saw NPS pleading for relief while it continued to "plug holes in the dike" of growing public demand and use.[998]

At Hot Springs, the deluge resulted in breaking all records. With the end of the redistribution center and restoration of four spa hotels, 113 more tubs became available for use. The increase of baths given in February, for example, went up 42.3 percent from the previous year. The total for fiscal year 1946 was 952,467. Almost 25,000 more baths were given at Government Free Bathhouse and Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital. Massages went through the roof at 345,701 massage treatments. Happy park concessioners saw total revenues soar to $1.5 million. NPS estimated 293,461 visitors to the national park, augmented by resumption of horse racing and the convention trade.[999] For the first time in Hot Springs history, bathhouses agreed to initiate closing operations on Sundays. This collective decision went into effect on December 24, 1945.[1000]

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[996] Superintendent Libbey to General Manager Ralph H. Teed, Arkansas Power and Light Company, letter, 19 September 1945, D22 Construction/Preservation.
[997] "Army Station's Task Fulfilled, General Asserts," 19 August 1945, and "Army Station to Delay Closing Until Nov. 20," 13 September 1945, both in *Sentinel Record.*
[998] Director Newton B. Drury, "The National Park Service" in *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1946* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), 307-310; 346-347.
[999] *Annual Report for 1946.*
[1000] *Annual Report for 1945.*

A stir was caused in 1946 when the B'nai B'rith announced the establishment of the National Arthritis Research Foundation, in cooperation with the local Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital. They launched a nationwide campaign to raise $2.5 million to establish a national headquarters at Hot Springs. They proposed to build a national center for the study of the causes, treatment and prevention of arthritis and other rheumatic conditions. It had the support of President Truman, philanthropist Bernard Baruch, and actor Lionel Barrymore. Superintendent Libbey became enthused about associating with the proposed research center when Dr. O. C. Wenger, USPHS retired, who was previously stationed at Hot Springs, took an active part in helping organize the effort.

The year 1946 proved to be the apex for the bathing industry at Hot Springs. The combined concessions gave a total of 1,042,000 paid baths. In one day the Arlington Hotel gave 750 baths and provided more than 500 massages. Few realized following the 1946 pent-up post-war American embrace of Hot Springs National Park, the annual numbers would begin a gradual, steady decline over the next two decades.[1001]

Figure 159. NPS ranger with two horseback riders on Hot Springs Mountain overlooking Park Avenue, c. mid-1940s (HSNP 10432, National Park Service)

With the war emergency over, the Army and Navy Hospital underwent a reduction in its workforce. With the redistribution station closed and the war over, its 500 civilian workforce was trimmed to around 200. The Eastman Annex Bathhouse closed and the building no longer held hospital patients. The Army began converting it into officer's quarters and office space for peacetime use. (President Truman officially declared an end to all hostilities by Presidential Proclamation issued December 31, 1946, as the nation and world enter the Cold War era.[1002]) Meanwhile, nearly all registered physicians called to military service returned to civilian life. As a post-war normalcy returned, NPS began discussions with the hospital to improve the area in front of the Eastman Annex and next to the hospital grounds and NPS Administration Building. NPS landscape architects proposed a beautified approach to the federal area in the form of a plaza.[1003]

NPS initiated planning effort towards constructing a central cooling system in 1946. It had the goal of helping temper thermal bathwater to a prescribed degree of heat. This would finally allow removal of unsightly aerating cooling towers behind each

[1001] Nancy Russ, "Bath House Row," *The Record*, Vol. 22 (Hot Springs, Ark.: Garland County Historical Society, 1981), 51.
[1002] *Annual Report for 1946;* and President Harry S Truman, Proclamation No. 2714, 61 Stat. 1048.
[1003] Ibid.; and Regional Director Tillotson to Col. R. P. Upshur, Commanding Officer, Army and Navy Hospital, letter, 5 February 1946, D18 Planning Program, 1938-1946.

bathhouse and confine it to a single area, ensuring a sanitary cooling process while retaining all natural properties of the water. The process was begun by searching for an adequate cold water thermal source. Engineers eliminated such sources as water flowing through the creek arch beneath Central Avenue, and a cold spring beneath Arlington Hotel. Two test wells were drilled in the Whittington Park area before a free-flowing well was located and its water tested. Three additional sources were found providing 150,000 more gallons drawn into storage reservoirs. With metering, NPS determined bathhouses used from sixty-eight to 252 gallons per bath. It determined that for a satisfactory bath, about 150 gallons on average was best. During the heavy season, however, at-capacity use averaged 124 gallons per bath. Changing to a metered system in order to assess charges, water usage was most likely going to be more conservative.

Post-war applications for new hot water concessions were numerous. Owners of the De Soto Hotel, Park Hotel, Jack Tar Court Hotel, and Good Samaritan Mutual Benevolent Association which operated a local African American hospital were all denied applications in fiscal 1946. NPS ruled existing facilities were adequate to handle public demand and use of the available supply of thermal water. The latter organization was told to wait in order for newly expanded Pythian Bathhouse to prove its ability to accommodate its Negro clientele.[1004] Congress inserted itself when on May 7 the House Appropriations Committee recommended NPS make available any surplus water at Hot Springs National Park "to any responsible person who wants to open public bathing facilities" with priority given to existing facilities. Press accounts of this congressional directive caused all former applicants to re-file for concession contracts.

Yet another court case involving taxation occurred on October 23, 1946. A Garland County court ruled on city efforts to levy sewer and other use taxes against concessioners within Hot Springs National Park. Because the government provided partial funding to construct the local sewage system, the city had tried repeatedly to impose sewer taxes on park concessioners. A temporary injunction dated to 1935, but when the city reactivated the case, the Bathhouse Association called witnesses Thomas J. Allen, now regional director of Region I, and Assistant Superintendent George Bolton to testify. After the hearing the county court issued a permanent injunction freeing the bathhouses from those tax assessments.

Lacking funds to eradicate the old swimming pool at Gulpha Gorge Campground, maintenance workers tore a hole in the center of the dam to drain the impounded streambed above it. Ridding the area of pooled water improved campground health conditions and prevented unwanted use of the impounded creek area. The former bathing house was remodeled into a picnic shelter complete with tables and benches and the community house was converted to a garage and cache for area fire equipment.

[1004] *Annual Report for 1946.* Libbey repeated his predecessor's concern that continuous congestion might "cause colored bathers to demand bathhouse accommodations in any of the other existing bathhouses." He was willing to concede the need for a second black-only bathhouse. See Superintendent Libbey to Director Drury, 6 November 1945, File 900 Part 2 (1945), Concessions, Public Utility Operators, RG 79, Entry 7, Box 1226.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Post-War Boom Begins to Bust

SUPERINTENDENCY OF THOMAS BOLES, 1946-1951

More administrative changes occurred in 1946. At Interior, Secretary Harold L. Ickes, the second longest-serving cabinet member in U.S. history and the longest serving Interior secretary, resigned his position on February 15, having come to cross-hairs with his boss. Oscar L. Chapman served for a month as acting secretary until President Truman appointed Julius A. Krug to the post. At Hot Springs, Superintendent Libbey ended his second tour of duty after twenty-one months when Director Drury initiated yet another managerial exchange. On June 8, Libbey went to Carlsbad Caverns National Park, and that park's superintendent, Thomas Boles, came to Hot Springs entering on duty the following day.[1005] Congress enacted a jurisdictional reorganization by the Department of Justice, amending 1904 legislation changing jurisdiction for Hot Springs National Park and that section of the state from the "Eastern" to "Western U.S. Judicial District of Arkansas."[1006]

Figure 160. Thomas Boles (HSNP 10467, National Park Service)

An unflattering article in a national magazine highlighting the anything-goes gambling atmosphere of Hot Springs caused a major stir in August 1946. Collie Small's "The Town Without a Lid" in *The Saturday Evening Post* portrayed the city as "the last stronghold of good, honest, uninhibited lawlessness in America" and highlighted its mayor for holding the corrupt system together. Small wrote that Mayor Leo P. McLaughlin "is the official host to the gamblers, racketeers, hustlers and other purveyors of the fast dollar who take asylum in his province and give Hot Springs its heady flavor." He went on to describe the mayor as a "democratic gentleman" who made frequent appearances on Central Avenue in his viceroy show buggy drawn by two English hackney horses names Scotch and Soda. Wearing a pork pie hat and a carnation in his buttonhole, "the dapper Mr. McLaughlin sets off down the avenue, graciously accepting homage from the obedient citizens gathered reverently along the right of way." Separation of gambling and government bathhouses was clearly described as follows:

[1005] *Annual Report for 1946.*

[1006] *Act of Congress, 24 June 1946* (60 Stat. 303)(16 U.S.C., 372 note). It amended the *Act of Congress, 20 April 1904* (33 Stat. 187).

> *"The gambling houses in Hot Springs range from the fashionable Belvedere and Tower Club, two plush catchalls on the outskirts of town, to small ramshackle joints frequented by the fifty-cent clientele. The glass-enclosed mineral baths located on one side of Central Avenue lie inside Hot Springs National Park, but the Government preserve ends before gambling houses begin on the other side of the street. The general effect is that Central Avenue resembles nothing so much as the wedding of the German spa with an American frontier town."*

After dropping the names of infamous mobsters like Al Capone, Lucky Luciano, and Owney Madden, the author described how the mayor's political machine tolerated and profited off of nefarious illegal activities.[1007]

Surprisingly the local uproar did not take issue with the author's main thesis concerning gambling and official corruption, but with a closing aside from an unnamed Army and Navy Hospital doctor who ridiculed the properties of the hot water. In an open letter to the Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce, an indignant citizen called on the body to refute the statement and secure the offices of Congressman W. F. Norrell to uncover the identity of the Army doctor and correct the defamation for the city and nation.[1008] The chamber endorsed the move and asked the congressman to investigate and determine whether or not the medical staff at the federal hospital cared about the hot water. Representative Norrell appreciated the public sentiment but decided to take no action because it would likely only create unwanted additional adverse publicity.[1009]

The Saturday Evening Post article provided impetus to a growing local political reform movement led by Sidney Sanders McMath that became heralded as the "GI Revolt." Sid McMath, a decorated U.S. marine and attorney, networked with fellow veterans to oust the corrupt McLaughlin machine. Having fought totalitarianism abroad, the group was committed to making Arkansas and their community safe for democracy through fair and honest government. Adopting the name "Government Improvement League" or GI League for short, the group worked to win Democratic Party primaries in July 1946. Focusing on political corruption—not gambling per se—they hoped to bring down the machine that ruled Hot Springs for two decades. Using federal election laws to fight the stuffing of ballot boxes with illegal poll tax receipts, following McMath's primary victory, results of the other GI League-ticket races were challenged in court. Those candidates entered the general election race as independent candidates. In the November election, McMath became prosecuting attorney and his cohorts won the

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[1007] Collie Small, "The Town Without a Lid," *The Saturday Evening Post*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (2 August 1946): 22-23; 101.

[1008] "Hot Springs Thermal Waters," C. E. Palmer, letter to the editors of the *Hot Springs New Era* and *Sentinel Record,* addressed to President Bill Seiz, Jr., Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce, 20 July 1946, found in Library Vertical File: Thermal Waters of Hot Springs, Arkansas. Stating that the government had invested more than $5 million in the hospital "because the hot water is here," he wrote, "It appears to me that the Chamber of Commerce, in justice to the interests it represents, and especially for the future good of Hot Springs, cannot afford to permit this defamation of the hot water to go unnoticed, but will be prompt to officially let the people of the country know how untrue, unjustified and harmful it was."

[1009] Ibid., notations added from meeting notes for the chamber's July 22 and August 21, 1946, meetings.

remainder of Garland County offices and circuit judge. McMath declared the end of machine era politics in Garland County and Hot Springs. A grand jury soon returned thirty-two indictments against Mayor McLaughlin. GI Earl Ricks, co-owner of the local Ricks-Clinton Buick dealership, announced his candidacy for mayor. Soon after, recognizing his reign was over, Leo McLaughlin admitted he had allowed illegal gambling and withdrew from the race. The GI Revolt soon spread to Little Rock where McMath served two terms as Arkansas governor (1949-1953).[1010]

An obviously pleased Superintendent Thomas Boles declared a new spirit of increased cooperation now existed that also seemed to affect the daily traffic flow. He reported:

> *"Sweeping changes made in local city and county administrations have stirred the local citizenry into a renewed consciousness of their responsibilities, as this has been apparent in recent actions initiated in Hot Springs. The new city administration, headed by Mayor Earl Ricks, has taken a very salutary attitude in dealing with interrelated park and municipal affairs. A striking example of this has been the satisfactory manner in which the congested traffic conditions in the city which vitally affect the park have been resolved."*

He noted that Little Rock had suddenly rediscovered the spa city. Legislators held a special day to meet with Hot Springs and Garland County officials, and the powerful statewide newspaper, *Arkansas Gazette*, "for the first time in years [began] to give Hot Springs adequate recognition in its pages." Boles believed the new spirit would enhance public relations for Hot Springs National Park both within the state and beyond.[1011]

Concessions operations in 1947 saw several improvements. Concessioners' revenues reached $1,815,120.35 and paid baths were at 1,024,492. NPS revenues hit $40,726.58, but Boles saw signs that the heavy use was leveling off. A meter was placed on the ten-inch thermal water line supplying all concessioners providing the first accurate account of water consumption. Quapaw Bathhouse became the first on Bathhouse Row to install a small laundry unit in its basement. After years of NPS denying such an operation, the experiment proved "very satisfactory" in laundering the Quapaw's daily used towels and freeing it from the uncertainties connected with local commercial laundries. Plans were approved for the new central thermal water cooling system and

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[1010] Patsy Hawthorn Ramsey, "A Place at the Table: Hot Springs and the GI Revolt," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, vol. 59, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 407, 411-413, 415, 419-421, 424. Ricks' partner, Roger Clinton, was the step-father of William "Bill" Jefferson Clinton, future forty-second president of the United States. From 1947 to 1950, gambling went underground in Hot Springs but re-emerged in 1950 with an elaborate system of "licensing" permitting local gambling parlors to reopen. Hot Springs lost its premier status to Las Vegas, Nevada, as that desert community perfected legalized casino gambling. At Hot Springs, casinos revived during the administration of Governor Orval Faubus (1955-1967) but ended in 1967 under order of Governor Winthrop Rockefeller (1967-1971).

[1011] *Annual Report for 1947.* Boles was chagrined to find many people still referred to the national park as a "reservation." He redoubled past efforts to discuss the national park and NPS before civic groups, schools, and other organizations. He mentioned "The Town Without A Lid" article and said "every effort is being made to prevent secretive operations of this nature even on a small scale."

Congress appropriated $80,000 for its construction. The National Arthritis Research Foundation (NARF) established its local office and employed Dr. O.C. Wenger, USPHS retired, as manager. The foundation purchased a downtown property for $35,000 for a potential future laboratory as national fund-raising efforts continued. Meetings subsequently took place whereby three or four rooms in the Government Free Bathhouse excess to the needs of USPHS were identified for NARF under a special use permit. Actually USPHS had largely vacated the building, centering its Hot Springs operations at the former Camp Garraday complex where it operated the USPHS Medical Center. It only maintained a small downtown receiving office and clinic there and no longer used the laboratory. With NARF there, NPS hoped free patients would get medical exams sooner and obviate the need to utilize the Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital clinic. Venereal disease patients would continue using the USPHS clinic at the Government Free Bathhouse. By December 1947, Boles was negotiating a special use permit whereby NARF paid a $10 monthly fee to cover utilities and provided their own janitorial services.[1012]

Experimentation with "hot packs" at the Government Free Bathhouse and Clinic for indigent bathers proved satisfactory. However, due to lack of personnel, bathers had to aid each other in this treatment. Another change involved requiring patrons there to furnish their own towels. Because of their financial inability to supply additional towels for the hot packs this became an issue. Medical experts at the USPHS clinic at Levi Memorial Hospital confirmed that indigent bathers with the hot pack treatment experienced more rapid improvement and the ability to return to their homes than those without the packs. USPHS clinic leadership at both locations changed during the year with Dr. G. E. Parkhurst now in charge.

At the end of fiscal year 1947, negotiations were underway with the War Department petitioning to gain additional acreage within the national park. The department wished to expand facilities at the Army and Navy Hospital and the target area included the block with the superintendent's residence.[1013]

NPS continued close coordination with Interior and consulted Secretary Julius A. Krug about Hot Springs matters. In May 1947, Director Drury informed the secretary about problems with overcrowding at the Pythian Bathhouse. NPS granted the Pythian permission to install additional tubs to relieve congested conditions and provide "minimum facilities for Negro bathers." He admitted, "We believe that will solve the condition only temporarily and the Government must look ahead to another Negro bathhouse to meet demand."[1014] Krug also approved a new Interior policy for

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[1012] Notes of O.C. Wenger, M.D., 7 February 1947 conference with USPHS and NPS; Regional Director Tillotson to Superintendent Boles, 16 September 1947; Boles to Tillotson, 23 September 1947; Assistant Superintendent Bolton to Superintendent Boles, 6 November 1947; and Boles to Tillotson, 4 December 1947, all in A22 National Arthritis Research Foundation, 1946-1949.

[1013] *Annual Report for 1947.* In mid-September, President Truman signed an executive order abolishing the War Department, splitting it into the Department of the Army, Department of the Air Force, and Department of the Navy under the umbrella of the new joint "National Military Establishment" (NME). In 1949, this became known as the U.S. Department of Defense.

[1014] Director Drury to Secretary Krug, 12 May 1947, RG 79, Entry 7, Box 1226.

concessioners and concession contracts. He delegated authority to the NPS director to act on concessions issues in eleven categories, two of which involved Hot Springs. They were as follows:

> *(h) Transfers of shares of stock in bathhouses receiving water from Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas, where such transfers do not involve control of the bathhouses and where the transferees have no interest in any other bathhouse receiving water from the Park.*
>
> *(i) Reduction or increase in tubbage within the limit authorized by law, provided for by lease between the Department of the Interior and users of water from Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas.*[1015]

Boles tried his hand at getting the Arkansas Power and Light Company to remove the overhead electrical lines fronting Bathhouse Row, those behind it, and the line formerly supplying the defunct street railway system along Whittington Avenue. Boles tried a different tactic and implied a sense of urgency. Stating that replacement trees in the park nursery "must be moved in the near future," he asserted that NPS wished to replace damaged magnolia trees along Bathhouse Row. Further, he proposed the overhead lines adjacent to the Grand Promenade be replaced with underground conduit which could be attached to the rear masonry walls of the bathhouses. Because war conditions no longer persisted, he asked for a statement from the company in order to assist NPS future planning.[1016]

NPS conducted exhaustive tests to identify all potential thermal water sources in 1947 for future extension of bathing franchises. This came in response to the House Appropriations Committee recommendation to make any surplus thermal water available to new concessioners while giving priority to existing lessees. The testing sparked a rampant rumor campaign and strong reaction from the bathhouse industry centered at Quapaw Bathhouse. In a circular passed around town, it stated that a "Million Dollar Row" had been provided to Uncle Sam and any available water should be given first chance at it to develop additional Row facilities—not to outside interests. It demanded: "Are we going to have a real BATH HOUSE ROW specializing in giving a real bath for sick people, or are we going to have combinations of the rooming and bathing commodities scattered all over the town with the bathing industry playing second fiddle?"[1017] Accordingly, the Bathhouse Association prepared a position paper for NPS. It traced the history of thermal water use, first confined to the Hot Springs Reservation, and then expanded by Interior to the "Ozark Sanatorium, St. Joseph's Infirmary, Moody Hotel, Rockafellow Hotel, Arlington Hotel, Majestic Hotel, Pythian and Alhambra Bath House, and by Act of Congress, to the Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital." The Ozark

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[1015] Department of the Interior Policy Section 4.665, "Concessioners and concession contracts," *Federal Register*, 13 August 1947, found in Folder—NPS Concession, Box 129, Horace M. Albright Papers 2056, University of California, Los Angeles.

[1016] Superintendent Boles to Arkansas Power and Light Company, letter, 16 July 1947, D22 Construction and Preservation Program, Bathhouse Sidewalk Improvement.

[1017] "Shall We Allow Unfair Competition to Junk Our Million Dollar Row?" undated with "Quapaw Supt's File" written on it, C38 1947-1950, Legal Document Box 2, HOSP 13437.

Sanatorium, recently purchased by the Methodist Episcopal Church of Arkansas, now had plans to operate a larger bathhouse as did the Pythian. The Army and Navy Hospital with 1700 beds also continued to consume the water. Interior had promulgated a set of policies in 1938 to address shortages and expressed the "necessity of curtailing indiscriminate use" of the thermal water. According to the association, "the hot water supply is more nearly exhausted at this time than it was in 1938."

Accordingly, NPS announced a public hearing for September 8 and 9 in Hot Springs to assess local viewpoints and make recommendations to Interior. Held in the park's Administration Building, hearing conductors were Assistant Interior Solicitor Harry Edelstein, Assistant Chief of Concessions Paul R. Franke, and Region III Director M. R. Tillotson. The hearing evaluated current policies on disposition of the thermal water and considered the following three questions: First, should hot water be made available to new users, and on what basis. Second, should unused tubbage rights be cancelled. Third, should there be a universal reduction in bath rates. The Bathhouse Association, representing all those utilizing the thermal water, responded with a petition to NPS. It recommended hot water should not be made available to new users but continue with the present commitments. It presented lengthy arguments to enforce its position. On the second question, it unanimously requested that tub rights not now in use remain as is. And last, it "unanimously and most vigorously protest[ed] an overall reduction in rates citing wage and cost of living increases only being offset by increased business volume." It noted:

> *"The Bath House Row is pecularily [sic] at the mercy of the Interior Department. They have spent large amounts for the erection of a Bath House on land which has no long time lease. They have surrendered their rights to fix their own prices for the service rendered. The return of their original investment and profits are all and entirely at the discretion of the Interior Department. Under these circumstances, they should be regarded as wards of the Interior Department; the Department acting as trustee for his investment and his future success."*[1018]

At the Washington level, business returned to pre-war "normal" when the Washington Office moved back to the nation's capital in late October 1947. The five-year "exile" to Chicago ended when the NPS director's office returned to the Interior Building in Washington. Calling it "a severe and expensive handicap," Newton B. Drury expressed the collective NPS sentiment that with the Washington Office restored, the war-time exile had "now happily ended." Drury also expressed the urgent need for Congress to fund deferred maintenance of the national parks, neglected during wartime, and now experiencing record visitation and use. He stated that the Service was not adequately staffed—both in field and central offices—and with vastly greater visitation, the system was "seriously undeveloped." Annual visitation figures topped 25 million in

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[1018] J. M. Callahan, President, and G. E. Hogaboom, Secretary, Hot Springs Bath House Association, "Response of the Bath House Association of Hot Springs, Arkansas, with Respect to Questions Under Consideration at a Hearing to be Held on September 8th and 9th, 1947, in Hot Springs, Arkansas," no date, found in C38 1947-1950, Legal Document Box 2, HOSP 13437; and *Annual Report for 1948.*

fiscal 1948, a 3.5 million increase over 1947. He concluded a comprehensive program of development and improvement was critically needed.[1019]

Based on NPS recommendations from the September 1947 hearing, Interior announced a new thermal water policy for Hot Springs. Because examination by engineers indicated a surplus, the policy to limit the use of thermal water only to existing bathhouse leases ended. On January 7, 1948, new applications were invited from present users and potential ones. Nearly 200 entities responded. Careful examination in Washington resulted in seventeen additional tubs awarded to existing bathhouses and thirty-six tubs to four new concessioners. These included the Jack Tar Court Hotel, De Soto Hotel, Park Hotel, and ten tubs to an African American franchise on Malvern Avenue operated by a Baptist Church organization. The first three were limited to providing bathing patronage to their registered hotel guests only. Plans were then submitted for approval and contract requirements held that the new concessions be operational within one year.

Prior to the public hearing, on August 7, 1947, the Bath House Employees Association requested NPS raise the fees of attendants by five cents per bath and three cents for helpers. This followed a two percent per month decline in the bathing business during a time of increased living costs which adversely impacted take home pay. NPS took the request under consideration and in March 1948, announced the new rates for attendants of twenty-five cents per bath and helpers of eight cents per bath, effective May 1, 1948. On April 9, the bathhouse concessioners protested to Interior the increased fee for attendants and helpers, arguing that a simultaneous raise in rates to the public should also go into effect.[1020]

In April 1948, Secretary Krug authorized Region III Regional Director M. R. Tillotson and Paul Franke for a detail to Hot Springs to investigate and make recommendations. By mutual agreement of all parties, the May 1 date for the increase was pushed back to July 1 giving Tillotson and Franke time to prepare their report for Interior. After an exhaustive investigation, they made a series of recommendations to the secretary changing the operations of the bathhouse industry, including changing the method of water rate charges. Interior wanted to abolish the old annual tubbage charge in favor of a new gallon-based charge. At the same time, they also recommended a raise in bath rates. One point of contention involved the issue of providing towels. They wrote:

> *While we do not believe that it would be expedient at this time to force the issue and require bathhouse managers to furnish towels, we feel that the matter will resolve itself if the regulatory prohibition in this respect is removed…. Such a change would make it optional with the*

[1019] *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1948* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948) 318-319, 363. Drury praised Associate Director Arthur E. Demaray for leading a small liason office maintained in Washington, D.C., during the five-year exile stating, "Mr. Demaray's exceptional knowledge of Service policy and his mature, level-headed judgment peculiarly fitted him for that difficult and exacting assignment and did much to minimize the difficulties of the long-enforced separation."

[1020] *Annual Report for 1948.*

bathhouse manager as to whether or not he furnished towels other than for a single bath. If, due to increase of volume of business, rate of profit, or for other reasons the Service should later feel that concessioners should be required to furnish towels to all bathers, there would then be no regulation prohibiting such action as there is now.

The Tillotson-Franke report resulted in eleven recommendations, as follows:

1. *Charge $30 per tub per annum for bath tubs.*
2. *Charge 25 cents per thousand gallons for all water consumed.*
3. *Make proportionate percentage surcharge for water used for baths, but not for pools, in excess of 135 gallons per bath.*
4. *Charge $5.00 per annum per thousand gallons capacity for physiotherapy pools.*
5. *Increase attendants' fee to 25 cents and helpers' fee to 8 cents per bath.*
6. *Increase bath rates to the public by 15 cents per bath.*
7. *Increase physiotherapy pool rates by 30 cents per treatment.*
8. *Sell bath, massage and physiotherapy pool tickets in singles and in blocks of 6, 12, and 18.*
9. *Revise redemption schedule for massage tickets.*
10. *Remove restrictions against bathhouses furnishing towels.*
11. *All these changes to be effective July 1, 1948.*[1021]

Director Drury submitted the Tillotson-Franke report to Interior noting,

"A review of the bathing business at Hot Springs National Park indicates that the recommendations submitted will not result in any material increase of profit to the concessioners if the volume of business of 1946 and 1947 continues. However, there has been a general decline of over 5 per cent from the peak of 1946, and the trend, if it continues, will materially reduce the revenue of the concessioners."

Drury endorsed the report's recommendations. Secretary Krug gave his verbal approval on June 3, with the proviso: "That the question of rates will be reviewed with the understanding that no one will make an unreasonable profit."[1022]

In implementing the new policies, it became clear that the park's official Rules and Regulations needed an overhaul. Paul R. Franke directed that the basic and surcharge for thermal water be tabulated on a monthly basis and billed quarterly. Payments were to be made at the superintendent's office and thermal water could be cut-off if, after five days from receipt of billing, the payment had not been received there.

[1021] Assistant Chief of Concessions Paul R. Franke and Regional Director, Region III, M. R. Tillotson, to Director Drury, 12 May 1948, Accession 553, Management Archives, HSNP.
[1022] Notation on memorandum by Newton B. Drury. Director Drury to Under Secretary Oscar L. Chapman, 14 May 1948, Accession 553, Management Archives, HSNP.

Quarters began January 1, April 1, July1, and October 1. Among the many changes needed in the *Code of Federal Regulations*, Franke advised Chief Counsel J. E. Price the following: "There appear to be many conflicts with present procedures at Hot Springs National Park and the Rules and Regulations. We believe that the *Code of Federal Regulations* pertaining to Hot Springs National Park should be greatly reduced in text and that all procedures delegated for approval to the Director and other necessary regulatory measures should be published in a separate booklet of operating instructions to the concessioners."[1023] A complete re-write did not occur until 1955, when a pamphlet of the new streamlined Bathhouse Regulations was released and published. Dedicated exclusively to Hot Springs National Park were all official regulations as part of Title 36 Parks, Forests, and Memorials in the *Code of Federal Regulations.*[1024]

Events at Hot Springs National Park contributed to the Department of the Interior's "New Policy for National Park Concessions." Secretary Krug released a list of concession contracts in national parks and monuments that expired since the end of 1945 to those expiring by December 31, 1949. Before entering into any new contract, Interior wished to "give responsible persons or firms an opportunity to study the business covered by the expiring contract and, if interested, to make application to conduct the business under a new agreement." Henceforth, Interior would publish at the beginning of each calendar year a list of contracts due to expire in the approaching two years. Done in the interest of providing excellent service to the traveling public and while not a reflection on present concessioners, Interior pledged to given equal consideration to all contract proposals. A consolation to all NPS concessioners was the following proviso: "In the event that the contract proposal offered by the present concessioner is comparable to the contract proposal offered by other persons, and all other things are equal, the present concessioner will be given a preference over others in letting of the contract, providing that his service has been satisfactory."[1025]

Hot Springs bathhouse owners were undoubtedly stunned by the new Interior policies which went against the 1938 agreement. They compliantly purchased and donated the water meters which were installed on each incoming water line, permitting NPS to service the meters and regularly record meter readings. The new system went into effect July 1, 1948. NPS expected the sliding rates for thermal water would result not only in conservation, but increased revenue for the government. Not all owners were happy with Interior's changes in dealing with NPS concessions. In a letter to his local bathhouse manager, C. Powell Fordyce wrote that the "Bath House Owners Association should make efforts to have the new policy reversed after the November elections, and

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[1023] Acting Chief of Concessions Franke to Chief Counsel J. E. Price, 15 July 1948, Box 3, Administrative Archives, HOSP 530 (not sorted or catalogued).

[1024]United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Hot Springs National Park Bathhouse Regulations, Title 36—Parks, Forest, and Memorials, Chapter 1—National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Part 21—Hot Springs National Park, Bathhouse Regulations* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1955).

[1025] Department of the Interior Information Service for release August 12, 1948, "New Policy for National Park Concessions," Folder—Department of the Interior Information Service, Box 130, Horace M. Albright Papers 2056, University of California, Los Angeles.

conform to the 1938 policy giving existing concessions performing well a renewal."[1026] Another new federal requirement inserted in all new water leases involved a non-discrimination clause similar to one for the Lamar Bathhouse which read:

> *"The Concessioner and its employees shall not discriminate because of race, creed, color, or national origin, against (a) any employee or applicant for employment, or (b) any person by refusing to furnish such person any accommodation, facility, service, or privilege offered to or enjoyed by the general public. The Concessioner and its employees shall not publicize the accommodations, facilities, services, or privileges in any manner that would directly or inferentially reflect upon or question the acceptability of the patronage of any person because of race, creed, color, or national origin. The Concessioner shall include and require compliance with a provision similar to this provision in any subcontract made with respect to the operations authorized hereunder."*[1027]

Without publicity or public fanfare, all concessioners of Hot Springs National Park in a Jim Crow environment had to recognize non-discrimination and practice it.

Revision of plans for the proposed central cooling system at the northern end of Bathhouse Row faced funding issues. The original $76,230 allotment proved insufficient and an additional $51,700 had to be reprogrammed to meet the need.

Figure 161. Superintendent Thomas Boles stands in a deeply eroded gully inside Hot Springs National Park, 1948 (HSNP 7273, National Park Service)

After a considerable lull, land acquisition again became active—not for park expansion—but with two requests to appropriate and use park land. Neither would actually be realized. The city called for NPS to donate sufficient land in Whittington Park to build a new municipal auditorium. In addition, the Army and Navy Hospital proposed an ambitious expansion with a request for fifty acres of forested area fronting

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[1026] Quote from C. Powell Fordyce to Byron L. Neimeyer, Manager, Fordyce Bathhouse, letter, 7 September 1948, Folder 12-5: Fordyce Bath House, 1948 Concessions Policies, Correspondence and Proposal, 1948-1950, Box 12, MC1311 Fordyce Family Papers, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Clearly, Fordyce expected the Democratic administration of Harry S Truman to be swept from office in November 1948, to be replaced by a more sympathetic Republican one.

[1027] Acting Director A. E. Demaray to John F. Manier, President, Lamar Bath House Company, letter, 13 July 1949, from uncatalogued Lamar files, HSNP.

on Reserve Avenue. It wanted the land to build officers' cottages.[1028] The following year a bill was introduced in Congress to permit the transfer of eleven acres in Whittington Park to the city for its auditorium and an inter-departmental agreement was prepared authorizing sixty acres on the wooded south slope of Hot Springs Mountain for permanent residences and recreational areas for the Army and Navy Hospital.[1029]

Figure 162. Maurice Bathhouse Attendant Iola Bedford applying a head pack to a female bather (HSNP 1684, National Park Service)

After twenty-six years occupying the lower floor of the Government Free Bathhouse, the USPHS moved its staff out in 1948, consolidating operations at its medical center at the eastern end of the park. NPS subsequently made part of the space available to the National Arthritis Research Foundation (NARF) in exchange for NARF conducting the required physical examinations for free bath applicants. The National Research Council also conducted a survey in connection with a NARF request potentially to utilize the thermal waters for the treatment of arthritis.[1030] Upon these developments, Secretary Krug reached out to Secretary of the Army Kenneth C. Royall to interest him in the scientific evaluation of the thermal waters and asked if NARF and Dr. Wenger might use the "necessary laboratory, clinical apparatus, assistants and patients for proper conduct and control of the investigation" at its Hot Springs Army and Navy Hospital. Krug posited that the surgeon general would be interested in the project which would be of "considerable help in the treatment of patients at your Hospital." Unfortunately, the military declined to participate. Acting Secretary of the Army William H. Draper, Jr., responded his department did not have a primary interest in the study because the Army "is mainly concentrated in selected younger age groups in which rheumatoid and hypertrophic arthritis are relatively minor problems."[1031]

Establishing the NARF center at Hot Springs failed to occur. Interior passed the bad news from the Army on to O.C. Wenger, advising that Interior lacked the funds to have USPHS become involved in thermal water physiotherapy evaluations. A year later, NARF President A. B. Frey based in St. Louis notified Superintendent Thomas Boles that

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[1028] *Annual Report for 1948.*

[1029] *Annual Report for 1949.* Boles wrote that $852,000 for the project remained unreleased for the project by the Defense Department in Washington and none of it was authorized for land acquisition purposes.

[1030] Ibid.

[1031] Secretary Krug to Secretary of the Army Kenneth C. Royall, letter, 18 December 1948; and Acting Secretary of the Army William H. Draper, Jr., to Secretary Krug, letter, no date, both in A22 National Arthritis Research Foundation, 1946-1949. Draper suggested Interior partner with USPHS or U.S. Veterans Administration.

the organization wished to terminate is special use permit effective June 30, 1949. Citing the lack of applicants to its Hot Springs clinic, Frey said that a research expert, after a month-long evaluation, determined that the permit's requirement of a thirty-day notice prevented securing the services of that expert or anyone else establishing a stable research program under such tenuous circumstances. If the continuity of work could not be guaranteed at one place, it should not be undertaken. Superintendent Boles concluded in his annual report, ""It is believed they were disappointed in the amount of funds made available to them for this important research." The arthritis research experiment at Hot Springs came to an end.[1032]

Park visitation continued to increase in fiscal 1949, with 309,859 visitors counted, a two percent increase over the previous year. However, the bathing industry decline also continued with a steeper ten percent decline (835,691 baths given) and seven percent fewer massages (370,444 massages given). Similarly, the Government Free Bathhouse experienced a thirteen percent decline (14,887 baths given).

CONSTRUCTION OF THE HEAT-EXCHANGE SYSTEM, 1949

Perhaps the highlight of the year was execution of the contract to construct the new central cooling system. Additional funds were required to award the contract on March 11, 1949, at $164,285, considerably above the original estimate.[1033] Designed by NPS engineers, the new system's construction was overseen by Engineer J. B. Hamilton, who oversaw construction of the 1933 collection and distribution system, utilizing the park maintenance force and a crew of private contractors.

It involved a semi-subterranean heat-exchange station at the north end of Bathhouse Row on Arlington Lawn just north of the Superior Bathhouse and a new 100,000 gallon storage tank, adjoining the 400,000 gallon reservoir on Hot Springs Mountain. At the heat-exchange station, thermal water was pumped in pipes submerged in cooler water from cold springs and Hot Springs Creek to lower its temperature from 130 degrees to ninety degrees. This cooled water was then pumped to the new reservoir for future use. The system has intake and supply lines made of twelve and eight-inch cast iron pipes laid in the Creek Arch along with existing piping. In addition, "Telemetering equipment was installed at each reservoir to record and control water levels, and flow meters were used at each bathhouse to monitor hot and cooled water use. A pumping station and settling basin were constructed at the site of the heat exchangers for supplying the 400,000-gallon reservoir. Two and four-inch supply pipes were laid to each bathhouse on the Row." Work ended on February 3, 1950. The new system permitted

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[1032] *Annual Report for 1949;* Secretary Krug to O. C. Wenger, letter, 13 January 1948; A. B. Frey to Superintendent Boles, letter, 23 May 1949; Notice of Termination, Frey to Boles, letter, 23 May 1949; and Regional Director Tillotson to A. B. Frey, letter, 1 June 1949, all in A22 National Arthritis Research Foundation, 1946-1949. NARF used six rooms and two toilets in the extreme east end of the east wing of the lower floor in the Government Free Bathhouse.

[1033] *Annual Report for 1949.*

the cooled water to mix with the 130-degree thermal water to provide a bath at the prescribed temperature, usually around 100 degrees.[1034]

Of the new concession leases let in 1948, only the Jack Tar Court Hotel showed progress with excavation, water line installation, and construction of its new hotel and bathhouse off Park Avenue on Oriole Street. The others were delayed by post-war difficulty in obtaining materials and numerous revisions of plans.[1035] The situation improved somewhat in 1950, as the Jack Tar Court Hotel and Bathhouse approached completion by the end of the fiscal year, its rates the "highest in effect here." The African American-owned National Baptist Sanitarium and Bathhouse was under construction in 1950. Plans for the De Soto Hotel and Bathhouse, despite several time extensions, were nowhere near final approval. The Park Hotel, embroiled in an ownership lawsuit, had not begun its planning process.[1036]

In his 1949 annual report, Boles reported numerous feature writers for national publications visited during the year and the chamber of commerce continued distributing and mailing out thousands of flyers and information packets concerning Hot Springs National Park and the region. On March 3, 1949, the centennial of the Department of the Interior, an open house held at the park Administration Building was well-attended. Director Drury noted in his annual report concerning the centennial, "Although the National Park Service is one of the younger bureaus of the Department of the Interior, two of the areas which it administers—Yellowstone and Hot Springs National Parks—represent probably the earliest examples of the allocation of land to conservation-and-use under the Department's control."[1037]

Extreme drought conditions prevailed in 1949, causing strict rationing of city water. Hotels and laundries were forced to utilize well water for several weeks. To assist in the water crisis, Boles authorized the bathhouses to use thermal water for purposes in addition to bathing. The park and city's firefighting forces were on continual alert due to the dry conditions. To alleviate the shortage, the city erected a three mile long pipeline and pumped water from Lake Catherine into municipal reservoirs. Park shrubbery was saved by maintenance crews hauling creek water each day as lawns went dormant and many trees died. When the rains returned, statewide roads and bridges were damaged. Park roads and trails, however, remained in good shape, thanks to the small maintenance force and its superior equipment.[1038]

[1034] Quotation from Historical American Engineering Record, National Park Service, HAER No. AR-4, *Written Historical and Descriptive Data, Hot Springs National Park, Bathhouse Row: Mechanical and Piping Systems*, Hot Springs National Park, Garland County, Arkansas (Washington, D.C.: HAER, National Park Service, 1987), 21-22; and "Government to Construct Central Cooling System," Mail-It-Away Edition of *Sentinel Record*, 1949, K34 News Media-Publicity, 1939-1956. Problems with the new system were noted within a month and it was modified in March 1950 to minimize accumulating sediment from the creek water. "Clogging to the cold-water supply pipes was a continuing problem and cleaning of the pipes an ongoing maintenance project." See Ibid., HAER No. AR-4, p. 22.
[1035] *Annual Report for 1949.*
[1036] *Annual Report for 1950.*
[1037] Quotation from *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1949* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1949), 296; and *Annual Report for 1949.*
[1038] *Annual Report for 1949.*

In November 1949, frustration, uncertainty, and apprehension among bathhouse operators approached the boiling point as they went public with their opposition to any NPS move to change bathhouse operating policies. They won the support of Rep. J. Hardin Peterson (D.-Fla.), chairman of the Public Lands Committee, to hold an open hearing at the park Administration Building. In cooperation with local Rep. W. F. Norrell (D.-Ark.), the hearing was called to address two issues. First, what was to happen when current contracts expired, and second, what limitations would the government place on income if and when their contracts were renewed. The Bathhouse Association asserted that private operators and capital were invested under a federal policy whereby continuity of control was assured through contract renewals. Now that the old policy was scrapped, they faced an uncertain future confronted with open competition.[1039]

On November 7, the Subcommittee on Public Lands met in Hot Springs with thirty-two people in attendance. Rep. Norrell made opening remarks followed by the mayor and Rep. Peterson. J. M. Callahan, president of the Bathhouse Association, stated the case for his fellow concessioners emphasizing they represented a "highly competitive industry" that was in no way a monopoly. He stressed those on Bathhouse Row were wards of the government whereas those outside the national park had other sources of revenue, with a bathhouse being just one component of their business. He declared the relationship between NPS and concessioners was "friendly and cooperative," with the local superintendents being well-qualified men interested in the bathing industry's success. The association and its members preferred doing business strictly with the park superintendent rather than the higher echelon of the bureaucracy. Callahan stated, "When we go to the regional office we run into directors and associate directors. Then that goes to Washington, where again we run into directors and associate directors. We run into the Department of the Interior with secretaries and under secretaries, and the first thing we know we have to call on Congressman Norrell to get us straightened out." He continued testifying that NPS had expressed a position that limits on bathhouse profits were necessary with the threat of a government takeover implied. He declared "the failure to renew these contracts to present operators is contrary to the spirit or letter of the situation in which the investments were made." Other bathhouse owners and managers echoed the same sentiments.[1040] Boles reported the two hour hearing helped clear the air,

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[1039] "Bathhouse Men Against Any U.S. Policy Change," *Sentinel Record*, no date [circa November 7, 1949], found in File 5, Box 12, Manuscript Collection 1311 Fordyce Family Papers, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

[1040] *Concessions in National Parks: Hearings Before A Subcommittee on Public Lands of the Committee on Public Lands, House of Representatives, Eight-First Congress First Session; Making Study of Problems in Connection with the Public Lands of the United States Pursuant to H. Res. 66, Hearings Held At Hot Springs, Ark., November 7, 1949 and Hearings Held at Santa Fe, N. Mex., November 12, 1949, Committee Hearing No. 28* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950), 1-4, 6, 14-15. Callahan estimated the combined value of real property stood at $600,000 and they paid upward of $30,000 annually in taxes. Of Bathhouse Row, he stated: "The buildings in their designs show individual characteristics. Each building has its own personality and the spirit of the organization within the building. Each one is dedicated to public service and reflects the personalities of the operators. The individual bather, many of whom bathed in various houses, both on and off the reservation [sic], finally adjust themselves to the house that more nearly suits their needs, their price, and their convenience. It is this wide selection which has no small measure created the complete satisfaction that attends bathing in Hot Springs."

noting: "The hearing ended on a note of general satisfaction, in that local concessioners felt that they were able to present their problems directly to individuals who would be in a position to look after their interests in subsequent meetings in Washington and elsewhere, and the Congressmen seemed interested and pleased to learn first-hand many important facts concerning bathing operations at Hot Springs National Park." [1041]

Congress granted a perpetual easement in April to the City of Hot Springs for "construction, operation, maintenance, inspection, reconstruction, and repair of a sixteen-inch water main pipe line in, under, and across" a strip of Hot Springs National Park land. This was done with the provision that if the public interest required it, the city must relocate the pipe line at its own expense.[1042]

On May 13, 1950, the Methodist Hospital Bathhouse, once known as the Ozark Sanitarium, ceased operations. Both the hospital and bathhouse were sold by the Methodist Church of Arkansas to a local group of doctors called the Physicians and Surgeons Hospital Association, Incorporated. The group wanted a thermal water contract as part of a plan to enlarge the existing bathhouse.

While park visitation estimates in 1950 dropped slightly due to "the polio epidemic which raged throughout Arkansas during last summer and fall," the number of baths given experienced a significant 12.2 percent decline. Paid bathhouses reported a total of 733,996 baths given, 101,695 fewer baths than were paid for in 1949. The downward spiral continued on at the Government Free Bathhouse which reported a six percent loss.

Land acquisition activity slowed in 1950. The city dropped its initial plan to use Whittington Park as the site of a new municipal auditorium when other more suitable ones were found. Boles acknowledged that city fathers wanted the area for use as a city park. The following year, Regional Director Minor R. Tillotson and Regional Landscape Architect Harold Marsh engaged in direct talks with city officials on the matter. While NPS gave conditional authority for the transfer, doubts about the small size of Whittington Park were expressed and city officials began backing away from their request. In spite of a bill introduced in Congress to transfer Whittington Park to the City of Hot Springs, the city council, bowing to the growing public opposition, reversed its decision to accept the area on August 6, 1951. This ended the move to divest Whittington Park from Hot Springs National Park. Meanwhile, park planners hoped that federal land would not be needed in the Gulpha Gorge area for a potential realignment of the county road there, as an issue under evaluation by Arkansas State Highway Department engineers, Bureau of Public Roads engineers, and NPS.[1043]

A new two-way radio system went into operation at Hot Springs National Park in fiscal year 1950. Superintendent Boles remarked that "Installation of two-way radios in

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[1041] *Annual Report for 1950.* Boles reported that field auditors arrived in January 1950 to audit "all concessioner accounts and reports" of seventeen concessioners.
[1042] *Act of Congress, 28 April 1950* (64 Stat. 89).
[1043] *Annual Reports for 1950, 1951, and 1952.*

the ranger patrol cars of this park is a noteworthy improvement in policing of the area and a very important adjunct to our fire protection and firefighting program." Use of radios was done through a cooperative agreement with city and county police departments.

THIRD SUPERINTENDENCY OF DONALD S. LIBBEY, 1951-1959

Management changes at the Washington and local park level characterized 1951. In the Washington Office, Newton B. Drury's decade-long tenure as NPS director came to an end on March 31, 1951, with his retirement. He was succeeded by Associate Director Arthur E. Demaray who served nine months until his planned retirement on December 8, 1951, whereupon Director Demaray was succeeded by Conrad L. Wirth.[1044] At Hot Springs, a similar three-man array held the top manager's position. Thomas Boles retired on January 31, 1951, when Assistant Superintendent George C. Bolton served as acting superintendent until April 1, when Donald S. Libbey returned to serve his third term as Hot Springs National Park superintendent.

Figure 163. Fordyce Bathhouse attendant assists two female bathers in vapor cabinets, c. early 1950s (HSNP 2021, National Park Service)

Three new bathhouses opened during fiscal 1951. The Jack Tar Court Hotel opened its extravagant bathhouse on July 1, 1950, but patronage there did not meet up to the expectations of its owner who soon petitioned NPS to be allowed to bathe others aside from only registered guests. The National Baptist Sanitarium and Bathhouse opened on February 8, 1951, in a refurbished building to serve African Americans. Finally, the De Soto Hotel opened its bathhouse on April 2, having erected a new façade and remodeled lobby to unify the facility architecturally. The fourth concessioner defaulted when the Park Hotel Company continued to be mired in litigation. The park and Region III Office recommended against any further time extension for it to construct a new bathhouse. NPS was also engaging in renewal of several contracts. At the Maurice Bathhouse, it wished to enter into a joint therapeutic pool project instead of continuing with its own "experimental" pool. Negotiations with the Hot Springs Mountain Observatory Company included an NPS stipulation that the obtrusive observation tower be shortened forty-five feet. Superintendent Libbey observed that bathhouse owners were unreceptive to a request by masseurs for a twenty cent increase per massage. An irate Fordyce manager, reporting to his boss and huffing that their $270 per month salary should be

[1044] *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1952* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1952), 353.

able to meet normal living conditions, wrote: "If they are under paid, the porters, maids and clerks are starving."[1045]

A short two-week notice was all Acting Superintendent George Bolton had that Interior Secretary Oscar L. Chapman and the Subcommittee for the House Appropriations Committee for Interior planned to arrive on March 23. Due to illness, however, Secretary Chapman stayed in Washington, but Assistant Secretary Vernon Northrop headed the delegation to Hot Springs National Park. Accompanying him was Otis Beasley, director of the Division of Budget and Finance, Office of the Secretary; Subcommittee Chairman Rep. Michael J. Kirwan (D.-Ohio); Rep. W. F. Norrell (D.-Ark.); Rep. H. Peter Eberharter (D.-Penn..); Rep. Foster Furcolo, (D.-Mass.); Rep. Lowell Stockman, (R.-Ore.); Rep. Ivor D. Fenton (R.-Penn..); Rep. O. C. Fisher (D.-Tex.); Subcommittee Clerk Claude Hobbs; and a military liaison officer. With accommodations at the Arlington and Park hotels, the official party received royal entertainment in Hot Springs complete with formal cocktail parties, dinners, breakfasts, and luncheons. It seemed the trip's purpose, other than "taking the waters" or to Oaklawn for horse racing, was to sight-see. The group toured Army and Navy Hospital, mountain drives, went up the observation tower, and saw Gulpha Gorge Campground before driving on to Bauxite, Arkansas, and to Jones Mill to tour the Reynolds Metal Company and Remmel Dam. Returning to Hot Springs, the party left on March 25 by airplane. Other than their hotel bathhouses, the group never inspected Bathhouse Row. In documenting the official contingent's activities, Acting Superintendent Bolton reported, "It is to be regretted that time did not allow, nor were the gentlemen interested to any great extent, in an inspection of our bathhouses or the administration building."[1046]

Encroachment on park property became a recurring multi-year issue beginning in 1951 when excavation of rock bluffs on private land caused a mountainside slide of earth and rock within the national park. Several large trees and parts of a trail succumbed to the landslide. Local residents, Onais Green and Dane Harris, caused it while excavating for a surface parking lot. NPS consulted with the U.S. district attorney who proposed the two residents restore the area to natural conditions and to arrest further landslides. NPS filed an action in federal district court against the men and they proceeded to try to stop the slide, only to be foiled by heavy rain events.[1047] As late as 1953, "slipping and sliding" of parkland above the parking lot continued, even with cement anchors, bracings, and patching persistent cracks in retaining walls. The encroachment issue prompted NPS to place new boundary markers and signs around the park boundaries.[1048] By 1954,

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[1045] Quotation from "Byron L. Neimeyer, Manager, Fordyce Baths, to C. Powell Fordyce, letter, 17 January 1951, Folder 12-8, Box 12, Manuscript Collection 1311 Fordyce Family Papers, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville; and *Annual Report 1951.*. "Bones" Neimeyer noted that the masseurs had petitioned the Bathhouse Association for the raise, and were threatening to strike if it was not granted. Bathhouse operators contended any wage increase had to come with a rate increase to the public.
[1046] Acting Superintendent Bolton to Director Demaray, 27 March 1951, A54 Inspections, Investigations, Etc. 1923-1953; and *Annual Report 1951.* Region III Assistant Regional Director Preston P. Patraw, once superintendent at Hot Springs, returned to assist George Bolton with making arrangements for entertainment and inspection tours for the official party.
[1047] *Annual Reports for 1951 and 1952.* NPS acknowledged the "dire need" for surface parking lots, but notified another developer, Hill Wheatley, in writing concerning his liability for similar encroachments.
[1048] *Annual Report for 1953.*

restoration of the Green-Harris parking lot bluff had been completed, with vegetation screening the scarred area's cribbing to prevent new slides.[1049]

Korean War-wounded soldiers began receiving treatment at the Army and Navy Hospital in July 1951. Most wounded soldiers receiving treatment were those who had suffered either arm or leg wounds, or both. As the Korean conflict continued, hundreds more received treatment at Hot Springs. NPS played a unique role in their rehabilitation through presentations of interpretive slides and talks. The more ambulatory soldiers ventured onto park grounds and utilized NPS facilities while on short daytime leave.

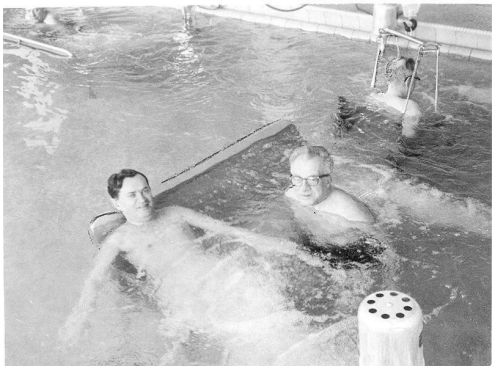

Figure 164. Three men using therapy equipment in thermal pool at Government Free Bathhouse, c. 1950s (HSNP 1661, National Park Service)

Chemistry students from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville conducted studies in the park and adjacent areas documenting the geological features and preparing a preliminary report. Entitled "Investigation of the Radioactivity of Thermal Waters and its Relationship to the Geology and Geochemistry of Uranium," the university submitted a proposal to the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission's (AEC) research division in application for a $35,000 grant to complete their Hot Springs research. The AEC approved the grant, and Superintendent Libbey reported: "While the primary purpose of the studies is doubtless a search for uranium ore and other strategic minerals, such research will doubtless reveal interesting and valuable information concerning the thermal waters of this park and related subjects."[1050] Benign results were ultimately obtained with two professional papers produced from the effort.[1051]

DEVELOPMENT OUTLINE, 1951

Donald S. Libbey put his professional imprint and three-term experience at Hot Springs on the 1951 *Development Outline, Hot Springs National Park* with the primary theme of development being "to provide adequate facilities for the utilization of the

[1049] *Annual Report for 1954.*

[1050] *Annual Report for 1951.* NPS granted permission for testing but restricted the use of Geiger counters to areas in connection with thermal spring vapors or at the top of the observation tower. In addition, locational knowledge of possible fissionable materials "may not be made available to agencies interested in the commercial development of same." See *Annual Report for 1952.*

[1051] *Annual Report for 1954.* The two papers were entitled: "Radioactivity of Rivers and Lakes in Parts of Garland and Hot Spring Counties, Arkansas" and "Radioactivity of the Spring Waters of Hot Springs National Park and Vicinity in Arkansas." The latter, by P. K. Kuroda, P. E. Damon, and H. I. Hyde," appeared in *American Journal of Science*, Vol. 252 (February 1954), 76-86. It re-determined the radon content in park waters, compared findings to Boltwood (1905) and Schlundt (1935), and detected thoron measuring with a new technique. The article said radon in Hot Springs National Park was "derived, in part, from radium-bearing tufa."

heath-giving mineral waters." Visitors who took advantage of thermal baths also required facilities for "camping, picnicking, and physical exercise facilities, with the required sanitary facilities." A secondary development theme involved recreation, with NPS required to provide for camping, picnicking, horseback riding, and hiking, with the city also sharing in that responsibility. Camp Garraday and the Army and Navy Hospital were seen as removed from the park. Libbey wrote: "The Army and Navy Hospital grounds constitute, for all intents and purposes, a separated reservation, over which the National Park Service has relinquished all authority and responsibility for development and use. The Public Health Service grounds are to a less extent, in somewhat similar category, although the National Park Service retains jurisdiction for police protection."

Concerning the park boundary, the *Development Outline* stated it was "satisfactory" except for three minor areas recommended for acquisition. The first area involved the undeveloped part of Block 195 and all of Block 196, in the vicinity of the Arlington Hotel and north along Fountain Street. The area was of strategic importance because of the park entrance there. The second area, Block 37 north of Grand Avenue bounded by East Border Street on the east and Reserve Avenue on the west, was also needed for addition to the national park. Finally, the third area, defined as "approximately the north half of Section 1, T. 3 S., R. 20 W., and the north half of Section 6, T. 3 S., R. 19 W," constituted one square mile. Its addition would permit the extension of West Mountain Drive to Rector Heights.[1052]

Figure 165. Park visitors at Magnesia Cold Spring pavilion, July 1953 (HSNP 1957, National Park Service)

Under "Trends of Use," the 1951 *Development Outline* recognized mid-century visitation trends had changed. It noted: "In recent years, visitors coming to Hot Springs National Park have changed in type. Greater numbers come to seek relief from arthritic, rheumatic, and joint ailments. Greater impetus is placed upon underwater therapy treatments. Venereal disease treatments are no more prevalent than in any other community and the U.S. Public Health Service no longer maintains a clinic in the basement of the Government Free Bathhouse, but confine their services to the Medical Center maintained by that service." The *Outline* detailed several special problems affecting visitor use. NPS proposed improving and changing use of Gulpha Gorge Campground as a day camping and picnicking area. Citing the hazardous and heavily traveled highway there, it noted: "Truck route of the Hot Springs Highway has grades

[1052] *Development Outline, Hot Springs National Park, 1951,* General Information Sheet 2, 3 and 4. The *Outline* acknowledges "The official name of the city is 'Hot Springs National Park' but the shorter name is used herein to avoid confusion." See Ibid., General Information Sheet 5.

and curves which skirt the campground area. This route should be straightened and the area thus bisected to be used only for day rather than overnight use." Medical examination for free bath applicants had now become a problem with medical staff now gone from the Government Free Bathhouse. Similarly, USPHS monthly physical examinations of employees of the paid bathhouses were also recognized as "in need of further study and a solution accomplished." Finally, because the Government Free Bathhouse only operated at one-fourth capacity, it presented "an opportunity for this Service to provide the most modern underwater hot water therapy service."[1053]

The 1951 *Development Outline* called for a park naturalist in the Protection Division to provide interpretive services, a duty protection rangers collectively shared. It enumerated the park's existing personnel by title and grade classification as follows:

Administration:

Permanent:	Superintendent – GS-12
	Assistant Superintendent – GS-11
	Chief Clerk – GS-7
	Secretary (Stenography) – GS-4
	Clerk Stenographer Inspector – GS-3
	Clerk Stenographer – GS-3
	Clerk Stenographer – GS-2 (WAE)

Protection:

Permanent:	Chief Park Ranger – GS-7
	Park Ranger – GS-5
	Park Ranger – GS-5
	Park Ranger – GS-5
	Park Ranger – GS-5
	Park Ranger – GS-5
	Guard – CPC-4 (WAE)

Free Bathhouse:

Permanent:	Manager, Free Bathhouse – GS-4
	Bath Attendant – CPC-2
	Bath Attendant – CPC-2
	Bath Attendant – CPC-2
	Bath Attendant – CPC-2

Maintenance:

Permanent:	Construction and Maintenance Supervisor – CPC-9
	Foreman, Mixed Gang – Ungraded
	Foreman, Pump Station & Electrical substation – Ungraded
	Gardener – GS-2
	Automobile Mechanic – Ungraded
	Janitor – CPC-5

[1053] Ibid., General Information Sheet 7. Straightening the alignment of U.S. Highway 70 through Gulpha Gorge Campground and converting it to a day use site only would occur "when a suitable alternate campground site can be acquired and developed." See Ibid., General Information Sheet 11.

Janitor – CPC-3
Electrician - Ungraded
Maintenanceman – Ungraded
Maintenanceman - Ungraded
Maintenanceman - Ungraded
Maintenanceman - Ungraded
Maintenanceman - Ungraded
Maintenanceman - Ungraded
Laborer – Ungraded
Laborer – Ungraded

It also listed the required park quarters for four positions: Superintendent's residence, Assistant Superintendent's residence, Maintenance Foreman's residence (Whittington Park), and Campground Ranger's residence (Gulpha Gorge Campground).[1054]

Figure 166. Bathhouse Row, looking north, July 1953 (HSNP 1819, National Park Service)

In the interpretation section of the 1951 *Development Outline,* it acknowledged visitors remained anywhere from a few days to several months, an aspect in sharp contrast to the short-term visits experienced at most national parks and monuments: "The use of Hot Springs National Park is entirely different than that of other national parks and monuments, and this must be taken carefully into consideration in justifying and planning any interpretive program or development. Hot Springs National Park is a health center, and the great preponderance of visitation consists of elderly persons and health seekers who come to take the baths. These people are primarily interested in regaining or improving health and not in the national park or its features." Given this, those taking the waters had a lot of down time. Those able to engage in mild exercise used the park trails and roads for outdoor walks and drives. Most spent their time in the hotels and bathhouses and were open to interpretive programs and other diversions "which helps pass the time and takes their minds off their troubles." This afforded NPS the opportunity to educate the health visitor about Hot Springs National Park and NPS in general though travelogue- type programs. The *Outline* continued: "In this manner, an interpretive program at Hot Springs National Park must be developed, not along the familiar pattern of field trips and wayside exhibits, but designed to meet the situation peculiar to the use of the area by semi-invalids able to walk only short distances and restricted in their movements to the immediate vicinity of the hotels and bath houses."[1055]

[1054] Ibid., General Information Sheets 9-11. In 1951, the Gulpha Gorge Campground had forty-two individual campsites. See Ibid., Developed Areas, Sheet 8.
[1055] Ibid., Interpretation, Scenic-Scientific, Sheet 3.

Concessioners were put at ease in 1952 when NPS continued to renew existing contracts instead of offers from new outside parties. Contracts for the Moody, Maurice, Buckstaff, Lamar, and Hot Springs Mountain Observatory were all awarded extended leases. In final negotiations for the observatory, NPS held that the tower was "too conspicuous" and that it "detracts from the beauty of the wooded hills." To fix it at the correct height would cost around $10,000, and at this, the company balked. After extensive negotiations, NPS demurred, allowed the tower to remain intact, and granted the extended lease.[1056] Demonstrating the benefits of the central cooling system, the Lamar and Buckstaff bathhouses removed their unsightly cooling towers and NPS directed the Quapaw and Ozark to follow suit. However, operation of the central cooling system continued to be plagued following heavy rain events which caused the creek water pumped from Whittington Park to clog the pipeline with debris. This kept park maintenance workers busy clearing out the pipeline for the system to operate.

The Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital, receiving thermal water under congressional sanction, announced a change in its operating procedures. Effective September 1, 1952, the Levi eliminated its general hospital program and began specializing in arthritis research. Under a cooperative agreement with NPS, it agreed to continue examining free bath applicants.

Superintendent Libbey, backed by the 1951 *Development Outline*, went public in July 1952 with his novel idea to convert the Government Free Bathhouse into a physical medicine center. His goal was to utilize it to make Hot Springs National Park the nation's leading underwater therapy treatment center. With the building operating at only a quarter of its capacity and indigent bather numbers continuing to plummet, a new approach was warranted. He estimated the conversion would cost $200,000 to $250,000 and be a joint operation by all bathhouse concessionaires. Libbey proposed having indigent bathers accommodated in pay bathhouses with the government reimbursing those establishments while continuing to fulfill its congressional mandate. The large building could then be transformed into a jointly-owned and operated underwater therapy facility. The Bathhouse Association embraced Libbey's idea and appointed a committee to investigate and make further recommendations. Owners were asked to subscribe from $800 to $1,000 worth of stock in a new corporation. Government solicitors determined the effort did not conflict with the park-specific non-combination laws. This meant that legal authority already existed to pursue the new venture. Ten bathhouse owners signed on to the initiative by September 1952.[1057] The Bathhouse Association approved a draft

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[1056] Alice C. Horner, "The Observation Tower, 1906-1969 (1971)," *The Record,* Vol. 24 (Hot Springs, Ark.: Garland County Historical Society, 1983), 159; and *Annual Report for 1952.*

[1057] "Spa Visualized as Nation's Underwater Therapy Center," *Sentinel Record*, 1 July 1952 (Libbey stated he conceived the idea as early as 1937 and perfected it in 1950); *Annual Report for 1952;* and C. Powell Fordyce to B. L. Neimeyer, letter, 2 October 1952, and Superintendent Libbey to B. L. Neimeyer, letter, 10 October 1952, both in File 10, Box 12, MC 1311 Fordyce Family Papers, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. The ten ownerships were as follows: Superior, Hale, Ozark, Buckstaff, Lamar, Alhambra, National Baptist, DeSoto, Moody, and Rockafellow, with verbal commitments from the Arlington and Maurice bathhouses. The Fordyce had yet to confer with its partners, and Quapaw Bathhouse advised it would invest their share but not actually become a legal partner. See C. M. King to Superintendent Libbey, letter, 25 September 1952, Folder: HOSP 13536.01.1 Correspondence

application for the development of a physical medicine rehabilitation center on February 18, 1953, when stock company subscriptions began.[1058]

By mid-century, growth of the City of Hot Springs had out-stripped its sewage disposal system to such an extent the Arkansas State Board of Health demanded immediate remedial action. At the 1950 U.S. Census, Greater Hot Springs was Arkansas' fifth largest city with a population of 300,000. The state health board threatened to list the city as unsafe and to condemn the adjoining Lakes Catherine and Hamilton for their high levels of pollutants. To meet the emergency situation, the mayor announced a $1.59 million bond issues to enlarge the municipal sewage system. On June 26, 1952, Hot Springs citizens voted down the bond issue. The city council subsequently appointed a new firm to study the problem and recommend solutions.[1059]

An across the board increase in rates for baths and massages was announced on July 31, 1952, contingent upon approval of a wage increase for bathhouse employees by the federal Wage Stabilization Board. The board approved the wage increases on August 8, and the rates went into effect September 1. NPS approved an agreement with the Bathhouse Association for complete towel service to bathhouse patrons which became active on January 1, 1953.

A flash flood in early December 1952 caused the central cooling system to shut-down. Park maintenance crews responded to the emergency, cleared debris from the water pipeline, and prevented curtailment of bath service. NPS terminated the concession contract for the Park Hotel Bathhouse on December 1 for its failure to install the authorized tubbage within the prescribed time limit.[1060]

NPS negotiated with the American Medical Association's Dr. Walter S. McClellan, chairman of the Advisory Committee on Health Resorts, concerning applications filed by bathhouse concessioners for listing with the AMA. In Hot Springs, the Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital and Army and Navy Hospital were already AMA-approved and listed and the individual bathhouses wished to attain the same status. AMA rules, however, prevented that from happening because direct medical supervision was not available in the various bathhouses.

Local newspapers announced the impending closing of the U.S. Public Health Service Medical Center on March 29, 1953, and all operations there ceased on May 10. However, USPHS had not given NPS a formal notification of the closure as late as June 1 despite the provision to do so in an inter-agency agreement. Informal meetings with the USPHS medical director, E. B. Johnwick, M.D., confirmed the closing but no firm information was forthcoming from USPHS headquarters. This left NPS with the

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Re. Physical Medicine Center 10-16-1952 to 3-3-1965 (1 of 3), Archives Box 46: Libbey Memorial PMC Archives, Accession 525, HOSP 13536.

[1058] *Annual Report for 1953.*

[1059] *Annual Report for 1952.* The city had an area of 8.05 miles and had grown through annexation. Its population was eighty-seven percent white and thirteen percent black. See League of Women's Voters, Hot Springs, Ark., "The Hot Springs Story," Spring 1954, Letter Document Box 2, HOSP 3294.

[1060] *Annual Report for 1952.*

dilemma of what to do with the buildings and land, regular physical exams for indigent bathers and bathhouse employees, and monthly testing to confirm the safety of NPS water sources. While the Army and Navy Hospital agreed to conduct the monthly water quality tests, Dr. O. C. Wenger (USPHS retired) employed at the Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital volunteered to assume responsibility for the monthly medical examinations of bathhouse employees until a permanent solution was found. In mid-June, USPHS transferred Johnwick to another facility and left its local administrative officer in charge of a liquidation crew to remove agency equipment and supplies leaving behind only vacant buildings.[1061]

NPS Director Conrad Wirth declared the USPHS buildings and land as surplus on June 29, 1953, and referred the matter to the General Services Administration.[1062] Meanwhile USPHS declared the official closure of the medical center on September 30, and transferred it to NPS. In short order, Superintendent Libbey executed special use permits for the Hot Springs District No. 6 School Board and the Garland County Health Unit, both of which occupied the former USPHS buildings. A year later, Congress conveyed the area to the Hot Springs School District for public school purposes and to Garland County for its health and welfare unit. The legislation featured a reversion clause to the National Park Service should those entities ever abandon the facilities.[1063]

Defense Department and Army officials also announced plans to close the Army and Navy Hospital in 1953, thus halting all previous planning efforts for hospital expansion and appropriation of additional NPS land. It sparked efforts by civic groups and retired military to launch letter-writing campaigns and take lobbying trips to Washington to stop the hospital's demise. Funding continued for each fiscal year until June 30, 1955, forcing an immediate shut-down. Thanks to political support and efforts by Arkansas U.S. Senator John McClellan and Congressman William F. Norrell, military officials were compelled to continue operations under congressional direction until a new use for the facility was found.[1064]

In the fall of 1953, Region III assigned Architect Charles R. Sigler the task of designing the proposed physical medicine center. Superintendent Libbey arranged to have Dr. Edward M. Krusen, Jr., Baylor University Hospital in Dallas, Texas, as a consultant on the project. He wanted Krusen, a member of the AMA's Committee on Physical Medicine's medical expertise and AMA connections to assist Sigler in designing the new facility.[1065] A Hot Springs contingent visited Krusen's hospital in Dallas and subsequently prepared a prospectus as the steering committee for the joint venture received "firm, legal commitments from the concessioners." With the physical medicine

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[1061] *Annual Report for 1953.*
[1062] Noted in Superintendent Libbey to Regional Director Tillotson, 17 July 1953, A24 Committees, 1929-1953.
[1063] *Annual Report for 1954;* and *Act of Congress, 11 August 1954* (68 Stat. 790).
[1064] Bonnie L. Edens, "Rehab Center: Treasure for Ages to Enjoy," *The Record*, Vol. 25 (Hot Springs, Ark.: Garland County Historical Society, 1984), 64.
[1065] Superintendent Libbey to Dr. Edward M. Krusen, Jr., letter, 2 October 1953, Folder: HOSP 13536.01.1 Correspondence Re. Physical Medicine Center 10-16-1952 to 3-3-1965 (1 of 3), Archives Box 46: Libbey Memorial PMC Archives, ACC 525, HOSP 13536.

center becoming a reality, concessioners were feeling optimistic. The De Soto Hotel Bathhouse requested and received authorization to increase its tubbage from eight to twelve.[1066] As for the indigent bather, Libbey estimated the present cost to the government at $1.70 per person at the Government Free Bathhouse. Under the new scheme, that cost dropped to $1.40 per person at the pay bathhouses where he believed the indigent would receive superior treatment as well as enjoy anonymity. The new arrangement would also result in the closure of the "experimental" Maurice Bathhouse underwater therapy pool.[1067]

By June 1954, formal commitments from fourteen bathhouses were received to transform the Government Free Bathhouse. It was heralded as a development to "expand and improve the use of the thermal waters and to check the downward trend in the numbers of baths administered each year." The next step was to secure a congressional appropriation. Superintendent Libbey made the announcement at a public forum entitled "What Do You Think Can Be Done to Promote Increased Patronage of Our World Famous Baths?" It brought into focus differing opinions between the Garland County Medical Society and the Bathhouse Association. Local physicians believed the bathhouses opened too early in the morning and closed too early in the afternoon. They also believed businesses had been adversely affected by the 1945 policy to close on Sundays. C. M. King, president of the Bathhouse Association, held that bathers preferred early morning hours which necessitated early opening, and labor regulations did not permit later business hours or Sunday operations. Many of the physicians held that decline in bathing did not mean a lack of faith in the thermal waters, but more confidence in modern medicine and drug therapies.[1068]

In 1954, Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay's management study committee recommended a reorganization of the National Park Service which included the Washington Office and four regional offices. It established two branch offices for design and construction located in Philadelphia and San Francisco, and ordered the delegation of greater administrative authority to the field areas. It recommended additional regional offices pending congressional authorization. Director Wirth noted, "The four regional offices, with their reduced staffs, have been delegated much of the authority formerly exercised by the director, and most of this has, in turn, been re-delegated to those in charge of field areas, in varying degrees, depending largely on the adequacy of area staffs. A number of technicians, formerly on regional office staffs, have been transferred to field areas where, as a rule, they serve two or more areas."[1069]

The problem of finding a reliable source for bathhouse employee physical exams was solved January 1, 1954, when the Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital agreed to perform one complete physical exam for each bathhouse employee of the eighteen

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[1066] *Annual Report for 1954.*
[1067] Edna Lee Howe, "Spa Could Become Nation's Physical Medicine Center: Park Service, AMA Okay Underway Therapy Plan," *Sentinel Record*, 21 February 1954.
[1068] "All Bath House in New Therapy Setup Sign Commitments," *Sentinel Record,* 19 June 1954.
[1069] Conrad L. Wirth, "National Park Service," in *1954 Annual Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30; Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay, Resources for Tomorrow* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1954), 335-336.

concessionaires who had regular contact with bathing patrons. Also, it agreed to provide exams for all new employees prior to their entrance on duty, followed by eleven monthly exams for each employee. The collective concessionaires agreed to pay semi-annual payments of $3.00 per employee for the service.

The solution to the faulty sewage treatment came on August 25, 1953, when Hot Springs citizens approved a $985,000 sewer bond issue. The initiative would rebuild, rehabilitate, and maintain a modern new municipal system. However, the local water company began billing the eight Bathhouse Row concessioners for the special assessment on monthly water and sewer bills which they immediately disputed and filed a lawsuit.[1070] The litigation went to the Arkansas Supreme Court which in June 1958 ruled the eight bathhouses were liable for sewage assessments; they subsequently appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.[1071] The high court ruled in favor of the state court. On May 29, 1959, the U.S. Supreme Court dismissed the bathhouses' appeal from the Arkansas Supreme Court ordering them to pay the sewage assessments. The total in back service charges was almost $40,000.[1072]

ADVISORY BOARD FLOATS DE-AUTHORIZATION IDEA, 1954

Expansion of the national park system was in full swing during the first half of the twentieth century, but the first effort to de-authorize certain units first came to light at a March 1954 meeting of the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments. The Advisory Board, established following passage of the Historic Sites Act of 1935, reviewed an Interior department's survey team report recommending NPS examine all areas under its administration to determine which were of state rather than national significance. The team produced a preliminary list of seven such units it recommended for transfer to the states. Reviewing the team's list, the Advisory Board mulled the situation over and adopted the following resolution that "certain areas now administered by the Park Service possess a degree of interest which would make them suitable for administration by appropriate agencies of political subdivisions of the states" and encouraged "the

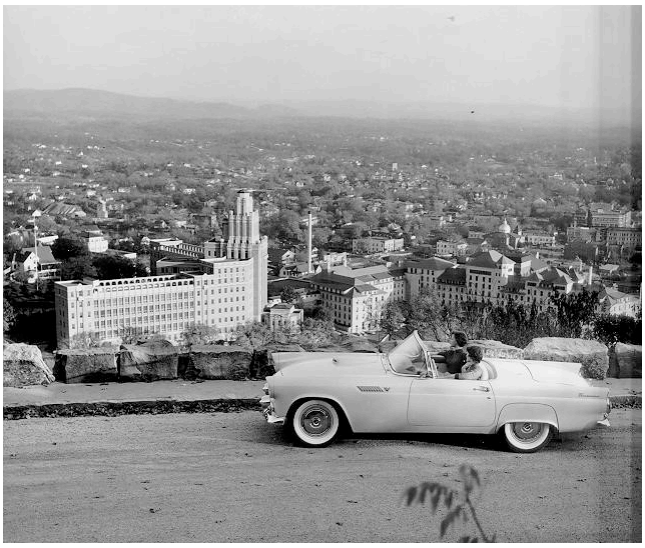

Figure 167. Two visitors in a Ford at the West Mountain overlook, c. 1955 (HSNP 1241, National Park Service)

[1070] *Annual Report for 1954.*
[1071] *Annual Report for 1958.*
[1072] *Annual Report for 1959.*

Department's efforts toward that end." The Advisory Board next approved the survey team's list of seven park units, and added five new units of its own. Atop the new list of thirteen units to be de-authorized was Hot Springs National Park.[1073] Interior and NPS recognized that only Congress had the authority to de-authorize a park unit and neither supported the Advisory Board's action with regard to Arkansas and the nation's oldest national park.

Director Conrad Wirth unveiled his proposed nationwide MISSION 66 plan during fiscal year 1955 to Interior Secretary Douglas McKay and received his support. Designed as a decade-long program of capital improvement to be funded annually by Congress to expand dramatically NPS's visitor services, MISSION 66 was planned to be completed by the bureau's fiftieth anniversary in 1966. While planners began developing more detail for the servicewide MISSION 66 report, NPS announced part of its reorganization by establishing Region Five and opening a new regional office in Philadelphia effective July 1, 1955.[1074] Establishing the new sixteen state Region Five necessitated carving territory away from Regions One and Two. A diminished Region One, with headquarters in Richmond, Virginia, added Arkansas, with Hot Springs National Park, away from Region Three with headquarters in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The state also possessed emerging new park units like Pea Ridge National Military Park (authorized July 20, 1956), Arkansas Post National Memorial (authorized July 6, 1960), and Fort Smith National Historic Site (authorized September 13, 1961).[1075]

At Hot Springs, progress toward realizing the new physical medicine center came when the legal partnership formed. Arkansas's secretary of state certified the articles of incorporation for Hot Springs National Park Physical Medicine Center, Inc., on November 1, 1954. Its board of directors was: C. M. King, president; B. L. Neimeyer, vice-president, and L. N. Hogaboom, secretary-treasurer. In July 1955, Interior announced $235,000 for the conversion project under supervision of the NPS Western Office of Design and Construction. Superintendent Libbey informed the press few changes would be made to the building's exterior, although a solarium would be added on the Spring Street level. The first floor would contain two thermal pools, office space for the supervising medical officer and physio-therapist, and a lounge for technical staff. As for the second floor, new whirlpool tubs for leg and arm treatments, two Hubbard tubs, space for physical rehabilitation equipment, and a room for occupational therapy would be built. Six communal tubs were enlarged to accommodate eight to ten people and fitted with agitators for whirlpool treatments. An overhead trolley system was

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[1073] John Ise, *Our National Park Policy: A Critical History* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1961), 522-523. After Hot Springs National Park were: Platt National Park, Capulin Mountain National Monument, Mound City Group National Monument, Pinnacles National Monument, Shoshone Cavern National Monument, Verendrye National Monument, Moore's Creek National Military Park, Brices Cross Roads National Battlefield Site, Cowpens National Battlefield Site, Tupelo National Battlefield Site, White Plains National Battlefield Site, and Millerton Lake National Recreation Area.

[1074] *1955 Annual Report, Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay, Partnership in Resource Conservation and Development for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1955), 332, 334-336.

[1075] Barry Macintosh, *The National Parks: Shaping the System* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Harpers Ferry Center, 1991), 80.

designed to accommodate non-ambulatory patients making it possible to lower them into pools or tubs.[1076]

Park Ranger Lawrence W. Quist became acting park naturalist on December 29, 1954, breathing new life into the park's moribund interpretation program. Quist also served as secretary of the Hot Springs Natural History Association and helped acquire a new display counter for the Information Desk outside the museum where Association publications were on display for sale to the public. Quist worked to plan, map out, stake, and compile leaflets for the Hot Springs Mountain Nature Walk, an activity that many visitors enjoyed. Quist and fellow park rangers organized and conducted a regular summer interpretive program for each Friday night at Gulpha Gorge Campground with average attendance at 150 people per event.

Park maintenance was forced to utilize city water to operate the central cooling system due to changes in the low flow of Hot Springs Creek during hot, dry periods. Because numerous motels, hotels, and businesses along Park Avenue had installed their own similar cooling systems and a new Majestic Hotel laundry and central cooling system also demanded a share of the creek water, these commercial uses collectively made Hot Springs Creed an unreliable and unserviceable source. The buildup of sludge in the heat exchange tubes for the park's central cooling system, a regular event causing periodic boring to clear them, made a new solution necessary after three and half years in operation. Libbey authorized drilling of a cold water well on Arlington Lawn to locate a new water source for the heat exchange units. In March 1955, the new well produced eighty-five to 100 gallons per minute, and Libbey authorized drilling of a second well nearby to ensure a plentiful supply.

A shift in personnel practices occurred in fiscal 1955 with the new regional re-alignment. The accounting field office at Hot Springs National Park relocated to the Region Three Office at Santa Fe and the local position of fiscal accounting clerk was subsequently abolished. Also, park wide, all personnel were converted during the year to career or career-conditional status by the U.S. Civil Service Commission.[1077]

In order to get the long-delayed Grand Promenade project completed, an agreement was reached at the Region Three Office to utilize limited funds remaining in the NPS roads and trails construction program and to accomplish work section by section each year. In a parting gift to its Arkansas park, the Santa Fe office signaled the Eastern Office of Design and Construction to utilize $47,000 in fiscal year 1956 funds to get the ill-fated project going again.[1078] This occurred as another ill-fated effort to convince NPS to allow parking behind Bathhouse Row among bathhouse concessioners was underway. Led by Fordyce Bathhouse manager Byron Neimeyer to "stir up" support and "to go the

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[1076] *Annual Report for 1955;* and "Ann Stell McDaniel, "Physical Therapy Center to Be Finest of Nation," *Arkansas Gazette*, 10 July 1955. Folder: Hot Springs Physical Medicine Center, Library Vertical File, HSNP.

[1077] *Annual Report for 1955.* Libbey noted the maintenanceman position as an exception because "there is no examination open for Maintenanceman at this time."

[1078] Chief, Eastern Office of Design and Construction, Edward S. Zimmer to Acting Regional Director Hugh M. Miller, 1 June 1955, D30 Roads and Trails, 1955.

political route" if necessary, Neimeyer pitched the Fordyce plan to a receptive audience before the Bathhouse Association in August 1955. The Association passed a resolution in favor and forwarded it to NPS and Secretary McKay. Neimeyer headed a special committee sent to convince U.S. Senator John McClellan (D. Ark.). When he met with Donald Libbey and George Bolton, an upfront Libbey bluntly stated that if he recommended the parking scheme to his superiors, "[I] would write [my] resignation at the same time." Instead of parking behind the bathhouses, Libbey proposed a parking lot on the "edge of the city toward the lakes and have bus or station wagon service" to the Row operated by Bathhouse Row establishments.[1079]

On January 27, 1956, NPS completed its MISSION 66 report and Director Conrad L. Wirth and others pitched it at the White House to President Dwight D. Eisenhower and his cabinet. Eisenhower gave his blessing to the ten-year program and Interior presented MISSION 66 to Congress on February 2 which responded by appropriating the required funding. The innovative program was presented to the nation in an illustrated booklet entitled *Our Heritage.* NPS explained it to all park concessioners and a permanent staff was established in the Washington Office to coordinate and continue the decade-long effort. That office also coordinated development of individual park prospectuses defining MISSION 66 plans and projects at specific NPS units.[1080]

News of the "second most disastrous flood ever" to strike downtown Hot Springs made the secretary's 1956 annual report. On February 15, 5.54 inches of rain fell in a two-hour period causing basements of all Bathhouse Row Bathhouses and the Rockafellow Bathhouse to flood, causing damage to their boilers and ruining all supplies stored in the basements. Those concessioners were unable to operate for three days. When it was feared floodwater had entered the central collecting reservoir through three open springs found in some of those flooded basements, Superintendent Libbey ordered the reservoir to be emptied and potability tests run.[1081] USPHS inspectors subsequently recommended the three open springs in the bathhouses be sealed. Manager of the Quapaw, Hale, and Fordyce Bathhouses agreed to seal the thermal springs with concrete brick and covered by a half-inch thick plate of glass.[1082]

Progress in contracting for a new Hot Springs National Park Physical Medicine Center came when a new contract was endorsed by the corporation's board of directors and forwarded to NPS. Also, at the end of July, nine contracts from pay bathhouses to bathe indigents were signed and forwarded to Washington for approval. Participating bathhouses were: Pythian, Rockafellow, Moody, National Baptist, Alhambra, Superior, Maurice, Hale, and Lamar. Architect John Cabot of the Eastern Office of Design and Construction began interviewing four prospective Little Rock architectural firms in

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[1079] Byron L. Neimeyer to C. Powell Fordyce, letters, 8 January, 27 August, and 1 November 1954, all in Box 12, Folder 12-13: Fordyce Bath House—Parking 1954-1955, Manuscript Collection 1311 Fordyce Family Papers, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.
[1080] *1956 Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton, The Conservation of Natural Resources, For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1956* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), 299, 304, 307-308.
[1081] Ibid., 306-307.
[1082] *Annual Report 1957.*

regard to converting the building according to NPS preliminary designs. The signed twenty-year contract was subsequently forwarded to Congress on June 18.[1083] Award of the exterior architectural conversion went to Erhart, Eichenbaum, and Rauch, Architects, of Little Rock. Contract for the interior work went The McRae Company of Hot Springs. Contract award for the medical treatment equipment went to Little Rock's Crane Company. Work on the conversion began on March 26, 1957.[1084]

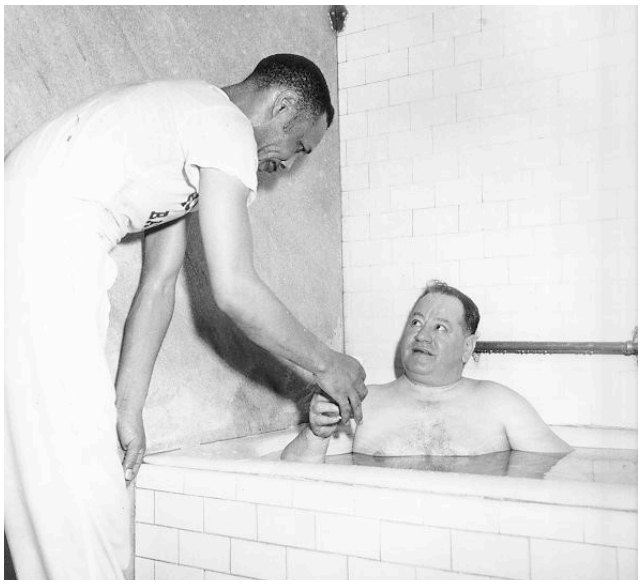

Figure 168. Maurice Bathhouse attendant Herbert Wilson giving water to a male bather in a thermal tub, c. 1956 (HSNP 1763, National Park Service)

A side benefit of the regional shift and MISSION 66, was the addition of resource specialist personnel servicewide. The Richmond Region Five Office gained a naturalist position as did Hot Springs National Park. Acting Park Naturalist Lawrence Quist was appointed into the full-time career position (GS-7) on October 9, 1955. Quist continued to build the park's natural history and interpretation program. On "Establishment Day," he led special tours through the Water Pumping and Control Station at park headquarters. Quist also initiated a Junior Naturalist Program that saw seventy-seven children, age nine to twelve, registering for the special course.[1085] He also conceived the "Day-in-the-Park" program for school groups in cooperation with the city superintendent of schools. Program objectives were to "teach and inspire appreciation of Hot Springs National Park and the National Park System areas. We feel that appreciation and full knowledge of the area will help to reduce vandalism in Hot Springs and, therefore, protection will be achieved through interpretation."[1086]

[1083] *Annual Report for 1956;* "Physical Medicine Center Contract To Be Let Soon," *Sentinel Record*, 5 November 1956; "NPS Negotiating with State Architects on Spa Physical Medicine Center Drawings, *Hot Springs New Era*, 18 May 1956; and Department of the Interior, Information Service, "Proposed Concession Contract for Operation of Physical Medicine Center in Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas, Submitted to Congress," news release, 18 June 1956, K34 News Media, Publicity, 1938-1956.

[1084] *Annual Report for 1957.*

[1085] Ibid., and *1956 Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton, The Conservation of Natural Resources, For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1956* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), 310.

[1086] *Annual Report for 1957.* This is the first superintendent's annual report (1957) where service of seasonal park rangers is mentioned. Quist accepted a promotion and transfer effective May 3, 1958, to Zion National Park. On June 4, he was replaced by Dwight T. Warren as park naturalist. See *Annual Report for 1958.*

HARRY AND BESS TRUMAN VACATION IN HOT SPRINGS, 1956

In stark contrast to the hoopla displayed during former President Theodore Roosevelt's Hot Springs appearance forty years previously, former President Harry S Truman's vacation with his wife, Bess Wallace Truman, received considerably less fanfare. As private citizens living in retirement at their home in Independence, Missouri, Harry and Bess Truman freely embarked in their automobile to various spots in the country.

In November 1956, the former first family drove through Fort Smith and arrived at Hot Springs for a week-long vacation, staying at the Arlington Hotel and taking the baths there. "Citizen Truman" held an impromptu press conference in the hotel lobby on November 14. He said it was their first Hot Springs visit since 1943 and "it feels like coming back home." He went on to state that as a senator, he made regular visits to take the baths but had not had the opportunity to return after being in the White House. He joked with newspaper, radio, and television reporters, "I took my customary two-mile hike and baths before most of you got up this morning," having strolled down Central Avenue and having a few surprised people recognizing him. Truman remarked that he found the "baths were very invigorating."

Turning to local affairs, the former president called attempts to close the Army and Navy Hospital "very foolish" considering the large federal expenditures on the facility, and "it should be put back like it was before (on a full operating basis.)" He added: "If you don't watch them (the Defense Department), they'll try to close it again." Truman revealed that he had asked Missouri's U.S. Senator Stuart Symington (D.-Mo.) in 1954 to help keep the hospital open and return the 150-bed facility to its former 450-bed capacity.[1087] Two days later, former President Truman paid a visit to the Army and Navy Hospital, walking in unannounced at mid-morning. As a former patient there, Truman wished to tour the government facility again and spent thirty-five minutes visiting the surgery and x-ray departments and post exchange. He spoke with patients and admired the commanding view of Hot Springs from the ninth floor.[1088]

Arkansas recognized the income-producing aspect of Oaklawn Park at Hot Springs by taking an initiative petition to amend the state constitution and legalize all aspects of horse racing. Put on the November 1956 ballot, voters approved Amendment

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[1087] Maurice Moore, "Former President Vacations Here: Truman Calls Attempts To Close A-N 'Very Foolish'; Sees Another Demo Congressional Win In 1958, " *Sentinel Record,* 14 November 1956, in File: Truman, Harry S, Box 53, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Truman said he wanted to be treated "like any other Hot Springs vacationer," and that he and Bess Truman would spend "two or three days—possibly a week vacationing in Hot Springs." The reporter observed the former president was "besieged by well-wishers wherever he went at the Arlington," and that Mrs. Truman did not attend the press conference, "instead, she sat in the hotel lobby and chatted with friends."

[1088] "Truman Makes Surprise Visit to A-N Hospital," *Sentinel Record,* 17 November 1956 in File: Truman, Harry S, Box 53, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

46. It provided that horse racing and pari-mutuel wagering be restricted to Hot Springs, Garland County, and that it be regulated by the Arkansas General Assembly.[1089]

At the close of business on March 22, 1957, the Government Free Bathhouse closed its doors for the nine month conversion to a physical medicine center. For seventy-nine years a free bathhouse for the indigent had been in continuous government operation. Now, indigent bathers were accommodated in participating pay bathhouses. With the closure of this institution, the manager, four attendants, and janitor positions were abolished. Male employees were shifted into other park positions, but the employment of two female bath attendants ended.

In July 1957, new comfort stations opened to the public at the observation tower and grading, draining, and brickwork on the Grand Promenade resumed under contract. Also, a formal entrance at Reserve Avenue to this designed landscape feature began.

In an effort to entice local residents to take the waters, all bathhouses participated in an open house on November 26. For two evening hours, the general public was invited inside to tour the bathhouses and ask questions.[1090]

HOT SPRINGS NATIONAL PARK PHYSICAL MEDICINE CENTER OPENS, 1958

The Hot Springs National Park Physical Medicine Center, Inc., held an open house on January 12, 1958, with more than 2,000 in attendance representing twenty-seven states. Three days later, it opened for business. Patients were admitted on an out-patient basis upon referral by a local federally-registered physician. Treatments for those with disabling "conditions involving the function of muscles, joints, and nerves," and included "arthritis, neuritis, bursitis, myositis, paralysis, post-injury cases, 'strokes,' back disorders and many other disabilities involving body motion" were offered. At long last, the dreams of many NPS park managers for a professional hydrotherapy center at Hot Springs came to life. A promotional leaflet briefly explained it as follows:

Figure 169. Hot Springs National Park Physical Medicine Center, Spring Street entrance, 1958--later renamed Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center in honor of Superintendent Donald S. Libbey (HSNP 10325, National

[1089] C. Armitage Harper, ed., "Amendment No. 46, Hot Springs Horse Racing Amendment," *Historical Report of the Secretary of State (Arkansas),* (Little Rock, Ark.: State of Arkansas, 1968), 217.
[1090] *Annual Report for 1957.*

> *"Hydrotherapy (water treatment) includes deep therapy pools, shallow agitated pools, Hubbard tubs, whirlpools for treatments of upper and lower extremities, and hot packs. In addition to these featured treatment employing the famous Hot Springs thermal waters, other methods commonly employed in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation are available. These include diathermy, ultrasound, electrical stimulation, paraffin baths and like methods."* [1091]

The opening of the physical medicine facility signaled the Maurice Bathhouse to close its thermal pool. After two months, the center's directors requested revision of some of the rates and Superintendent Libbey approved the revised rates effective April 1. In 1959, stockholders of the physical medicine center offered both common and preferred corporation stock for sale to the public.[1092]

MISSION 66 BEGINS, 1957

Other park improvements in fiscal year 1958 were assorted. In August 1957, a base station for the park radio net with four mobile units began operating with call letters KKF-700. Ranger patrols used the park net during daytime operating hours and after-hours switched to the city-county radio net under an existing cooperative agreement. The park hosted a Master Plan conference September 25-26, 1957, and began its MISSION 66 planning effort. The development program sanctioned by President Dwight D. Eisenhower was designed to improve visitor facilities and park infrastructure in time for the fiftieth anniversary of the National Park Service in 1966. In attendance was Robert Coates, MISSION 66 Washington Office specialist, Region One Office's Reese Smith, and from the Eastern Office of Design and Construction were staff members E. S. Zimmer, Harvey Cornell, Robert White, and John Cabot. They met with Superintendent Libbey,

Figure 170. A Mission 66 project involved utility line improvements next to the Grand Promenade with old print shop (no longer extant) at right, early 1960s (HSNP 10807, National Park Service)

[1091] Quotations from promotional flyer entitled *Hot Springs National Park Physical Medicine Center, Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas,* no date [circa 1958], HSNP Archives.
[1092] *Annual Report for 1959.*

Assistant Superintendent Bolton, and two other park staff members to begin drafting a MISSION 66 prospectus. The Ozark Bathhouse installed laundry facilities in its basement at the end of January 1958. The Grand Promenade planting project began on February 28 and by utilizing day labor and plant materials from the park's propagation beds, the effort saved the government $12,000. Bids for eliminating the concrete drive between the Fordyce and Maurice bathhouses opened in June. The Hammond Construction Company of Hot Springs won the contract to build a new concrete and landscaped entrance to the promenade. Largely used by the Maurice in connection with its long-time "experimental" hydrotherapy pool, its closure afforded NPS an opportunity to reconfigure the area.[1093]

Assistant Superintendent George C. Bolton suffered a heart attack on June 5, 1958, and subsequently retired August 1. His departure prompted NPS to divest itself of the old residence he occupied. Once serving as the original official superintendent's residence, the structure's placement near Arlington Lawn's termination of the promenade on Fountain Street doomed its continued use. Bids for its removal were let in October 1958. The seventy-two-year-old two-story eleven-room frame structure was "not considered of sufficient historical significance to justify expenditure of some $8,000, the estimated cost of rehabilitation" according to Libbey. Aside from its location near the promenade, Libbey unveiled a MISSION 66 goal to erect a new visitor center there in "two to three years" to include a museum, park naturalist's office, and a small auditorium to show audio-visual presentations.[1094] Demolition of the assistant superintendent's residence and restoration landscaping of the site was finished at the end of April 1959.[1095]

The year 1958 was a pivotal time for the Fordyce Bathhouse family partnership. They watched with dismay as bathhouse manager Byron Neimeyer communicated regularly the gloomy and declining business environment and the ineffective measures taken to bolster it. C. Powell Fordyce continued to hold out hope political pressure exerted on Interior and NPS would force the cumbersome bureaucracy to change course and permit parking behind Bathhouse Row. When this proposal met stiff opposition, Fordyce switched tactics and proposed converting the third floor gymnasium into a parking garage, instructing his manager to determine how many cars could be parked at one time, if the building was strong enough to accommodate additional weight without new bracing, and if Libbey would permit an extra charge to patrons for parking.[1096] Fordyce also schemed to raise income if allowed to convert the third floor to office space for rent to local doctors, lawyers, dentists, accountants, or other professional business ventures. Neimeyer paid local engineer Albert Annen to draw up plans and Annen studied the second and third floors, determined the structure to be strong enough, but

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[1093] *Annual Report for 1958*; and Superintendent Libbey to Chief, Eastern Office of Design and Construction, 14 March 1958, D30 Roads and Trails, 1955.
[1094] *Annual Report for 1958*; and "Former Home of Assistant Park Head to Be Sold," *Sentinel Record,* 15 October 1958, File: National Park Service, Box 51, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.
[1095] *Annual Report for 1959.*
[1096] C. Powell Fordyce to B. L. Neimeyer, letters, 16 April and 9 May 1958, Folder 31, Box 4, Manuscript Collection 1311, Fordyce Family Papers, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

support posts were too close to the front of the building for it to serve as a suitable parking garage. Also, there was the thorny problem of how to get automobiles up from street level. Neimeyer reported that Libbey and his superior nixed the conversion idea without further discussion.[1097]

With no movement on the part of Interior or NPS, the Fordyce family partnership acted. On September 13, 1958, Byron Neimeyer notified NPS that the family owners of Fordyce Bathhouse authorized him to offer it for sale. The building, with the exception of the owners' Indian relic collection and personal papers, were valued at a price tag of $175,000. The thermal lease, renewed in 1955, ran through the end of 1974.[1098] NPS subsequently prepared a prospectus soliciting offers for operation of the bathhouse. As part of a nationwide effort for concessioners' improvements, NPS offered training programs at all principal park units with substantial park concessioners, including Hot Springs National Park in 1959.[1099]

Congress authorized a land exchange on August 18, 1958. In Blocks 195 and 196, NPS acquired from the city 4.75 acres. In exchange, NPS granted the city 5.3 acres immediately behind the Arlington Hotel.[1100] Following congressional passage, Arlington Hotel attorneys requested NPS extend its present contract another twenty years because it wished to build new facilities on the acquired land behind the hotel valued at a quarter million dollars. Before construction, the hotel wished to have the thermal water lease extension. Libbey reported NPS "refused this request since it has been administratively determined that the terms of the existing contracts will be extended only in unusual and extenuating circumstances, which do not appear to exist in this instance."[1101]

New rates for the nine participating bathhouses providing indigent baths were approved effective September 1, 1958. It increased each bath by twenty cents to $1.35 per bath. NPS approval also extended the period to complete a full course of baths from thirty to sixty days.

Park Naturalist Dwight T. Warren worked with a Region One museum curator in September 1958 to establish the park's first accessions files on a professional basis. Upon Warren's resignation four months later, Charles F. Adams, Jr., entered on duty in the same position in April 1959.

[1097] Fordyce to Neimeyer, letter, 14 May 1958, and Neimeyer to Fordyce, letter, 21 April 1958, both in Folder 31, Box 4, Manuscript Collection 1311, Fordyce Family Papers, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

[1098] B. L. Neimeyer to Superintendent Libbey, letter, 13 September 1958, Folder 31, Box 4, Manuscript Collection 1311, Fordyce Family Papers, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Neimeyer wrote: "The building is in good repair, is a three story brick, hollow tile partitions and basic structure is of reinforced concrete. It has tile roof, tile floors, copper marquee, some marble walls, individual rest rooms and gymnasium. The building is of fine construction and workmanship. The Fordyce Bath House has a nation wide [sic] clientele and is generally known as the finest in the world."

[1099] *1959 Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1959; Resources for a Growing Population* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1959), 356.

[1100] *Act of Congress, 18 August 1958* (73 Stat. 630)(16 U.S.C., sec. 361f); and *Annual Report for 1959.*

[1101] *Annual Report for 1959.*

Superintendent Donald Libbey received a Special Acts Award from Regional Director Elbert Cox on October 21, 1958. The award recognized Libbey's achievements which saved the government money in developing the physical medicine center and reorganizing the treatments for indigent bathers. Three months later, Libbey welcomed his new assistant superintendent, Albert D. Rose, on January 4, 1959.

NEW USE FOR ARMY AND NAVY HOSPITAL, 1959

Resolution of the Army and Navy Hospital's fate came in 1959. Threatened with closure annually since 1954, the hospital's future was determined by a joint survey undertaken by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare and a committee from the Arkansas State Vocational and Rehabilitation Service. They surveyed its potential use as a state-operated vocational facility to be known as Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center. In early April, companion bills were introduced in Congress to direct the secretary of the Army to convey the hospital to the state agency. NPS requested that the superintendent's residence, two sets of duplex quarters including garages and outbuildings be reserved for use by Hot Springs National Park. The legislation passed on September 21, 1959. Twenty-one acres comprising the former Army and Navy Hospital were conveyed "together with all buildings, improvements, appurtenances and utilities… excluding approximately 3½ acres of Hot Springs National Park property." Mineral rights and title to thermal waters were retained by the United States and the secretary of the Interior was authorized to grant permits to the state for thermal water use.

Congress further stipulated that Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center must be used as a vocational rehabilitation center or for other public health or educational purposes. Should it not, title then reverts to the United States. In addition, the U.S. "has the right to reenter upon the property and use the same whenever Congress declares a state of war, or the President declares a state of emergency" and remain for the duration of wartime or national emergency plus six months, at which time the U.S. will return the property to the state. Should title ever revert to the U.S., lands and improvements may be restored to Hot Springs National Park.[1102]

Following its first year of operation, NPS assessed the progress of Hot Springs National Park Physical Medicine Center. Its medical director, manager, two registered physical therapists, two physical therapy aides, and support staff administered 11,399 treatments. Libbey told reporters that he was pleased with the response and "the center shows a great potential need for the services rendered here in Hot Springs." He cited the original prospectus which projected four to five years until self-supporting. At the current rate Libbey estimated it at fifty percent self-supporting. Patronage was from throughout the U.S. and several foreign countries. Medical specialists from hospitals, medical centers, and clinics from the U.S., Canada, Argentina, Italy, England, Germany, India, Japan, and South Korea had come to tour and learn about it. The center paid the annual thermal water fee but had a five year grace period before payments to the government began on the grounds and building. Its operation had already saved money.

[1102] Ibid.; and *Act of Congress, 21 September 1959* (73 Stat. 594).

While NPS paid $4,046 for indigent bathing at pay bathhouses, it saved $22,000 in annual operating costs under the former Government Free Bathhouse system.[1103]

MISSION 66 PROSPECTUS UNVEILED, 1959

Donald Libbey used the one year anniversary of the physical medicine center to unveil the first prospectus issued for MISSION 66 activities at Hot Spring National Park. Four of the twenty-two separate projects under the ten year program had already been completed. These included the physical medicine center, promenade (including reconstructing the park's formal grand entrance area), new parking area and egress road from the observation tower, and extending West Mountain Drive across to Whittington Park. Upcoming projects were landscaping the site of the former assistant superintendent's residence on Fountain Street, drilling an additional well at Whittington Park piping it to the central cooling exchange, and utilizing Fountain Street's Happy Hollow Spring by the public, piping city water to Gulpha Gorge Campground, and upgrading the heating and air-conditioning system at the park headquarters building. Long-range MISSION 66 projects in the funding pipeline were as follows:

1. Improving Hot Springs and North Mountain road system (making them one-way).
2. Two comfort stations along the Grand Promenade.
3. New underground sprinkling system for Arlington Lawn and Bathhouse Row.
4. Construction of new visitor center at site of former assistant superintendent's residence.
5. Construction of five sets of housing for personnel subject to lateral transfer or promotion.
6. Amphitheatre on Hot Springs Mountain near the Superior Bathhouse.
7. Gulpha Gorge Campground improvements (two additional comfort stations, enlarging the lecture circle, additional campsites, and picnic tables).
8. Construct comfort station at Hot Springs Mountain picnic area.
9. Construct sign shop at park maintenance utility area.
10. New park entrance at Happy Hollow Spring on Fountain Street.
11. Hot Springs Creek Arch improvements along Bathhouse Row.
12. Creek bank improvements, including possible arch over creek at Whittington Park.
13. New wayside exhibits and orientation stations on Hot Springs, West, and North mountains.[1104]

[1103] "Nature, Science Team Up: Physical Medicine Center Ushers in New Era Featuring Use of Natural Hot Waters in Underwater Therapy Treatments," *Sentinel Record*, 22 February 1959, File: Bathhouses, Box 48, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

[1104] "Spa National Park Showing Results of 10-Year 'Mission 66' Program," *Sentinel Record*, 22 February 1959, , File: Industry, Box 50, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. The article listed approximate dollar estimates for each project.

The MISSION 66 prospectus included the following approximate amount to be spent:

Roads and Trails	$497,500
Buildings	$483,000
Utilities	$60,000
Miscellaneous	$273,300
Total of physical development	$1,216,400[1105]

An article in *Newsweek* magazine in August 1959 suggested there might be a revival in the U.S. for spa therapy similar to that of Europe. It chronicled Dr. William Bierman, a rehabilitation specialist at New York's Mount Sinai Hospital, and five other American physicians monitoring fourteen European medical spas and the "cures" affected there. Many of the spas were in West Germany where spa therapy was taught in medical schools. This was in sharp contrast to the U.S. where no medical school offered spa therapy and there was no on-going spa research program. Bierman called on his colleagues at the American Medical Association's annual meeting to follow the Europeans' lead and reinvigorate American efforts in regard to spa therapy. *Newsweek* reported "Today, there are only 150 U.S. spas compared with more than 2,000 in 1900. In sharp contrast, medical spas in Europe are enjoying their greatest boom. In the once socially important watering places people of moderate means can now stay for as little as $100 to $250 for three weeks of medical care and lodging."[1106] Fall-out from the article saw the Association of American Spas encouraging U.S. physicians to consider sending their patients to American spas first. The association worked to convince U.S. insurance companies to cover the hydrotherapy treatments like their European counterparts, and pointed to the rapid development of spas in the Soviet Union with its eight institutes of hydrology, compared to none in the U.S.[1107]

In August, the Bathhouse Association approached Superintendent Libbey to gain permission for Bathhouse Row businesses to enter into agreements with local parking lot operators. The eight bathhouses wanted to enter into agreements with local lots to pay for up to two hours of parking for patrons' cars during a trial period concluding October 1. While Libbey did not object to underwriting the cost of parking, he told the Association it would not be a legitimate justification for raising bath rates. When the trial period ended, not all bathhouses wished to continue the experiment because of its cost and the experiment ended.[1108]

[1105] National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, *MISSION 66 For Hot Springs National Park*, prospectus, no date [circa 1959].

[1106] Spas: Bubbling Up*?," Newsweek*, 10 August 1959, 86-87, Folder: Association of American Spas, Box 48, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. When the Association of American Spas formed in 1954 in Hot Springs to elevate U.S. medical standards among spas, it included in the operating code a clause requiring 'a qualified physician to supervise treatment,' and many dropped out except: "Hot Springs, Ark.(Federally owned); Saratoga Springs, N. Y. (state owned); Safety Harbor, Fla.; White Sulphur Baths, Sharon Springs, N.Y., and the Buie and Corbett Clinics at Marlin, Texas, with full medical supervision."

[1107] "Doctors Under Pressure to Send Their Patients to American Spas," *Sentinel Record,* 22 October 1959, Folder: Association of American Spas, Box 48, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

[1108] *Annual Report for 1960.*

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Era of Decline

SUPERINTENDENCY OF H. RAYMOND GREGG, 1959-1962

On September 25, 1959, Donald S. Libbey, who was returning from Hot Springs Municipal Airport after dropping off Region One Office members, suffered a heart attack while at the wheel of his automobile. He was pronounced dead on arrival at Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital. Libbey, 66, was but a few months away from a scheduled retirement in Hot Springs. The *Arkansas Democrat* called him "an exemplary federal official. His type of personal relations is the best form of public relations the Park Service can have."[1109] Conrad Wirth, looking for a successor to Libbey, turned to H. Raymond Gregg, who began his NPS career at Hot Springs National Park in 1933 as park naturalist. Gregg subsequently had gone on to positions at Rocky Mountain National Park, National Capital Parks, Washington Office, and Region Two Office in Omaha, where he served as regional chief of interpretation. Gregg, a native Arkansan, began his first superintendency at Hot Springs National Park on November 15, 1959.[1110]

Figure 171. H. Raymond Gregg (National Park Service)

Because of the Levi Memorial Hospital's transition to an arthritis research and treatment center, it formally requested in October 1959 to be relieved from accepting and treating emergency cases from the Hot Springs National Park Physical Medicine Center. NPS negotiated a new agreement with the hospital recognizing it was no longer a general hospital and charging it for its use of the thermal waters.

The Bathhouse Association notified NPS on November 18 that a labor union organizer had assisted local bathhouse attendants and helpers to organize their own union. Known as Local 242 of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees and Bartenders International Union, it came under the purview of the American Federal of Labor-

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[1109] "Donald Smith Libbey," editorial, *Arkansas Democrat, 28 September 1959,* unaccessioned folder Le-Li, HSNP archives; and "Donald S. Libbey, Head of National Park Here, Dies, *Hot Springs New Era*, 26 September 1959, Folder: National Park Service, Box 51, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

[1110] "Began Career Here: Gregg Assumes Duties as Park Superintendent in Hot Springs," *Sentinel Record,* 17 November 1959, File: National Park Service, Box 51, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Gregg reportedly told Conrad Wirth he was interested in the position whenever Donald Libbey retired.

Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). In February and March 1960, a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) examiner held hearings on the unionization of the bathhouse industry. Superintendent Gregg reported, "It is clear that the Union is attempting to obtain a finding that bathhouses are engaged in interstate commerce as a basis for NLRB jurisdiction."[1111] The AFL-CIO unionization effort among bathhouse workers ultimately fizzled.

In December 1959, two sets of duplex quarters, along with garages and outbuildings, came into NPS ownership under legislation granting the Army and Navy Hospital campus to the state. Two of the residences were occupied by park protection rangers and the other two went to Assistant Superintendent Albert D. Rose and Park Naturalist Charles F. Adams, Jr.

A new park fountain opened on April 1, 1960, at Happy Hollow Spring, on a 4.75-acre tract of land recently acquired by NPS. The spring water was piped to Fountain Street where a jug fountain sat on a small plaza. The first and second celebratory jugs were presented in a ceremony to two local old-time residents who had first visited Happy Hollow Spring in 1884.[1112]

Figure 172. Superintendent H. Raymond Gregg (at far right) accepts deed from Arlington Hotel owners for new park land including Happy Hollow Spring, November 1959 (HSNP 10154, National Park Service)

Interpretation received a boost in 1960 when seven bulletin boards constructed by park maintenance were placed at "strategic points" within the national park. Campfire program announcements at Gulpha Gorge Campground were regularly posted on bulletin boards to advertise topics of presentations for the Tuesday and Friday night events. The following year, audio repeater units were installed at the Display Springs and Heat Exchange Building. Fixed with relays and counters, plus utilizing a counting factor, NPS was able to get an approximate number of people who listened to the brief interpretive messages at both locations.[1113]

While the park lost its top manager to cardiac arrest, tragedy struck again exactly eight months later on May 25, 1960. Assistant Superintendent Albert D. Rose suffered a fatal heart attack as he prepared to come to work. Rose's replacement entered on duty November 28. H. Gordon Bender became the third assistant superintendent, coming

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[1111] *Annual Report for 1960.*
[1112] Ibid., and "Over 100 Attend Dedication at Happy Hollow," *Hot Springs New Era*, 2 April 1960, File: Happy Hollow, Box 50, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.
[1113] *Annual Reports for 1960 and 1961.*

from the position of chief ranger at Glacier National Park.[1114] Bender subsequently accepted a position in the Region One Office in November 1962.[1115] He subsequently was replaced by Courtland T. Reid.

A lasting tribute to Donald S. Libbey, the facility he conceived, helped plan, and build was renamed the "Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center" at a ceremony on October 2, 1960. NPS Director Conrad Wirth gave the dedication speech at the Libbey Center and presented a posthumous citation of service plaque to the late superintendent's son. In Wirth's remarks, he spoke about early Hot Springs history, declaring:

"We must remember that this was done at a time when the prevailing attitude toward the land and the natural resources of America was to dispose of them, to use them up and move on. This Act to protect the public interest in these hot waters was thus a milestone in the history of resource use in our country. In a sense, it set a pattern for the long series of later acts through which we Americans have created for ourselves national parks, national forests, wildlife refuges, and other conservation districts for orderly management of our common possessions."

Figure 173. Meeting of the Hot Springs National Park Federal Registration Board with Superintendent H. Raymond Gregg center right, April 7, 1961 (HSNP 6376, National Park Service)

Director Wirth concluded:

> *"I can assure you that the National Park Service intends to continue in every reasonable and practical way to protect and manage the water resources and the natural values of this park for the benefit of generations to come. The institution we dedicate here today is a step in that direction….*
>
> *"On behalf of Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton, and in my own capacity as the representative of the National Park Service, I officially name it "Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center."*
>
> *"The great and good things that happen to those who find their way to its portals will take place in the lengthening shadow of Donald S.*

[1114] Ibid.
[1115] *Annual Report for 1963.*

Libbey, the man we honor today in dedicating this Center to the benefit of all."[1116]

FORDYCE DILEMMA: POTENTIAL VISITOR CENTER OR EMPTY BATHHOUSE?

Sixteen months after the Fordyce family partnership put their bathhouse on the market and with no credible offers, Superintendent H. Raymond Gregg made a startling recommendation. In a memorandum dated February 2, 1962, Gregg recommended to Southeast[1117] Regional Director Elbert Cox that NPS acquire the Fordyce Bathhouse and convert it into the park's visitor center in lieu of the MISSION 66 plan for a new visitor center built on Arlington Lawn. He argued its central location on Bathhouse Row and being the most elegant of the bathhouses made it an ideal candidate. Cox authorized Southeast Regional Architect Edward Aschmann to conduct a preliminary study. In March, Aschmann evaluated the 31,000 square foot building and, based on Gregg's assertion that the family might accept a lower price of $100,000 to $125,000, he estimated the conversion would cost $75,000, combined with $80,000 for exhibits, audio-visual equipment, and furnishings, for a total of $280,000. That amount matched the 1958 estimate to build a visitor center on Arlington Lawn. Aschmann took the Region One's staff recommendations for an 8,375 square foot structure and compared it to the 13,115 square foot plan developed by Gregg and his staff. Gregg's version included such things as a fall-out shelter, separate lounges for men and women, and a special exhibit room on bathing and found these to be at odds and excessive to the regional office's vision. Operating such a center, Aschmann believed, would be two to four times more expensive. He noted:

> *"The park has made no statement as to how the space not needed for a visitor center will be used. If this surplus space is not utilized, it could lead to requests from other government agencies or private individuals for permission to use, which would not be compatible with service standards.*
>
> *"Although no parking area for visitors is shown on Master Plan NP-HS-3008E, at the new visitor center site, one could be provided if considered desirable. Parking cannot at present be provided at the Fordyce Bathhouse."*

Aschmann concluded by recommending NPS stay with the 1958 master plan drawing already approved by Director Wirth.[1118] In response, Cox informed Gregg that while "your proposal has a great deal of merit… the practical considerations as set out [by]

[1116] Department of the Interior, Information Service, "Address by Conrad L. Wirth, Director, National Park Service, Dedication of Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center, Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas, October 2, 1960," for release October 3, 1960, no folder, HOSP 429/455; and "Physical Med Center Dedicated as Memorial to Donald Libbey," *Sentinel Record,* 3 October 1960, Library Vertical File: Hot Springs Physical Medicine Center.

[1117] In 1962, NPS wanted to add clarity to its regional alignments and instead of numbers, switched to geographic place names. Region One became Southeast Region.

[1118] Regional Architect Edward Aschmann to Regional Director Elbert Cox, 15 March 196, D22 Fordyce Bathhouse.

Aschmann… lead me to the conclusion that the better course is to proceed with the original plan." Cox also stated that land acquisition funds were "grossly inadequate" but "if the building were already in Government ownership or could be donated, then we might justify its conversion and use for a Visitor Center."[1119]

News of the rejection for utilizing Fordyce Bathhouse as a visitor center by upper NPS management slowly filtered out and the family resorted to political pressure to reverse that decision. In similar letters sent to Arkansas U.S. Senators John L. McClellan and William Fulbright, Downs Lander Fordyce explained the family's plight and pushed for converting "this fine building to the use of the United States National Park Visitor's Center." She argued:

> *"Tourists to Hot Springs, Arkansas, are increasing each year but bathers are steadily declining from past years. Bath House Row would benefit by the deletion of the largest competitor as there are too many now for the business involved. All of the bath houses are operating at a loss now but fewer establishments with a more modern program in connection with the springs and with parking areas available within the Park would have a better chance to prosper. Arkansas is allowing an unusual natural resource to become a past attraction. A visitor's center would help re-educate the public to take advantage of the health-giving waters and it would provide a more wholesome entertainment for visitors than the racing season and gambling houses. We concur with the Park officials on the need for such a center.*"

Downs Lander Fordyce asked that if the senators could not get NPS to buy the Fordyce Bathhouse, "would you help us gain permission to convert [it] to some respectable business more in demand by the public?"[1120] Responses to the senators from Interior and NPS stated that while the proposal was interesting, a feasibility study would be required before any decision could be made.

With new life breathed into his proposal, an excited H. Raymond Gregg assured Elbert Cox that while he supported the concept, he had done nothing to encourage the Fordyce family to go the political route to circumvent Cox's decision. Gregg still believed the Fordyce partners would accept $100,000 to $125,000 for the building. He disagreed with several points in her letters, as follows:

> *"The Fordyce partners are steadily losing money, with little prospect of bringing the operation into the black. However, Mrs. Fordyce's estimate that all houses are losing, and the whole bathing industry is hopeless and on the decline is not entirely accurate. A nice increase in over-all bathhouse business volume is in prospect for the 1961 calendar year, and in 1959 there was an increase over 1958. A slump in 1960 was negligible*

[1119] Regional Director Cox to Superintendent Gregg, 3 April 1961, D22 Fordyce Bathhouse.
[1120] Downs Lander Fordyce to Senators McClellan and Fulbright, letters, 4 October 1961, D22 Fordyce Bathhouse.

> *percentage-wise. Hot Springs has never enjoyed such general business prosperity and heavy visitation as it has had throughout this calendar year…. In this situation I consider the bathing industry far from decadent, and with the present momentum, and accelerated promotion, we should see a steady upward trend. Poor management and decline in quality of service at the Fordyce have been substantially responsible for the loss of business, but the Fordyce also suffers from its former excellence, in that its rate structure is the highest on Bathhouse Row, and the customer trend is away from elegance represented in proportions and fittings of this establishment."*[1121]

NPS Assistant Director, Design and Construction, A. Clark Stratton directed that a scheduled concessions operations study team also undertake the proposed Fordyce visitor center feasibility study. Onsite January 31 through February 2, 1962, the team consisted of the following members: Wilson George, chief, branch of contracts, concessions division, and Edwin Kenner, chief of operations and maintenance, both from the Washington Office; Southeast Region Chief of Concessions Management Gus Muehlenhaupt; Museum Specialist James Mulcahy of the Museum Laboratory; Southeast Region Architect Ed Aschmann; and Architect Walter Roth, Eastern Office of Design and Construction. Edwin Kenner emerged as the coordinator for the ad hoc committee. Kenner's team inspected the bathhouse and produced floor plan diagrams. They met with hotel managers and bathhouse concessioners, Fordyce family members, and park staff where the team informed Gregg "there was considerably more space in the Fordyce building than was deemed necessary or desirable for a visitor center." A session with the family revolved around various schemes for offering other commercial services, all of which were inconsistent with NPS policies. As for a reinvigorated program of bathing and relaxation there, the family appeared "totally without enthusiasm" and they admitted that "all they want is out." Architect Walter Roth estimated, at minimum, with 19,000 square feet and utilizing $10 per square foot, a conversion of the first and second floors could be accomplished at $190,000. For all floors, using a higher cost factor, he estimated it would be $435,000. However, Roth believed the ideal solution was to demolish both the Fordyce and Maurice Bathhouses opening up the monumental grand formal entrance connecting to the Grand Promenade, and then "a light and airy, modern, semi-pavilion visitor center could be erected at the perfect site."[1122]

Regional Director Elbert Cox asked Director Wirth to insure all due speed be taken with the feasibility study because Fordyce partners continued to devise new schemes to improve their economic plight which "are inconsistent with public interest and the policies of the Service." He also shared the views of his regional architect. According to Ed Aschmann, the first floor contained all the space needed for an NPS visitor center with the remaining floors available for other uses such as "research

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[1121] Superintendent Gregg to Regional Director Cox, 9 November 1961, D22 Fordyce Bathhouse.

[1122] Chief Robert G. Hall, Eastern Office of Design and Construction, to Assistant Director Stratton, 23 February 1962, with excerpts from Architect Roth's trip report, C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse. Roth estimated the cost to the Fordyce family, should the partnership be forced to demolish the bathhouse and restore the site to natural conditions, would be a minimum of $20,000.

laboratory, art museum, meeting rooms for cultural groups, etc." Aschmann revealed the difference of opinion among the ad hoc team concerning the practicability and economic impacts of the conversion. Aschmann pointed out Roth's preliminary figures did not include costs for exhibits, furniture, and audio-visual needs. Using 19,000 square feet and including these amenities, the total cost would be $275,600, or $85,600 more than Roth's minimum estimate. Add to that the price of buying out Fordyce interests at $100,000 or more, and Aschmann concluded the uneconomical infeasibility of the project became clear. Aschmann agreed with Roth the ideal solution would be to demolish both bathhouses surrounding the grand entrance to build a new visitor center.[1123]

Superintendent Gregg expressed amazement and disappointment at the high preliminary estimates for the conversion and believed restricting it to only the first floor would keep costs down. Adjusting costs with a low acquisition bid could keep expenditures to the $280,000 level. He argued, "The indirect advantages to the Service and the welfare of the whole concession operation in this Park by removing the Fordyce Bathhouse from the bathing business fully support extraordinary considerations in this instance." Pointing to an estimate of $300,000 for a Mount Rushmore National Memorial visitor center, Gregg believed "It is not unreasonable to invest a comparable amount for a visitor center in a Park than enjoys our volume and intensity of visitation." He criticized the practicality of demolishing two grand bathhouses whose leases did not expire until the early 1970s. Gregg concluded, "We would like to think a visitor center for this Park can be provided within the MISSION 66 period. The Roth proposal would put it far in the future. We earnestly urge careful re-analysis of objectives and costs, with our assistance."[1124]

Robert G. Hall, chief of the Eastern Office of Design and Construction weighed in on the matter by concurring with both Roth and Aschmann that building a new structure at the grand entrance was the better option as opposed to converting Fordyce into a visitor center. Hall opposed purchasing it outright and pointed to problems with circulation and parking, which he believed favored the original Master Plan location. Another option would be to use the park administration building for a visitor center.[1125]

Ad hoc team coordinator Edwin Kenner, Washington Office chief of operations and maintenance, recognized five positive aspects of the Fordyce conversion, as follows:

> *"(1) adequately serve a segment of the population, the 'oldsters,' not often considered though increasing in number at a rapid rate; (2) preserve as in place exhibit an outstanding example of the grand style of the spa of yesteryear; (3) stimulate research by making space available to universities and students as a base for field operations; (4) enhance local public relations by providing for and permitting local cultural and civic*

[1123] Regional Director Cox to Director Wirth, 4 April 1962, with enclosure: Regional Architect Aschmann to Regional Director Cox, 29 March 1962, C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse.
[1124] Superintendent Gregg to Regional Director Cox, 10 April 1962, C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse.
[1125] Chief EODC Hall to Assistant Director Stratton, 12 April 1962, C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse.

groups to meet in the building; and (5) provide space for a fallout shelter capable of accommodating approximately 700 people."

For those reasons, Kenner advocated for the $350,000 conversion, including cost of acquisition.[1126]

It was Kenner who compiled opinions of all feasibility study team members. He noted Museum Specialist James Mulcahy held the space was not ideal but "preserving a portion of the building as an in place exhibit" was sound and could be developed into a usable visitor center. Recognizing the diversity of viewpoints, Kenner wrote: "The Committee agreed unanimously that it would be possible to convert the Fordyce Bathhouse to a Visitor Center but as to practicability, economic considerations, and other pertinent factors of doing so, each member of the Committee held views that precluded formulating any specific recommended course of action." With the team unable to reach consensus, Kenner recommended all viewpoints be presented to Elbert Cox, Robert Hall, and H. Raymond Gregg "for their respective comments and recommendation and upon the receipt thereof the problem be presented to the Director for decision."[1127]

FORDYCE BATHHOUSE CLOSES ITS DOORS, 1962

As NPS struggled internally to decide a course of action, the Fordyce partnership applied for a six-month suspension of their contract in the spring of 1962 covering the last six months of the calendar year. Recognizing that some of the internal management problems precipitated the request, Superintendent Gregg saw it as "the first victim" of a struggling bathing industry exacerbated by the NPS decision in 1946 to extend thermal water contracts to the point of over-expansion. In a memorandum to Regional Director Cox, Gregg revealed that the Mountain Valley Water Company, a local mineral water distributor, showed interest in acquiring and operating the bathhouse if agreement could be reached with NPS on utilizing surplus space for its business uses. Gregg recommended that the contract relief be granted until December 31, 1962, and he be given authority to waive third and fourth quarter payment of Fordyce tubbage charges.[1128]

While the issue of granting a six-month suspension made the rounds of the Washington Office, Superintendent Gregg made his pitch to Director Wirth. He stressed there was no ideal solution and was dubious another concessioner could be found, but he did not want the Fordyce "to stand as an empty witness of a decaying Park, and a depressant to morale of the bathing industry." On circulation and parking being superior at the Arlington Lawn site claiming valuable open green space, he challenged that option,

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[1126] Kenner, "Position Summery Regarding Feasibility of Acquiring and Adapting the Fordyce Bathhouse for Use as a Visitor Center, Hot Springs National Park," 1 May 1962,, C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse.
[1127] Edwin C. Kenner, Coordinator, Ad Hoc Committee for the Fordyce Bathhouse Study, to Assistant Director Stratton, 28 May 1962, C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse.
[1128] Superintendent Gregg to Regional Director Cox, 4 June 1962. C. Powell Fordyce cited "circumstances beyond our control, which we believe warrant closing the Fordyce Bathhouse, consist of the drastic and inexorable decline in the number of persons who wish to take the hot mineral baths in Hot Springs, Arkansas." See Fordyce to Superintendent Gregg, letter, 29 May 1962, both in C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse.

arguing, "There is excellent prospect additional off-street parking on Central Avenue opposite the Fordyce will be developed before it could be readied as a visitor center. Opposite the Master Plan site on Fountain Street there is no opportunity to develop more off-street parking because of the Arlington Hotel. Hotel guest parking, and parking for special events and local affairs at the Arlington would make the situation hopeless for visitors trying to park near this site." He scoffed at the notion of converting the administration building to visitor center purposes, preferring instead to remove the museum exhibit room for needed office, utility, and public comfort station space. He noted, "The latter are a sadly neglected need. Hundreds of people, including many who are elderly or infirm, daily spend considerable time drinking the thermal water at fountains adjacent to headquarters. Strong urine odors around nearby shrubbery are convincing olfactory arguments for public comfort facilities at headquarters."[1129]

In January 1962, NPS conducted a comprehensive study of the bathing industry with a team of specialists analyzing what was needed to modernize Hot Springs bathhouses utilizing hydrotherapeutic innovations. The goal was to have all concessioners using modern equipment and techniques. Superintendent Gregg envisioned an expansion of bathing three to four times greater than present use, declaring "With proper handling and management, I am confident this could be increased to between 1.5 and 2 million baths per year. The present facilities are capable of serving more than 1 million baths per year. The plants, with adjustments in equipment and procedures, could possibly increase to 1.5 million."[1130] While Gregg was successful in selling the concept to the other concessioners, he failed to convince the Fordyce partnership. All Bathhouse Row establishments except the Fordyce agreed to the pilot installation of whirlpool baths for which medical prescriptions would not be required. He argued, "No one is being coerced, but those who lose the benefit of the initial momentum and promotion will suffer competitively."[1131] The family remained adamantly against participating and, two months later, applied for relief and closure.

While all parties waited for the Washington Office to act, Superintendent Gregg remained in close contact with C. Powell Fordyce who had traveled to Washington, D.C., to lobby Congress, Interior, and NPS. Gregg speculated that if NPS decided not to purchase the bathhouse it might be disposed to a sale to Mountain Valley Water Company if they agreed to continue bathing services and confine their use of other areas of the building to other than direct commercial sales. He reminded Fordyce of his pledge to donate land the family owned in Gulpha Gorge for campground expansion and highway realignment should NPS grant the relief the family desired.[1132]

[1129] Superintendent Gregg to Director Wirth, 15 June 1962, C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse.
[1130] "Experts to Make Study: Modernization of Spa Bathing Industry Planned," *Arkansas Democrat*, 7 January 1962, File: Bathhouses, Box 48, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.
[1131] Superintendent Gregg to C. Powell Fordyce, letters, 9 and 27 March 1962, C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse.
[1132] Superintendent Gregg to C. Powell Fordyce, letter, 21 June 1962, C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse. Gregg said NPS was developing a legal description, plat sketch, and draft deed on the Gorge "triangle of land" he had previously discussed with Fordyce.

On June 29, 1962, Assistant Director, Office of Chief Counsel, Jackson E. Price sent a telegram to C. Powell Fordyce with the long-awaited answer. Price said NPS lacked legal authority to suspend the contract, but "since there are adequate facilities for bathing the general public, the Fordyce Bathhouse will not be required to provide services for the period requested. However, should NPS find that bathing facilities at the Fordyce Bathhouse were needed to accommodate demand by park visitors," the partnership would be required to resume operations. With the approval in hand, Fordyce ordered the family business to close its doors at noon the following day.[1133]

A public relations-minded H. Raymond Gregg spun the Fordyce Bathhouse closure to the public saying all the bathhouses were undertaking a modernization program by installing new whirlpool therapeutic facilities. The Fordyce was suspending operations "pending conclusion of negotiations on reorganization and plant redevelopment now underway between the owners and the Department of the Interior." The industry-wide effort with whirlpool tubs was a "new method" which employed "air-charged, impelled agitation of the thermal water in the tubs, at temperatures higher than now possible in the still waters, producing improved therapeutic effects in the baths." He expected the modernization effort to be completed by October 1. "Operating and plant problems" necessitated the suspension of operations at the Fordyce "pending resolution of these problems." Other bathhouses would accommodate Fordyce patrons with the same hydrotherapy services. The crafty move worked. When the Fordyce Bathhouse quietly closed its doors—never to reopen again as a commercial establishment—there was no panic among the concessioners or the public.[1134]

Having been granted temporary relief from contractual obligations, C. Powell Fordyce confirmed the family offer to deed 2.9 acres of land required for Gulpha Gorge highway relocation. The donation was contingent upon $500 consideration from local interests in the road project. Gregg responded that the funds would be forthcoming from local Rotarians Hill Wheatley and W. R. Perry once NPS accepted title. Gregg continued to urge the family to find a buyer during the six-month suspension. He wrote: "Due to the divided opinion on the Visitor Center proposal, I am sure our Regional and Washington Offices will greatly prefer a sale of the bathhouse to new owners who will operate it to any other solution, including conversion to a Visitor Center."[1135]

BRIEF SUPERINTENDENCY OF ROBERT H. ATKINSON, 1962-1963

In the meantime, events continued to unfold. H. Raymond Gregg accepted a promotion and transfer to the superintendency of Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis, departing after August 21. Gregg's replacement, Robert H. Atkinson,

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[1133] *Annual Report for 1962.*

[1134] News Release for July 1, 1962; "Bathhouses Modernizing Therapeutic Facilities," *Arkansas Gazette*, 1 July 1962; and "Fordyce Baths to Convert to New Therapy Methods," *Sentinel Record*, 1 July 1962; all in C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse. A contract to supply bathhouses with whirlpool bath equipment went to the Hot Springs Surgical Supply Company. See *Annual Report for 1962.*

[1135] Quotation from Superintendent Gregg to C. Powell Fordyce, letter 27 July 1962, and Fordyce to Gregg, letter, 24 July 1962, both in C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse.

transferred from the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Sites, in New York. Atkinson entered on duty as Hot Springs superintendent on September 2, 1962. A week prior to Gregg's departure, the Federal Registration Board urged Director Conrad L. Wirth to acquire and convert the Fordyce Bathhouse to the park's proposed visitor center.[1136] This did little to encourage the family partnership. Instead, they were already contemplating selling the inventory of sheets and towels on hand and preparing to request a year-long extension as their six-month relief period wound down.[1137] Indeed, the request to keep the bathhouse shuttered through the end of 1963 came on December 6, citing the continued decline in thermal baths at Hot Springs. The superintendent recommended the request be granted.[1138]

Unbeknownst to the public it began to appear that Fordyce Bathhouse might never re-open for bathing purposes again. Business on Bathhouse Row continued a steady decline. Indeed, it became a yearly ritual for the Fordyce family partnership to request closure every calendar year thereafter until the Fordyce Bathhouse's lease period expired in 1974, and the contractual relationship terminated.[1139]

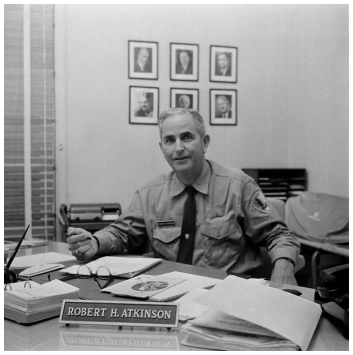

Figure 174. Robert H. Atkinson (Courtesy of Arkansas History Commission)

Horace and Grace Albright spent more than a week at Hot Springs in October 1961. Mrs. Albright received hydrotherapy treatment at the Libbey Center for an arthritic condition. Absent from Hot Springs for three decades, the former NPS director and his wife were entertained by park staff. The couple was hosted by the Bathhouse Association to a cocktail party and dinner at the Arlington Hotel on October 31, 1961.[1140]

In interpretation, the park museum closed July 17-21 for the installation of new exhibits, and the public was given an opportunity to see them when museum hours were extended until 9:00 p.m. for the last three days of July. Eastern National Park and Monument Association began its involvement at Hot Springs National Park when it purchased several publications for the park library. Yet another staff change came on

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[1136] Albert H. Tribble, M.D., President, Federal Registration Board, Hot Springs National Park, to Director Wirth, letter, 15 August 1962, A18 Federal Registration Board, 1953-1962.
[1137] C. Powell Fordyce to B. L. Neimeyer, Manager, Fordyce Bathhouse, letter, 5 November 1962, File 17, Box 12, Manuscript Collection, Fordyce Family Papers 1311, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Fordyce offered Neimeyer a ten percent commission if he sold the property to a non-government entity. He inquired if the city, since it was about to build a new civic center, might be interested in the Fordyce Bathhouse for that purpose.
[1138] C. Powell Fordyce to Superintendent Robert H. Atkinson, letter, 6 December 1962, and Superintendent Atkinson to Regional Director Cox, 10 December 1962, both in C3823 Fordyce Bathhouse.
[1139] Examples of annual letters can be found in the "Concessions Binder," HOSP 530, Box 2, HSNP Archives.
[1140] *Annual Report for 1962*; and Horace Albright to D. L. Libbey, letter 8 September 196l, Albright to Superintendent Gregg, letter 8 September 1961, and Gregg to Albright, letter, 15 September 1961, all in Folder 3: NPS Correspondence 1961, Box 37, Manuscript Collection 2056, Horace M. Albright Papers, Special Collections, University of California, Los Angeles.

November 4, 1961, when Chief Park Naturalist Charles F. Adams transferred to National Capital Parks. His replacement, Robert W. Carpenter from Haleakala National Park, entered on duty February 25, 1962.

Improvements during fiscal year 1962 were varied. NPS contracted for a new air-cooled heat exchange plant for the thermal water system. NPS used it as the primary cooling system for cooled thermal water mixing for desired tub temperatures. It retained the water-cooled system for emergency and high demand periods. At Gulpha Gorge Campground, the upper picnic area became a tent and pick-up camping site. New trash receptacles, tables, and fireplaces were installed and a road extended through the campground. Crews built a new area for picnicking at the opposite end of the campground. At the Libbey Center, the old Spring Street water outlet was removed and a new jug fountain placed on the Reserve Avenue side of the building.[1141]

When the Hot Springs City Council entertained a proposal to close a section of Canyon Street from Central Avenue to "unopened" Whippoorwill Street, Superintendent Atkinson sprang into action. Atkinson reminded the city of the 1880 law establishing titles wherein any portion of the street system abandoned for public use as roadways automatically reverts to government ownership. Atkinson warned, "In event you give serious consideration to abandoning this as a street, it will be necessary that I notify the director of the National Park Service of your proposed action, with the recommendation that he take whatever steps that he considers appropriate to protect the interest of the government. Conceivably this might involve court action." The superintendent wanted to keep the street open to provide access to NPS fire-fighting equipment for access to potential fires on West Mountain. Further, the street served as a terminus to the popularly used Canyon Trail and NPS did not wish ingress or egress from it impaired. Once explained, the NPS position was honored and the city dismissed the proposed closure.[1142]

Not all the news of 1962 related to the bathing industry was gloomy. The Libbey Physical Medicine Center, four years in operation, reported rapid growth in its services to the point where it could offer lower rates. After three years, the facility became self-sustaining. By the end of the year, all fifteen government-regulated bathhouses had completed installation of new stainless steel whirlpool thermal tubs and received training on their therapeutic uses. On New Year's Day 1963, the new services became available to the public. Superintendent Atkinson lauded the upgrade as bringing thermal bathing at Hot Springs National Park to a new level of technical, medical, and scientific progress.

[1141] *Annual Report for 1962*; and National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Historic American Engineering Record No. AR-4, *Written Historical and Descriptive Data, Hot Springs National Park, Bathhouse Row: Mechanical and Piping Systems*, Hot Springs National Park, Garland County, Arkansas (Washington, D.C.: Historic American Engineering Record, National Park Service, 1987), 22.

[1142] Quotation from "Efforts at Closing Street Dropped as NPS Head Intervenes," no date, and "Request for Closing of Section of Canyon Street To Be Studied," 6 November 1962, *Sentinel Record*, File: National Park Service, Box 51, , Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

He noted that many of the bathhouse patrons seeking relaxation and physical restoration were former servicemen and women who had enjoyed the waters during wartime.[1143]

Another eye-opening exposé on gambling appeared in an unlikely national publication. The March 19 edition of *Sports Illustrated*, in its widely-read article entitled "The Hottest Spring in Hot Springs," proclaimed "That's the forecast for this jumping Arkansas town where gambling is wide open, the track is fast and the fishing is fine." The author noted that FBI men were among the visitors in town observing the festival atmosphere of Hot Springs. He wrote:

> *"Hot Springs, sometimes celebrated as the Paris of the Bible Belt, attracts characters and crowds galore because it has something for almost anyone…. At times it seems as though the town was dreamed up in a collaboration of W. C. Fields and the Mayo brothers. Besides legal betting on the horses at Oaklawn Park, there is illegal gambling—craps, roulette, chuck-a-luck, bingo, blackjack, slots, you name it—at the lavish casinos."*

Opposite Bathhouse Row, it seemed any vice could be fulfilled. "Home-owned and operated" clubs like The Vapors, Belvedere, and The Southern Club joined a half dozen smaller casinos including two for African Americans: the Atmosphere and Cameo. The city imposed a monthly tax of $500 for "a large place" and $200 for "a small place," all deposited in the Hot Springs Municipal Auditorium and Civic Improvement Fund. The city expected to net $80,000 during 1962 from the fund.[1144]

Under Secretary of the Interior John A. Carver approved a new thermal water concession for fifty tubs to the Aristocrat Motor Inn on September 25, 1962. Under this new policy, Interior no longer permitted placing tubs in individual rooms. Because the facility did not want to operate an exclusive bathhouse, when the Aristocrat opened, it did so without benefit of the thermal water. Incensed over the granting of a new contract, the Bathhouse Association managers and their attorney journeyed to the capital to meet with Carver and protest Interior's decision. Nonetheless, Interior accepted another application for twenty tubs from Hill Wheatley Enterprises, Inc., for the proposed Downtowner Motor Inn on Central Avenue. In order to see Hot Springs National Park and understand its issues, Under Secretary Carver and his wife visited on November 9 and 10 and toured several bathhouses, observation tower, and mountain road system.

[1143] "Libbey Physical Therapy Center Has Experienced Rapid Growth," *Houston Post*, 20 May 1962, Library Vertical File: Hot Springs Physical Medicine Center; "New Whirlpool Bath Seen As Boon To Hot Springs Bathing Industry," *Sentinel Record,* 30 December 1962, File: Bathhouses, Box 48, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville; and U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Hot Springs National Park, "Guidelines and Directions for Introduction and Use of Whirlpool Tubs in Bathhouses," no date, A18 Federal Registration Board, 1953-1962.

[1144] Robert H. Boyle, "The Hottest Spring in Hot Springs," *Sports Illustrated*, Vol. 16, 19 March 1962, File: Gambling, Box 50, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

Two thermal water concessioners lost their contracts in fiscal year 1963. When NPS learned that all properties of Jack Tar of Arkansas, Inc., had been sold without any prior negotiation or notification with the government, NPS Assistant Director for Operations Jackson E. Price threatened the new owner with termination. Apparently the new owner did not want to operate the Jack Tar Bathhouse any longer and the contract was cancelled and thermal water shut-off after the thirty-day notification period expired. In October 1962, the building accommodating the Rockafellow Bathhouse received a city condemnation notice. The building was demolished several months later, but the actual Rockafellow contract termination agreement was not signed until April 11, 1963.

Campground developments continued in 1963. Twenty-five additional trailer parking spurs and three separate parking areas were added. Gulpha Gorge Campground also received topsoil and landscaping treatments. By the end of the year, all necessary land for the proposed campground enlargement and road realignment had been acquired except for the 2.9-acre Fordyce tract.[1145]

In March 1963, Director Conrad Wirth weighed in on the proposed MISSION 66 visitor center for Hot Springs National Park. The MISSION 66 edition of the park's master plan, prepared in July 1961, languished in the Washington Office as issues related to the Fordyce Bathhouse played out. On March 18, 1963, Director Wirth signed the long-delayed master plan but with specific sections of the original draft section on "Objectives and Policies" expunged. Crossed-out were all provisions for a new visitor center. The final sanitized document no longer contained any discussion of a visitor center. As long as the Fordyce Bathhouse remained unsold and empty, Hot Springs National Park would not move forward with visitor center funding. Director Wirth had washed his hands of the visitor center controversy entirely.[1146]

A CIVIL RIGHTS TEST, 1963

The national civil rights movement came to Hot Springs National Park and Bathhouse Row in late March 1963. As early as September 1962, NPS had posted notices in the lobbies of all concession bathhouses stating race-based discrimination was not permitted by order of the park superintendent. A few applications for baths had been made by African Americans since the notices were posted, but no one had returned for service until the morning of March 28, 1963, when two black men appeared at the Buckstaff Bathhouse. For years, the Buckstaff had proudly advertised it was the exclusive Row bathhouse that employed white attendants.[1147] The two men, both representatives of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

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[1145] *Annual Report for 1963.*

[1146] U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of Hot Springs National Park, MISSION 66 Edition*, approved by NPS Director Conrad L. Wirth, March 18, 1963. See Vol. I, Chapter 1, Objectives and Policies, line-outs or strike-throughs concerning the visitor center appear on pages 7-10, HSNP Archives.

[1147] For example, a 1944 Buckstaff Baths advertisement read, in part, "The Buckstaff Baths, Complete. Sanitary. Convenient. Under Government Supervision. Service: The only bath house employing White Attendants. This means Courtesy, Cleanliness and Efficiency." See Buckstaff Bath House advertisement, circa 1944, RG 79, Entry 7, Box 1222.

(NAACP) presented themselves for baths at 9:10 a.m. They were turned away. Following this incident, a two-hour meeting took place in Superintendent Atkinson's office between the Buckstaff manager; two NAACP members; Rev. James Donald Rice, president of the recently organized local NAACP office; and local minister Rev. Donald Brown. At the conclusion of the conference, the manager assured the group that the two men would be accommodated for baths at 1:30 p.m. When the appointed time came, the men were accepted as patrons without further incident.[1148]

SUPERINTENDENCY OF BERNARD T. CAMPBELL, 1963-1973

Tragedy struck again when Robert H. Atkinson was killed instantly in an automobile accident on June 7, 1963. Atkinson and his wife were on vacation visiting relatives, when the accident occurred near Richland Center, Wisconsin. Atkinson's wife and niece were in the car but were not seriously injured.[1149] Courtland Reid served as acting superintendent until NPS Director Conrad L. Wirth appointed Bernard T. "Bernie" Campbell Hot Springs National Park's twenty-fifth superintendent. Campbell transferred from the superintendency of Shiloh National Military Park, Tennessee, and entered on duty December 1, 1963.

Figure 175. Bernard T. Campbell (HSNP 13381, National Park Service)

The same month as Atkinsons tragic death, the city of Hot Springs received more bad news. The Missouri Pacific Railroad, which operated two passenger trains between Little Rock and Hot Springs announced it would be ending service as of January 20, 1964. The railroad company said that it was no longer profitable to operate passenger lines; private automobiles, rental cars, and airline service had become the primary mode of travel.[1150]

A natural disaster stuck the following month. Gentle sprinkles preceded a cloudburst with 8.31 inches of rain sending a five-foot wave of muddy floodwater cascading down Central Avenue on July 16, 1963. Downtown businesses were inundated with four feet of water. A house-sized boulder broke loose on North Mountain and tumbled sixty-yards, coming to rest next to the De Soto Hotel. Acting Superintendent Reid ordered all bathhouses closed until the thermal reservoir could be inspected and

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[1148] "Spa's Bath House Row Is Quietly Integrated," *Sentinel Record,* 29 March 1963, File: Bathhouses, Box 48, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. The two NAACP representatives were M. T. Blanton, NAACP vice president from Chicago, Illinois, and Henry Harden, president of the National Bowling Association, Detroit, Michigan. Already integrated were the Levi and St. Joseph's Hospital. In *Annual Report for 1963,* Acting Superintendent Courtland T. Reid said the Buckstaff turned the men away because the "bath halls were crowded in the morning. Messrs. Blanton and Harden considered the action as delaying tactics and asked for a conference with the Superintendent."

[1149] *Annual Report for 1963.*

[1150] "Passenger Trains On Hot Springs Run To Be Eliminated," *Sentinel Record*, 12 June 1963, File: Railroads, Missouri Pacific, Box 52, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

cleaned. Bathhouse Row basements again were flooded. Despite signs posted at public thermal fountains cautioning about potential contamination, many people continued to fill their jugs. The flood did little to the city's "wide open" gambling industry. The three big casinos maintained operations and patrons in downtown cafes and bars continued plugging coins into slot machines as floodwaters swirled at their feet.[1151]

DIVESTITURE OF BATHHOUSE ROW EFFORT, 1963

While there was no public announcement concerning the proposed visitor center being deleted from NPS's MISSION 66 program, planning was taking place within the bureau and Interior to divest Hot Springs National Park of Bathhouse Row and the Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center entirely. On May 9, 1963, Regional Director Elbert Cox advised the director: "We feel that if the bathhouses are to be sold we should divest ourselves of all rights and interests in the property on which they are located. This would give maximum emphasis to the physical separation of this area from the Park, without loss of essential park values." The Southeast Region recommended NPS retain ownership and easements on the following utilities:

Figure 176. Eastern National sales clerk behind visitor center information desk in the days following President John F. Kennedy's assassination, November 26, 1963 (HSNP 10555, National Park Service)

1. Thermal water collection and distribution systems
2. Hot Springs Creek Arch
3. Thermal springs, some of which are under some of the bathhouses
4. Display springs be retained with a right of access from the street as well as from the mall
5. Power distribution system at rear of Superior Bathhouse[1152]

Delivery of the bombshell came in the form of a letter to President John F. Kennedy from Assistant Secretary of the Interior John A. Carver. The purpose of his "vacation" with his wife to Hot Springs National Park the previous year now became clear. Carver enclosed a draft bill entitled "To authorize the disposition of certain property at Hot Springs National Park, in the State of Arkansas, and for other purposes." The bill authorized Interior to convey nine parcels of land upon which bathhouse concessions were located to their respective concessioners at fair market value, less the value of their improvements.

[1151] Richard Allin, "Mud Darkens Glitter Of Spa As Businessmen Count Cost," *The Commercial Appeal* (Memphis, Tennessee, morning edition), 17 July 1963, and "Nine-Hour Rain Swamps Streets Of Hot Springs: Bathhouses Forced To Close As Gamblers Splash Way To Slot Machines," *The Commercial Appeal* (evening edition), 17 July 1963, both in Library Vertical File: 1963 Flood in Hot Springs.
[1152] Regional Director Cox to Director Wirth, 9 May 1963, C3823 (found in boxed files from Superior Bathhouse removed to Administration Building).

It covered all eight bathhouses on Bathhouse Row in addition to the Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center. The draft bill also authorized conveyance to the City of Hot Springs without compensation the sidewalks and other municipal amenities adjoining the tracts. While excluded from park boundaries, Interior could retain easements and right-of-way for NPS use. Each concessioner would be allowed two years in which to accept conveyance via purchase, after which time the excluded real estate could be disposed of per the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, with compensation to the concessioner for improvements. Other provisions of the draft bill repealed legislation regarding bathing regulations, including abolition of the Federal Registration Board, with Interior continuing to supply thermal water at market rates. Carver declared, "Enactment of this legislation will place all users of hot water from the Government-owned springs on the same basis and will greatly facilitate administration of Hot Springs National Park."[1153]

Figure 177. "Vacationing" Assistant Secretary John Carver in business suit with left to right Chief Ranger Frostie Freeman, Asst. Superintendent H. Gordon Bender, and Superintendent Robert Atkinson, November 9, 1962 (HSNP 10158, National Park Service)

Carver explained to President Kennedy why it was necessary to divest the Arkansas national park of its Bathhouse Row and Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center. Because they remained within national park boundaries, the concessions were subject to additional controls. He added,

> *"They are, therefore, unable to pursue additional lines of business which might provide further income. This situation has given rise to problems of administration and in general has been unsatisfactory from the standpoint of the economy of the bathhouses located within the park.*
>
> *"By providing for their exclusion from the park, the proposed legislation will place these bathhouses on an equal basis with bathhouses outside the park and provide them an equal competitive opportunity for financial success."*[1154]

He detailed the decline in bathing and the fact that hotels and bathhouses outside Hot Springs National Park were able to compensate by introducing "additional cosmetic and

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[1153] Assistant Secretary of the Interior John A. Carver to President John F. Kennedy, letter, 16 October 1963, Folder: Fordyce Bathhouse (Building), Fordyce Bathhouse Court Case, Accession 33, HOSP 691, HSNP Archives. It is interesting to note that, while the letter originated from "Office of the Secretary," Assistant Secretary Carver signed it. This indicates he was willing to "take the heat" for his boss, Secretary Stewart L. Udall.

[1154] Ibid.

health services and aids to attract patrons other than those interested solely in bathing." Because this was not in accordance with the national park concept, bathhouses within the park were at a competitive disadvantage. Eliminating them from the park would not adversely impact public use and enjoyment. With 960 acres remaining, Carver wrote:

> *"The public will continue to receive the benefits of the hot water from the park since the water will continue to be furnished to bathhouse operators who wish it. Also, the numerous and varied recreational attractions of the park, such as hiking, camping, and picnicking will continue to be available to the visitor."*[1155]

While $25,500 metered water tubbage fees per annum would be foregone, the $30 per tub fee at $13,365 per annum would still be collected. "The loss of tubbage fees," he noted, "will be met in part by a savings in maintenance costs, estimated at about $6,750 per year."

Assistant Secretary Carver added that the sale of Bathhouse Row and Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center would net the United States a profit, less the value of improvements by concessioners on Bathhouse Row. The Libbey Center was already in government ownership. He told the president that "The Bureau of the Budget has advised that there is no objection to the presentation of this draft bill from the standpoint of the Administration's program." Further, the Department of the Interior recommended the bill be "referred to the appropriate committee for consideration, and we recommend its enactment."[1156]

The decades-long perception in the community that Interior and NPS would like to divest itself of Hot Springs National Park, or at least Bathhouse Row, was about to be validated. Carver's letter to President Kennedy and the draft bill was published in the *Congressional Record* on October 21. An aide to Senator John L. McClellan's (D.-Ark.) sent a copy to C. M. King, president of the Bathhouse Association.[1157] Three days later, Senator Alan Bible (D.-Nev.), chairman of the subcommittee of the Senate Interior Committee, introduced Interior's draft bill in the U.S. Senate as S. 2255. Soon after, Acting Superintendent Courtland T. Reid first officially shared the news and draft bill with bathhouse managers. Reid reported that it was being "widely circulated" and that the "negative response" was "growing in intensity."[1158] A week later, he added: "Opposition has steadily increased as more persons have been made aware of the proposal, and such opposition apparently is unanimous." A local committee called on Governor Orval Faubus to lead the opposition and get the legislation killed in committee.[1159] Following Senator Bible's lead, Representative Wayne Aspinall (D.-

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[1155] Ibid.
[1156] Ibid.
[1157] Legislative Assistant James E. Westbrook to C. M. King, letter, 1 November 1963, Lamar File, HSNP Archives. The information appeared on page 18839 of the *Congressional Record.*
[1158] Acting Superintendent Reid to Regional Director Cox, 7 November 1963, L1419, (found in boxed files from Superior Bathhouse removed to Administration Building).
[1159] Ibid., Reid to Cox, 31 November 1963.

Colo.) next introduced an identical companion bill in the House of Representatives on November 14, as H.R. 9133.[1160]

On November 19, the Hot Springs City Council met and adopted a resolution opposing the federal legislation. Mort Cox, secretary-manager of the Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce, declared the "real dangers" attached to the legislation. He stated it represented the first step toward abolishing Hot Springs National Park which would rob the city of its tourist industry. Further, with abolition of the Federal Registration Board, there would no longer be medical supervision of the thermal baths. He added that NPS would only be responsible to sell the thermal water to concessioners while no longer being responsible for government oversight of bathhouse operations. Others at the meeting echoed the fear of government abandonment of Hot Springs National Park. The resolution called on the Arkansas Congressional Delegation "to take whatever steps necessary to see that the legislation is withdrawn."[1161]

While opposition to Interior's move roiled Hot Springs and the state of Arkansas, their mood was tempered by the national shock and sadness caused by President John F. Kennedy's assassination and state funeral in late November 1963. As the nation mourned, the opposition continued to crystallize. While conceding there may have been some benevolent motivation on the part of Interior and NPS, bathhouse owners, patrons, Hot Springs business community, citizens, and the state's Congressional members unanimously agreed on three points:

> *1. While giving bathhouse management a freer hand, the loss of identification with the park would be the greater loss.*
>
> *2. Such an action would result in a lessening of the prestige of the park, with a resultant adverse economic effect.*
>
> *3. Such an action might be the first move to eliminate the Federal Reservation from National Park status.*[1162]

Senator McClellan and Representative Oren Harris (D.-Ark.) met with representatives of the Hot Springs community in late December and pledged they would work to see that neither bill reached the floors of either chamber.[1163]

[1160] Copies of both S. 225 and H.R. 9133 were attached to Carver's letter to Kennedy, found in Folder: Fordyce Bathhouse (Building), Fordyce Bathhouse Court Case, Accession 33, HOSP 691, HSNP Archives. Senator John W. Fullbright, assured the manager of the Moody Bathhouse, that he had already contacted Senator Bible to relate the unanimous local opposition, and it was likely the subcommittee would "not bring up the bill for action." See Senator Fullbright to Thelma M. Goodwin, letter, 21 November 1963, (found in boxed files from Superior Bathhouse removed to Administration Building).

[1161] "Council Opposes Sale of Bathhouse Row Land," *Sentinel Record*, 19 November 1963, File: Bathhouses, Box 48, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

[1162] "Political Consideration in the Management and Use of Hot Springs National Park," typewritten statement, no date [circa early 1970s], no folder, Administrative Archives HOSP 530, Box 3 (not sorted or catalogued).

Figure 178. Gulpha Gorge Campground Amphitheater stage, 1966 (HSNP 10653, National Park Service)

In January 1964, a change in the NPS directorship saw Conrad L. Wirth resign, having fallen out of favor with Secretary Udall, and George B. Hartzog became the bureau's seventh director. At Hartzog's request, briefing statements on problems facing the National Park Service were forwarded to his office in mid-January. Hot Springs National Park had two problem issues to report. The first was the question of disposing of bathhouses on park property or conceding to "local interests who oppose sale." The new director was informed: "Proposed legislation has met with strenuous opposition from Mayor, City Council, concessioners, and members of the local public. Congressional opposition is indicated." The second briefing statement problem involved an NAACP discrimination complaint in hotel bathhouses. Local NAACP President Rev. James D. Price had telegrammed Director Wirth and Secretary Udall about certain incidents. Reply telegrams stated an investigation was underway followed by a December meeting in Secretary Udall's office. The solution offered was "The Superintendent will attempt to resolve the matter with individual hotels."[1164]

Figure 179. Superintendent Bernard T. "Bernie" Campbell presents a 20-year service pin to Auto Mechanic James Hope, March 26, 1964 (HSNP 10153, National Park Service)

On the discrimination issue, an investigation revealed the De Soto Bathhouse had been guilty of race-based discriminatory practices. A stern letter to the guilty party came directly from Interior Secretary Stewart Udall. "Gentlemen," he wrote:

> *"It has been reported to me by the Assistant Superintendent of Hot Springs National Park that the officials and managers of De Soto Hotel and Baths, Inc., have been fully informed of my position respecting your failure to comply with the Nondiscrimination clause (Section 12) of*

[1163] Acting Superintendent Foster R. Freeman to Regional Director Cox, 3 January 1964, (found in boxed files from Superior Bathhouse removed to Administration Building).

[1164] Regional Director Cox to Director George B. Hartzog, 13 January, A6431, Folder 397, Box 32, Manuscript Collection 74 Series 1, George B. Hartzog Papers, Subject File Additions 1928, 1947-1988, Special Collections, Clemson University Libraries, Clemson, South Carolina. It should be noted Director Hartzog, a former superintendent of Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, was not a fan of Supintendent's Annual Reports. As NPS director, he freed superintendents of this chore, preferring briefing statements or summaries, at best. Therefore, there are no Annual Reports for most of his directorship, robbing NPS historians of a primary source of bureau and park history. Thankfully, the practice resumed in 1974.

your contract of May 7, 1959, with this Department.

"You will please take notice that full and complete compliance with said provisions will be required of your company and its management. Such compliance must be accomplished immediately. You are advised also that after a reasonable period following the date hereof a survey will be made to determine the circumstances of your compliance. In the event that breach of your contract continues, we shall be constrained to take all steps necessary to protect the interests of the Government."

On July 3, 1964, the day following passage and presidential signature of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352, 78 Stat. 241), NPS issued instructions against discrimination in the "registering of any guests at the hotels" in Hot Springs, Arkansas. A follow-up compliance review by NPS indicated no problems and the controversy ended.[1165]

While funding approval did not occur during the 1960s or 1970s for a visitor center, documenting the need for one made it into an update of the Hot Springs National Park Master Plan approved by Superintendent Campbell. Prepared by Assistant Chief Ranger Robert B. Kasparek, the park would continue to operate under the "Natural Area" category and an interpretive facility was needed primarily to free up space in the cramped Administration Building.[1166]

The bills to divest Bathhouse Row and the Libbey Center did not advance in Congress. Superintendent Campbell pronounced the effort "dead" in an August 1964 speech to the local Kiwanis Club.[1167] Perhaps the lasting legacy of this legislative failure was the re-awakening of the public and a noticeable intensification of interest by the Arkansas Congressional Delegation in the welfare of Hot Springs National Park.[1168]

Bernard Campbell seized every opportunity to report good news. For example, much was made about the 1,800,000 visitors to Hot Springs National Park during 1963, up from 994,344 in 1960. The chamber of commerce estimated the national park, centerpiece of the area's tourist industry, brought $40 million into the local economy.[1169]

[1165] Associate Director A. C. Stratton to Staff Assistant to Assistant Secretary Carver, 30 July 1964, A3217, Folder 1 1964 Weekly Reports, Box 144, Manuscript Collection 2056, Horace M. Albright Papers, Special Collections, University of California, Los Angeles.

[1166] U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of Hot Springs National Park*, approved by Superintendent Bernard T. Campbell, June 26, 1964.

[1167] "Bill to Cede Park Property Believed Dead," *Sentinel Record*, 13 August 1964, File: National Park Service, Box 51, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

[1168] "Political Consideration in the Management and Use of Hot Springs National Park," typewritten statement, no date [circa early 1970s], no folder, Administrative Archives HOSP 530, Box 3 (not sorted or catalogued).

[1169] "Hot Springs National Park Visited by 1,800,000 in 1963," *Sentinel Record* (mail-it-away edition), 16 February 1964, File: National Park Service, Box 51, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. The article stated Chief Park Naturalist Boyd Evison joined the park staff.

Illicit gambling again made headlines in 1964. After Governor Orval Faubus declared the persistent problem in Garland County a "local issue," the Arkansas House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly for a resolution demanding the governor enforce state law. A compliant Gov. Faubus issued an order on March 27 asking all the casinos to close. The "wide open" gambling industry closed down, quietly waiting out the political storm. As the private gambling clubs stayed closed, the city's economy nosedived. Hundreds were unemployed and conventions cancelled. In response, the chamber of commerce sponsored a petition drive to legalize the casinos and put a constitutional amendment on the ballot allowing up to ten casinos in Garland County subject to state and local taxes. In opposition, a statewide ministerial group called Churches United Against Gambling formed to fight the evil. The December election saw the amendment defeated. A chagrined governor again turned his head away as the private clubs in Hot Springs once again quietly reopened their doors.[1170]

The number of concessions increased in fiscal year 1965 and the struggling bathhouse industry re-examined itself. NPS issued two new thermal water contracts to the Aristocrat and Downtowner Motor Inn, which brought the total number of concessions to twenty. The Hot Springs Bath House Association paid New York City firm EBS Management Consultants to conduct a thorough evaluation of the industry in order to improve their collective economic fortune. Noting that the number of baths given from 1950 at 700,000 was now at 400,000 annually, the firm forecast a continued decline in business volume. That factor, mixed with higher wages, promised weaker profit margins, leading EBS to recommend an increase in rates for baths and massages if the industry was to survive. The Association polled its membership and employees resulting in a recommendation to NPS to raise rates.[1171]

The EBS "General Business Study" reached several conclusions that served as a jolting reality call for the beleaguered bathing industry. The steady decline in business was occurring at the same time tourism and other economic indexes continued to increase, indicating the bathhouse business was not in synch with modern needs. Hotel bathhouses, however, were still profitable, and while the same was true along Bathhouse Row, their net return was substantially less per volume and related investment. Collectively, everyone was operating below expectations. Association members were experiencing a net income rate of less than one-sixth that of 1946, the peak year. Sales of single baths and massages and booklets of six coupons had risen since 1950, but coupon booklets of twelve or more realized a continual downward slide encompassing less than

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[1170] John Dombrink and William Thompson, *The Last Resort: Success and Failure in Campaigns for Casinos* (Reno, Nev.: University of Nevada Press, 1990), 145-146; "Spa Gambling to Close Tonight," *Hot Springs New Era*, 28 March 1964, "State May Have Ended Gambling in Resort" and "Faubus Vows To Keep Lid On Hot Springs," *Sentinel Record*, 5 November 1964, all three found in "File: Gambling, Box 50, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

[1171] President C. M. King, Hot Springs Bath House Association, to Superintendent Campbell, letter, 10 September 1965, Letter Document Box 3, HOSP 3433; and *Annual Report for 1965.* Note that the Annual Report for 1964 is missing, and the 1965 "report" consists of three paragraphs. See Superintendent Campbell to Regional Director Cox, 1 June 1965, A2621. A preliminary annual report for 1966 for Hot Springs was prepared before they ceased. The practice resumed for calendar year 1973 in 1974.

nine percent of the market and heavily concentrated among those over fifty years of age. EBS found: "There is every reason to believe the number of customers who are convinced that the Hot Springs waters have extensive therapeutic values are declining significantly and that the overwhelming number of the current customers are taking the baths either to satisfy a curiosity or because they feel relaxed." The consultants recommended the Association "take an active leadership interest in developing a program whereby the community's commercial interests sponsor a rehabilitation program for the downtown area of Hot Springs and in the process, revitalize itself."[1172]

In reaching their conclusions, the firm utilized two market research techniques: mail survey and personal interviews. It noted a "general lack of understanding as to the role of the National Park Service," with seventy percent of those interviewed having no knowledge of the NPS role at all, with the remaining people conceding the NPS role as that for "regulations." They found those over forty-five years old "stay a greater length of time, take more baths, have a high degree of confidence in the therapeutic merits of the waters, have less money to spend, stay in less expensive places, have been more influenced by friend who had taken the baths, travel less as a family groups, and had intended to visit the Hot Springs area." Finally, EBS concluded the "social prestige significance existing during the early part of the Twentieth Century when taking the 'baths' was related to social status is no longer present."[1173]

The recommended rate increase was approved and went into effect on March 1, 1966. New rates also included the Libbey Center. The St. Joseph's Hospital closed its bathhouse at the end of 1965 and converted it into a physical therapy department.[1174]

Big strides in interpretation came in fiscal 1966 when the museum was reduced in size to accommodate a new audio-visual slide presentation. Called "The Valley of the Vapors," its purpose was to orient visitors to NPS and the national park. The lobby area also provided a place for visitors to rest while enjoying the museum exhibits. Improvements also were made to the Gulpha Gorge Campground registration office. A re-design there accommodated space for maps, bulletins, soft drinks, public telephone, and the relocated bird and forest tree exhibits removed from the museum. Completed in November 1965, a new 300-seat amphitheatre and new entrance road graced the campground. The year also saw for the first time adequate directional signs installed on all major routes leading into Hot Springs directing motorists to the NPS Administration Building visitor center.

[1172] EBS Management Consultants, Inc., *General Business Study for Hot Springs Bath House Association, Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas* (New York, N.Y.: typewritten report, July 1965): 3-4. EBS recommended abolishing coupon booklets for twelve or more baths; combing four adjacent bathhouses on Bathhouse Row, replacing them with a modern motel with bathhouse installations; an extensive downtown rehabilitation program; an extensive advertisement program; and "all implications of therapeutic value should be discontinued except in an historical interest without depreciating such value—emphasis should be made on the relaxation values." Ibid., 4-5.

[1173] Ibid. 54.

[1174] *Preliminary Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1966,* Superintendent Campbell to Director Hartzog, 7 June 1966. This brief annual report ended the practice until 1974.

Director Hartzog instituted a servicewide program in 1966 of choosing one superintendent per state to serve as "state coordinator" for NPS. The position entailed being the director's "eyes and ears" on matters affecting NPS within their respective state and local governments. For Arkansas, the collateral-duty designation went to the Hot Springs National Park superintendent. As Arkansas State Coordinator, Superintendent Campbell also took on a key man role as Buffalo River Coordinator, looking after and promoting NPS interests in establishing a proposed "Buffalo National River." During the year, Campbell found himself busy promoting the concept appearing before nearly one hundred groups throughout Arkansas.[1175]

A rockslide of 450 cubic yards of sandstone and shale let loose nearly a thousand tons of debris that buried and completely demolished the south end of The Southern Club on April 25, 1966. Covering an area of 2,700 square feet, the debris pile came down from West Mountain toward Central Avenue following a period of wet weather. NPS paid a Little Rock consulting mining geologist to evaluate the cause and identify responsible parties, if any. NPS wished to anticipate potential future landslides and formulate regulations or practices to avoid creating new slide areas in order to protect human life and property. Geologist Robert B. McElwaine evaluated the area of downtown along either side of Central Avenue from Park Avenue to Fountain Street, and along Central Avenue's west side to Mountain Street. The area had seen extensive vertical face excavation in places where cliffs were seventy-five to one hundred feet high. He determined extensive areas of unsupported rock where rock footings had been cut away. That was the cause of The Southern Club's landslide. The use of gunite to cover over these scarred rock areas could actually accelerate the process by trapping moisture in existing cracks, lubricating them for potential slides. A prolonged wet spell permitted percolation of water into fracture joints, making unsupported rock walls easier to move. McElwaine predicted these same conditions would cause future slides at the same location and in back of the Aristocrat Motor Inn. Life and property damaging landslides could also extend westward into Hot Springs National Park. Another potential slide area was behind the Arlington Hotel and he recommended engineering studies be conducted to determine the soundness of those rock walls.[1176]

A primary plank in President Lyndon B. Johnson's "Great Society" came with the passage of the Social Security Act of 1965, (P.L. 89-97, 79 Stat. 286) enacted on July 30. It created Medicare and Medicaid to provide federal health insurance for those over the age of sixty-five and for the nation's poor. In an effort to determine whether or not the new social legislation might apply to therapeutic services rendered at the Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center as well as the fifteen other bathhouses utilizing thermal water under government regulations, Campbell began making inquiries. In a letter to the local Social Security administrator, the superintendent laid out the case for the physical therapy treatments offered, licensing requirements by therapists, and the

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[1175] Superintendent Campbell, "Highlight Briefing Statements, 1966 Calendar Year, Hot Springs National Park," A2621.

[1176] Robert B. McElwaine, *The Southern Club Rock Slide of April 25, 1966*, prepared for Hot Springs National Park (Little Rock, Ark.: typewritten, June 28, 1966): 1-2, 5-8, Library Vertical File: The Southern Club Rock Slide, Robert B. McElwaine, 1966.

regulatory prescriptions made by physicians certified by the Federal Registration Board. Campbell declared, "We hope that a favorable decision will be reached, enabling our older people to receive care under the new health insurance program at our Physical Medicine Center and bathhouses." [1177] (The request for approval took two years to be answered, accompanied by a change in the law, with only the Libbey Center and one bathhouse on Bathhouse Row approved to participate[1178]).

Another bathhouse concession ceased operating in 1967. St. Joseph's Hospital Bathhouse terminated its thermal water contract on July 7, citing financial losses.[1179]

DEATH KNELL FOR ILLEGAL GAMBLING, 1967

The final state-orchestrated raids to shut-down the persistent illegal gambling industry in Hot Springs came during 1967. Since Rep. Estes Kefauver's hearings in the early 1950s first brought national attention to illegal gambling being linked to the Italian-American Mafia, government officials were concerned about organized crime infiltration in American society and business. Known for a century as a center for illegal gaming, Hot Springs' reputed take for the 1959 season approached $100 million. Slot machines, illegal outside of Nevada, proliferated in the city. It had become a draw for Americans seeking high-stakes poker games, other forms of wagering, and slot machines. The tide turned in 1961, when U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy and Director J. Edgar Hoover of the Federal Bureau of Investigation launched a vigorous campaign against gambling, racketeering, and corruption. While Gov. Orval Faubus walked a tightrope on the issue, his replacement, Winthrop Rockefeller, did not. Following weeks of raids and arrests in 1967, Gov. Rockefeller vetoed a bill to legalize gaming by permitting a state crime commission to license up to four private gaming clubs in Hot Springs. When news reached Rockefeller that the shuttered clubs were open again, he sent state troopers back to Hot Springs in August where they seized $60,000 to $75,000 in equipment and money. Rockefeller pledged to keep the lid on Hot Springs and the successful crusade resulted in a final industry exodus to Las Vegas.[1180]

[1177] Superintendent Campbell to William H. Bell, District Manager, Social Security Administration, Hot Springs, Ark., letter, 25 February 1966, Folder 13536.02.1 Medicare/Health Insurance, 1966, Archives Box 46, Libbey Memorial PMC Archives, Accession 525, HOSP 13536.

[1178] "Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas, Remarks of Hon. Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia in the Senate of the United States, Wednesday, October 9, 1968," *Congressional Record,* excerpt, Library Vertical File Hot Springs National Park Administrative Papers. Byrd, reading a statement from Senator Fulbright, indicated Social Security Administration had approved benefits under Medicare for the Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center and Health Services, Inc. (Quapaw Bathhouse), "scheduled to be a provider of services through the PMC."

[1179] Assistant Director [not legible] to Sister Mary Cyrillus, letter, 21 July 1967, C3823, Folder: St. Joseph's, HOSP 530, Box 2, Concessions Archives.

[1180] "WR Vetoes Controversial Hot Springs Gaming Bill," 8 March 1967; "Many Gaming Devices Taken in Club Raids By State Police Here" and "WR Indicates Gambling Raids 'Only A Start,'" both in 18 August 1967, all in *Sentinel Record*, File: Gambling, Box 50, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville; Michael Woodiwiss, *Crime, Crusades, and Corruption: Prohibition in the United States, 1900-1987* (London: Pinter, 1988), 142-148; Hank Messick, *Syndicate Abroad* (London: MacMillan Company, 1969), 4; and U.S. Commission on the

THE INTERIM PLANNING REPORT, 1967

A baffling "Interim Planning Report" was prepared in 1967, and seemingly never approved. It put forth radical new park planning proposals meant to transform Hot Springs National Park into a fundamentally untraditional NPS unit. Prepared as result of a field study by members of both the Washington and Philadelphia service centers, Southeast Regional Office, and park staff during April 10-15, 1967, the team put forth the draft report "Because of the local conditions and changes that will affect the park and its use, and because of the recognized uniqueness of this area as a national park, the team did not think that a regular master plan was feasible yet. Rather, it felt that some basic questions must first be answered by the Service." It further explained:

> *"A recent slowdown in the city's tourist industry, ostensibly brought about by the elimination of gambling, but in fact related to broader aspects of the local economy, encouraged the community to look into the causes of its problem and seek remedies. A study done for a local group called Fifty for the Future, a development plan done by consultant William Ewald, and economic studies done for the bathhouse operators have all contributed imaginative suggestions. Governor Rockefeller has leant full support, and a newly aroused city government and public attitude have moved toward the implementation of these plans. Mr. Ewald has been retained to guide the planning and organizing necessary to contend for a Federal Model City grant and a beautification grant, and to tap other sources of support. The fact that these proposals bear directly on the public's use of Hot Springs National Park and would use parts of the park required a reassessment on the Service's part of the park's present and future role in this changing local situation."*[1181]

Recognizing that the most popular segments of the park were artificial "with elaborate structures and exotic plants, and is painstakingly kept that way," the planners declared: "It is clear that, notwithstanding the springs and the lovely hills, Hot Springs National Park does not bear a natural character or national significance comparable to other national parks, and that contemporary trends and needs of the surrounding city have increasingly emphasized this difference. It is the opinion of the team that the role this park can best play will be more nearly aligned with local, State, and regional needs than has been possible under existing laws and policies."[1182]

Citing locally produced studies with similar conclusions and recommendations, NPS planners acknowledged that the city needed to revitalize its run-down sections, provide facilities and services to modern-day tourists, reorient the bathing industry, and improve the Central Avenue corridor. They bought in to four specific proposals. The

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Review of the National Policy Toward Gambling, *Final Report, Gambling in America* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), 170.

[1181] *Hot Springs National Park Interim Planning Report,* unapproved draft May 1967, 4.

[1182] Ibid.

first, involved closing Central Avenue to traffic in front of Bathhouse Row, removing buildings opposite it and rehabilitating others, and installation of new lighting, signage, and a pedestrian boardwalk. Second, the proposed "Ozark Way," a regional scenic road from Arkadelphia, Arkansas, to Springfield, Missouri, would pass through West Mountain and serve as a bypass of the closed Central Avenue and provide access points to downtown. Third, build a Tivoli modeled after the pleasure gardens and amusement park in Copenhagen, Denmark, the second oldest amusement park in the world. This Arkansas Tivoli would be on the slopes of Hot Springs Mountain and incorporate cultural activities, restaurant, interpretive visitor center, band shells, and family amusements all connected with Bathhouse Row utilizing a small monorail with connection to other downtown, hotel, and main visitor attractions. Fourth, a sky ride "intended as an exciting ride and a means to a marvelous view of the region," the suspended cable vehicles would traverse West Mountain to Hot Springs and North mountains within the national park. In association would be a new observation tower and visitor tramway connecting Bathhouse Row to the sky ride terminus.[1183]

The team called on NPS to modify existing "national park classification, administrative policies, and legal restrictions… so as to permit its participation in the proposed local programs." In addition, it urged NPS to "accept, in principle, the concept that these facilities and activities that are inappropriate in other national parks have a proper place in this park." However, the team cautioned that NPS not implement any of the proposals until "there is adequate proof that local government and/or private parties are committed to the related projects outside the park and have shown the resources to carry them through." NPS involvement could only come about as a single partner in this larger "novel venture." The team supported a combination of corporate entities and concessions along Bathhouse Row and a need to remove some bathhouses to accommodate Tivoli. It also recognized a role for historic preservation, adding "The retention of some of the existing buildings, as a characteristic appearance and façade that is intimately related to the traditional use of the hot springs, is desirable, regardless of use."[1184] Because of the park's small size, the team recommended utilizing the 1938 authorization to expand boundaries, particularly to the west to take in more of Sugarloaf Mountain. Further, all public health responsibilities should be removed from the superintendent and vested in the U.S. Public Health Service.[1185]

A Proposed Hot Springs National Recreation Park, 1967

The interim planning team reasoned that because the park did not belong in the national park category, its designation should be changed to "Hot Springs National Recreation Park" and administered under the Recreation Area management category. While ideally remaining under NPS jurisdiction, the team added a proviso: should, "for whatever reasons, it is not possible to effect these proposed changes in policy and park

[1183] Ibid., 5. Tivoli would include a multi-purpose amphitheatre for interpretive and cultural programs as well as a small children's zoo with animals in the natural environment. Also, a "display of historic Indian people mining novaculite" and "a display of prehistoric people taking thermal baths." See Ibid., 13.
[1184] Ibid., 5-8.
[1185] Ibid., 9-10.

purpose under the National Park Service jurisdiction, the Service should explore the possibilities of transferring the park to the State of Arkansas."[1186]

The interim planning team held that their "series of statements that define the direction that the team feels the park ought to follow" should be considered for the future of Hot Springs National Park. The recommendations required decisions be made by Director Hartzog prior to any new master plan development.[1187]

Hot Springs's application under the federal urban aid program called Model City was not granted, but the city did receive some funding from the Economic Development Administration to generate new employment. Its ability to finance improvements along its side of Central Avenue and in the downtown area looked tenuous. Nonetheless, the master plan team proposed to roll-out its ideas and "national recreation park" concept before state and local officials in June 1968. Before it did, however, objectionable concepts involving Tivoli and other non-compatible features were deleted from NPS plans prior to their release to the public. Roll-out of the proposed changes in general terms came on June 11 before state and local representatives. NPS officials emphasized that whatever changes might be forthcoming would depend on those initiated by the community and not the federal government. News reports focused on the change of designation or status of the park and then turned to the general concepts for revitalizing the area as a tourist attraction. Those changes included "construction of a boardwalk along Central Avenue, a mini-rail, a sky-ride, covered walkways, plazas, a waterfall and general beautification of the city." NPS wanted community feedback, particularly on the change of status, before proceeding with the master plan.[1188]

Campbell enlisted the support of former NPS Director Horace Albright, writing: "I feel quite confident that the Service would 'buy' such a proposal, but even then much work would have to be done—consideration and approval by the Secretary of the Interior, the National Park Service Advisory Board, the Bureau of the Budget, Congress, etc. Personally, I am for it as beneficial to the community, the National Park Service, and those millions who visit this area."[1189] Albright responded that if the changes were supported by the bureau, business community, and bathhouse owners, "I would do what I could to help put through the change. However, I don't think you can get a new category

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[1186] Ibid., 11.
[1187] Ibid., 15.
[1188] "Possible Change in Status of National Park Discussed," *Sentinel Record*, 12 July 1968, File: National Park Service, Box 51, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville; and Superintendent Campbell to Horace M. Albright, letter, 18 July 1968, Folder 10: National Park Service Correspondence 1968, Box 144, Manuscript Collection 2056, Horace M. Albright Papers, Special Collections, University of California, Los Angeles.
[1189] Superintendent Campbell to Horace M. Albright, letter, 18 July 1968, Folder 10: National Park Service Correspondence 1968, Box 37, Manuscript Collection 2056, Horace M. Albright Papers, Special Collections, University of California, Los Angeles. Campbell sent Albright a list of participants from the June 11 meeting. For NPS: Ed Peetz (Washington Office); Charles Marshall and Robert McIntyre (Southeast Regional Office); and Superintendent Campbell, Administrative Officer Dorothy Dorr, Chief Park Ranger Foster Freeman, Chief Park Naturalist Dale Engquist, and Foreman IV Lewis May (Hot Springs National Park).

set up – National Recreation Park, unless the N.P.S. administration contemplates giving this name to all the recreation areas. I think it might be a good idea to do that."[1190]

FEDERAL BUDGET CUT-BACKS RESULT IN CLOSURES, 1968

Public suspicion concerning NPS intentions continued to simmer, but when park operations and services were suddenly cut in November 1968, a tumultuous uproar ensued. A congressional directive to all executive branch agencies to abide by strict spending levels left NPS in a quandary and necessitated immediate nationwide cut-backs impacting parks in all but four states. The Revenue and Expenditure Act, passed in June, authorized only three out of four vacant federal positions being filled. At Hot Springs National Park, cut-backs involved closing West Mountain Drive, North Mountain Loop, closure of Gulpha Gorge Campground to overnight campers, and curtailed visitor center hours effective November 15 until June 15. While the park had authorization for a total of thirty-four permanent positions, it was operating at only twenty-nine. Before the vacant Hot Springs positions could be filled, other parks had to come within their quotas and servicewide the bureau was 292 positions over quota. The public had already denounced the change in national park designation. Cut-backs and closures threatened their national park's very existence. The outcry from Hot Springs and Little Rock to Washington, D.C., to amend or rescind the actions was loud and angry. Distressed politicians were appealing to Secretary of the Interior Stuart Udall to intervene.

When the cuts were announced, Assistant Superintendent Dale Engquist handled the controversy head on. He explained that several federal agencies were exempted from the act leaving further limitations imposed on remaining agencies resulting in seven out of ten vacancies being filled. Congress intended that agencies curb personnel. Engquist responded, "One of the purposes of the Park Service is to protect our property and visitors. With our reduced staff we cannot fulfill this purpose" hence the announced curtailments. The only reason Hot Springs Mountain was kept open was because of the observation tower concession; the road would also be closed when the souvenir shop was closed. Engquist explained the decision on the curtailment was "arbitrary. Basically, it boiled down to the fact that we were not obviously going to effect the operation of the bath houses. The only other alternative we had to get down within the scope of the curtailment was to close West Mountain, North Mountain, and the camp grounds." It also meant closing the visitor center on the slow days of Mondays and Tuesdays.[1191]

After the city proposed that its police department be allowed to patrol the park's mountain roads until funding was restored, Regional Director J. Leonard Volz denied the request. While sympathetic, Volz said NPS had exclusive jurisdiction and lacked legal authority to delegate law enforcement and maintenance responsibility to the city. Even

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[1190] Horace Albright to Superintendent Campbell, letter, 28 July 1968, Folder 10: National Park Service Correspondence 1968, Box 37, Manuscript Collection 2056, Horace M. Albright Papers, Special Collections, University of California, Los Angeles.

[1191] Marty Dunn, "Order to End National Park Services Causes Furor" 10 November 1968, and "WR Joins Plea to Keep Spa Park Services Open," 13 November 1963, both in *Sentinel Record,* File: Gulpha Gorge, Box 50, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

the director of Arkansas Parks and Publicity Commission said the state stood ready to help in order to assist the vital tourist industry of Hot Springs and Arkansas. Four days later as a result of meetings in Washington between NPS officials and Senator John L. McClellan (D.-Ark.), tentative agreement was reached in which the city's offer could be accepted to keep the vital roadways open. Contingent on the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU), the arrangement would become legally binding. NPS pledged to keep the roads open until December 13 to give time for the MOU to be negotiated and signed. In the meantime, the other curtailments had already gone into effect.[1192]

The announcement that the Medicare program extended to those seniors seeking medically supervised therapeutic treatments at Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center came in October 1968. This followed passage of a Medicare Act amendment on July 1 providing coverage for outpatient physical and hydrotherapy treatments. The coverage also extended to those receiving similar treatment at Health Services, Inc., formerly known as Quapaw Bathhouse, a subsidiary provider of benefits of the Libbey Center. The news came from a statement released by Senator William Fulbright (D.-Ark.) read on the floor of the U.S. Senate by Sen. Robert C. Byrd (D.-W.Va.). Quoting from the *Sentinel Record*, he declared, "Nowhere else can the senior citizen entitled to Medicare receive the full range of health services available in this world famed spa. Facilities for the aged and infirm federally approved for all phases of the Medicare program are to be found in Hot Springs where the thermal waters are made an integral part of the treatment. Recent approval by the Social Security Administration of the Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center as a rehabilitation agency under Medicare, and Health Services, Inc., scheduled to be a provider of services through the PMC, form the final link in the chain that puts Hot Springs at the top of the health center list."[1193]

[1192] "NPS Denies City Request To Patrol Mountain Drive," *Sentinel Record*, 17 November 1968, File: Gulpha Gorge, Box 50, and "City's Offer Accepted," *Sentinel* Record, 19 November 1968, File: National Park Service, Box 51, both in Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

[1193] "Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas, Remarks of Hon. Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia in the Senate of the United States, Wednesday, October 9, 1968," *Congressional Record,* excerpt, Library Vertical File Hot Springs National Park Administrative Papers. The Quapaw Bathhouse closed in 1968, but reopened in 1969 as Health Services, Inc.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Struggle To Achieve A Master Plan

Edward S. Peetz, chief, Office of Resource Planning, Washington Service Center, wished to get the long-delayed Hot Springs National Park master planning effort restarted in February 1969. He reported to the Southeast Regional Office that "significant unresolved questions… lie in the path of an orderly study of this area." There had been no statement of community support for changing the park's designation and management category. Neither was there any partnership with the city to initiate improvements on municipal and private property, and without that partnership, it was pointless to act unilaterally. Without a mandate from Director Hartzog, the team could not consider some of the proposed alternatives.[1194] Volz responded by pointing to the Management Objectives Bernard Campbell had worked out with his staff in Richmond over a two-day period in March. Analyzing the many assorted congressional acts related to Hot Springs, Volz noted, "it was determined that development and management of Hot Springs National Park can be extremely liberal." Volz added that with the Washington Office's blessing, the new Management Objectives would allow the master planning effort to resume. Volz personally assured leading Hot Springs citizens that he would do his best to ensure it did happen soon.[1195]

With Bernard Campbell's participation, the 1969 Management Objectives for Hot Springs National Park were revised to reflect the unorthodox proposals put forth in the 1967 Interim Planning Report. This included Tivoli and the unique modes of transportation. It acknowledged existing conditions with the city attempting to revitalize, noting,

> *"With the loss of gambling to the City of Hot Springs in 1964 [sic], the type of visitor changed. Today, the visitor to this resort area, including Hot Springs National Park, is generally in his 30's or early 40's with young children in contrast to the former oldster with money or bodily aches. The younger person wants and has the right to expect recreation requiring physical effort or programs and developed facilities that his children will enjoy.*
>
> *"Coupled with the City's desire to move forward to meet the new urban challenge, Hot Springs National Park should do likewise, consistent with its present liberal laws that provide for leases and privileges to construct and maintain, for example, observatories, pavilions, and refreshment*

[1194] Chief, Office of Resource Planning, Washington Service Center, Edward Peetz to Regional Director Volz, 4 February 1969, D18 Model City.
[1195] Regional Director Volz to Chief, Office of Resource Planning, Washington Service Center, Edward Peetz, 27 March 1969, D18 Model City.

stands, provided the Secretary so authorizes. Accordingly, we can envision a Tivoli, a thermal water cascade, and unique modes of transportation, provided the latter supplement or better serve than motor vehicle travel within this geographically divided park as well as prevent greater damage to the park's fragile feature, the thermal springs."[1196]

The draft objectives also called for a reinvigorated land acquisition program, adding approximately 2,500 acres to extend the national park westward from Sugarloaf and West Mountains to their junction. This opened the area to additional camping, hiking, horseback riding, and environmental education.[1197] Director Hartzog endorsed the revised objectives in August 1969.[1198]

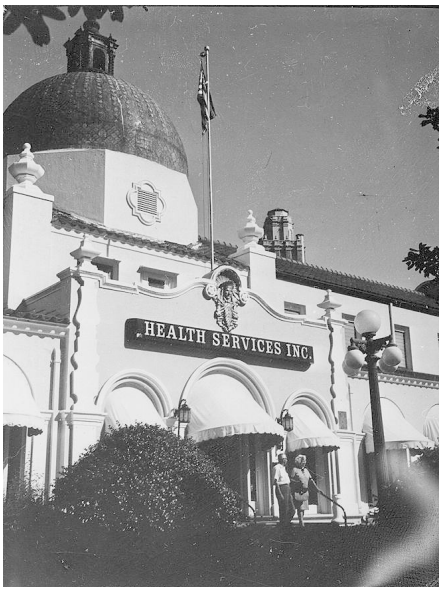

Figure 180. Quapaw Bathhouse became Health Services, Inc., 1969-1984 (HSNP 1715, National Park Service)

One of the park's highlights for 1969 coincided with the monumental achievement of the United States in space with Astronaut Neil Armstrong walking on the surface of the moon. A specialist from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in Houston, Texas, collected samples of thermal water to be used in tests of lunar material brought back to Earth by Apollo 11. The test of lunar soil and rock was to determine the potential presence of viable microorganisms. According to Regional Director Volz, "NASA scientists believe Hot Springs water may contain a unique combination of chemicals which would render it particularly suitable for this purpose."[1199]

A result of a servicewide reorganization of regional offices brought about the administrative practice of "clustering" parks concept. In Arkansas, Arkansas Post National Memorial became a satellite area attached to Hot Springs National Park. Proposed in 1970, the implementation occurred in fiscal year 1971. Included in the management cluster were Fort Smith National Historic Site and Pea Ridge National Military Park. The impractical cluster arrangement was abolished on June 15, 1972.[1200]

[1196] "Management Objectives, Hot Springs National Park," draft, 1969, page 5, D18 Model City.
[1197] Ibid., page 8.
[1198] Assistant Director for Park Management, Robert B. Moore to Director Hartzog, 12 August 1969, Folder 678, Box 55, Manuscript Collection 74 Series 1, George B. Hartzog Papers, Subject File Additions 1928, 1947-1988, Special Collections, Clemson University Libraries, Clemson, South Carolina.
[1199] Regional Director Volz to Director Hartzog, 6 August 1969, Regional Director's Monthly Report to the Director, July 1969, Folder 176, Box 26, Manuscript Collection 74 Series 1, George B. Hartzog Papers, Subject File Additions 1928, 1947-1988, Special Collections, Clemson University Libraries, Clemson, South Carolina.
[1200] Regional Director Volz to Superintendents and Regional Office Personnel, Southeast Region, 3 March 1970, A6431, in Folder 1022, Box 82, and Regional Director Volz to Director Hartzog, 6 October 1970, A2615, in Folder 178, Box 26, both in Manuscript Collection 74 Series 1, George B. Hartzog Papers,

Closed for eight years, a prospectus for utilization of the decaying Fordyce Bathhouse came out in 1970. Prepared under contract financed by the Arkansas Planning Commission in cooperation with the Ozarks Regional Commission, City of Hot Springs, and the Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce, the prospectus estimated the building's many deficiencies at $248,000. It required a new roof, elevator, emergency exits, and general cleanup. Pending definition of a specific use of the bathhouse, the family's Fordyce Corporation had promised to donate the structure to the city. Appraised value of the Fordyce was in excess of $300,000.[1201]

Figure 181. Hot Springs Mayor Tom Ellsworth and Superintendent Bernard Campbell view landslide area as Asst. Superintendent Franklyn Hambly and Chief Ranger Earl Adams at far left look on, September 1970 (HSNP 10163, National Park Service)

The Hot Springs Mountain observation tower was demolished on July 13, 1971. A March 1969 inspection revealed several structural defects which necessitated closing the facility until repairs could be made. The tower's souvenir shop, however, remained open. By November 1970 engineering evaluations revealed the tower was beyond repair. NPS moved to terminate the concession contract and in April 1971, a termination agreement was signed with the concessioner. It permitted the government to raze the tower at no expense to the concessioner. A Little Rock firm brought the 165-foot tower, built in 1906, crashing to the ground. Demolition included the souvenir shop.[1202]

When the Aristocrat Motor Inn's short-term lease expired, Superintendent Campbell advised all registered physicians that the contract had lapsed but that their bathhouse continued to do business. Campbell advised, "We feel that in all fairness we should keep you informed of such incidents, since you may have patients who are stopping and bathing at the Aristocrat and who may believe they are getting the world-famous thermal baths."[1203]

Subject File Additions 1928, 1947-1988, Special Collections, Clemson University Libraries, Clemson, South Carolina. An experimental change reversed after a few years included calling Regional Directors "Directors" of their respective regions. The confusion this caused among NPS employees and the public soon cancelled this innovation. For clarity, the author retains herein the original title.

[1201] *Fordyce Bath House, Hot Springs, Arkansas,* prospectus published by The Ozarks Regional Commission, 1970, HSNP Archives.

[1202] Alice C. Horner, "The Observation Tower, 1906-1969 (1971)," *The Record*, Vol. 24 (Hot Springs, Ark.: Garland County Historical Society, 1983): 159.

[1203] Superintendent Campbell to All Registered Physicians, 10 May 1971, A18 Federal Registration Board, 1963-1975.

HOT SPRINGS TOMORROW: A CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN, 1971

In late 1970, Eastern Service Center's John W. Bright, chief, Office of Environmental Planning and Design, recommended *Hot Springs Tomorrow: A Conceptual Master Plan, Hot Springs National Park* and Bernard Campbell signed it on September 22, 1971. Regional Director David Thompson approved the Master Plan on November 1, ten days prior to a reorganization which saw the Arkansas parks shift from Southeast Region back again to its original region, the Southwest Region, headquartered in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The Master Plan was silent on the issue of re-designation to "national recreation park" but that was indeed the same vision embodied by the report. It recognized "the Federal Government continues to support an archaic program of spa services." Business on Bathhouse Row was "not flourishing." Spelling out the problem, the document declared:

> *"The vitality of both the bathing industry as it is practiced in Hot Springs and the structures themselves have suffered with the passing years. Sterile, drab interiors and facilities, a venerable labor force, antiquated regulations, and lastly, standardized and unexciting methods of bathing all conspire toward this industry's depressed condition.*
>
> *"An analysis of the present market clearly indicates the eventual demise of the entire Row unless some renewal program can be introduced. In the dramatic decline, a quarter of a century has seen a reduction in baths in these eight facilities from approximately 650,000 to about 150,000! One bathhouse, the Fordyce, has been closed for nearly 10 years; others are on the brink of failure. Despite an authorization to provide over 400 tubs in the 18 bathing concessions, it is apparent that as few as 100 tubs would adequately serve the existing demand for such services."*[1204]

After spelling out the problem and describing the emerging partnership effort NPS desired with state and local communities, it continued:

> *"This plan conceives the new Hot Springs as a unique and varied resort center of recreational and cultural renown. Based on the most modern spa traditions, and focusing on a central pedestrian mall, it will feature a myriad of activities for the pleasure, stimulation and edification of a wide range of visiting patrons. The whole effort will seek to create a feeling in the visitor that he is in a very special place, devoted to <u>his</u> interests and pleasures, providing the features and activities to achieve this end. No routine, humdrum, or irritating place here…."*[1205]

The plan envisioned a "new Hot Springs regional resort complex" featuring four themes.

[1204] National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, *Hot Springs Tomorrow: A Conceptual Master Plan, Hot Springs National Park,* 1971, 6-7.
[1205] Ibid., 26.

The first, "Recreation," involved "International bathing, hiking, fishing, horseback riding, dancing, scenic tours, boating, biking, camping, swimming, amusement rides, horseracing, outdoor games, sidewalk cafes, theater, puppet show, etc." The second theme, "Culture," involved "Folk arts and crafts (shops and demonstrations), folk dancing and music, performing arts center with formal presentations and pageants, fine arts center, Mid American Center, educational facilities involving museum/interpretation, hotel-motel management, etc." In the third theme, "Fitness and Glamour," there would be "Cosmetic courses, diet and weight reduction programs, physical culture, etc." Finally, "Medical Rehabilitation and Physical Therapy," included "Medical and therapeutic treatment and research centers such as Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital and Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center."[1206]

In the "Downtown Resort Center," the Master Plan called for separating pedestrians from motor vehicles with a mall concept. A supplemental transportation system—"silent, attractive and festive" — was required to take visitors from resort and convention facilities to the hotel-motel area. Along with Bathhouse Row, "the symbolic landmark of the old Hot Springs as a tourist center," a new observation tower was needed reminiscent of the popular old tower of yesteryear, but placed on West Mountain. Its design would symbolize the new Hot Springs and be clearly visible from the south approach to the mall and overlook the front of Bathhouse Row. The area would be graced with a multitude of water displays to highlight the thermal water's historical significance and provide a "vital esthetic importance to the newly conceived recreational park." This involved uncovering several hot springs to be displayed natural, including a "cascade falling to a climactic waterfall or vapor-shrouded pool on the Arlington Lawn." Ideally, moving water throughout the mall's length could be displayed by incorporating Hot Springs Creek, with pools and fountains prominent in open spaces along with drinking fountains. Foyers and lobbies should also feature miniature fountains and pools along with dramatic lighting, colorful tile, and bright materials to enhance the atmosphere. Thermal bottled water should be a dominant advertising medium. In addition, there should be display gardens unifying the mall's walkways and fountains, and a "row of ornamental trees in tubs could extend beyond the mall to Whittington Avenue.[1207]

A new design along Bathhouse Row would transform it into an "International Fun and Fitness Center," replacing these "creatures of a bygone era" with a new use. Most should be saved "for the character that they will lend to a new resort center mall," their new purpose should be redirected to "fun, exercise enjoyment and pleasure for the visitor." Six original buildings would be preserved and modernized for public services. Because the Superior and Lamar lacked "significant merit," they would be removed. The other buildings required modernization and conversion into an international-themed fun and fitness areas with "bathing practices emphasizing family and communal bathing for leisure and fun," including swimming, gymnasiums, restaurant and cocktail lounge, game areas, beauty salon, bowling lanes, dance and music areas.[1208]

[1206] Ibid., 29-30.
[1207] Ibid., 34-39
[1208] Ibid., 39-42.

The 1971 Master Plan called for information and orientation centers at the principal entryways to the pedestrian mall, manned both by city and NPS employees. To make room for new visitor amenities the existing NPS Administration Building—lacking "the architectural integrity characteristics of the adjacent Bathhouse Row" — should be removed and NPS office space established in the federal building or other nearby structures. All automobiles would be removed between the Hot Springs Convention Center and Arlington Hotel, with all motorized traffic channeled through a municipally-produced four-lane bypass tunnel under West Mountain running parallel to Central Avenue. The tunnel would also serve as an emergency storm drainage channel. Nearby large-scale parking facilities would be placed in the Whittington Avenue vicinity and south of Reserve Avenue. The public transit system would serve to move people to and from the resort area.[1209]

A "Concessioner Transition Plan" would be required to assist the economically depressed park concessioners because "the relatively affluent tourist market that once supported the bathing industry has evaporated. This market has been replaced by relatively old, ailing people who live on fixed incomes." Because the city was also moving away from its central business district, new conditions were now required for existing concessions, namely, seven Row bathhouses, Libbey Center, and outside the national park: one bathhouse, six lodging establishments with bathhouses, and Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital. The government's principal responsibility was to concessioners on Bathhouse Row. The Master Plan envisioned ending therapeutic bathing on the Row and concentrating it at the Libbey Center. Existing concessioners would then have to adapt to the new reality or cease doing business, at which time NPS would compensate them for the book value of their facilities.[1210]

Complaints about the Master Plan emerged almost immediately and Superintendent Campbell was prepared with talking points to be used in response letters. To develop its plan, NPS met with representatives of city and state government, local chamber of commerce, and private sector individuals. A public Master Plan meeting occurred on July 21 with roughly 400 in attendance. The mayor, city council and chambers of commerce supported the document in "general terms." The pedestrian mall would be built only if vehicular traffic was relocated. A tunnel would be built only if the U.S. Geological Survey, Corps of Engineers, U.S. Department of Transportation, Arkansas Highway Department, and NPS found it economically feasible and practical. Feasibility studies would be required for other plan proposals.[1211] Hot Springs City Council endorsed the plan and Superintendent Campbell approved it noting that the

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[1209] Ibid., 48-52.

[1210] Ibid., 54-58. The planning team consisted of Team Captain Rock Comstock, Landscape Architect Barron Bohnet, Architect David Henderson, Landscape Architect John Parsons, Southeast Region Interpretive Specialist Donald Robinson, Interpretive Design Coordinator J. Walter Roth, Resource Manager James Rouse, Concessions Planner John Spurgeon, and Sociologist Linda Van Keuren. Participating park staff were Superintendent Bernard Campbell, Chief, Interpretation and Resource Management, Franklin Hambly, and Foreman IV Lewis May.

[1211] Draft response letter found in files; utilized for Regional Director Thompson to Senator J. W. Fulbright, 5 October 1971, D18 Model City.

greatest resistance would revolve around the proposed mall. He worked to calm local fears centering on the "belief that the National Park Service intended to do away with the therapeutic use of the thermal waters and would tear down part, or perhaps all, of Bathhouse Row. He urged proceeding with land acquisition to protect the thermal springs as rapidly as possible.[1212]

DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN, 1972

Because of the controversial nature of the Master Plan, NPS policymakers called for preparation of a Development Concept Plan (DCP) by a Little Rock architect-engineering (A/E) firm called Cromwell, Neyland, Truemper, Millett and Gatchell, or Cromwell and Associates for short. The 1972 DCP stripped out the proposals for a pedestrian mall, tunnel under West Mountain, and re-opening Hot Springs Creek. A review by an architectural historian resulted in Bathhouse Row being viewed as a "unique grouping among American spas" that was historically significant and should be preserved. Functions of the buildings could be altered, but the exteriors should be preserved and refurbished. The iron fronts of commercial downtown buildings were also architecturally important as were the groupings of Victorian homes in Hot Springs. The DCP recommended an aerial tramway, thermal cascade, openings in the arch to view Hot Springs Creek, a public plaza, and a pedestrian underpass for Central Avenue. On the east side of the avenue would be Hot Springs Square with three bathhouses: The Maurice as the new visitor center and museum; The Hale converted into shops; and The Fordyce as a fine restaurant in combination with shops or other visitor attractions. Hot Springs Square was seen as "an extension of the park across Central Avenue, a staging place for collecting visitors and beginning the interpretive and orientation process, and a vital contribution to the life of both the park and the city."[1213]

On West Mountain, the DCP envisioned a new observation tower with an uphill terminus for the tramway, a snack bar, gift shop, and a landscaped plaza with overlooks. A short distance away would be an American Indian village and an early pioneer settlement situated around a petting zoo. The mountain roadway would be closed except for service vehicles. For Hot Springs Mountain, the planned amenities focused on the health traditions of Hot Springs. Here would be a physical fitness center with cool and hot water pools, gymnasium, exercise and fitness oriented facilities, diet snack bar, and tennis courts. The mountain road system would remain in place. To compliment these developments, redevelopment along and off of Central Avenue would spawn the following:

1. *Parking for 600 cars on Central, adjacent to Hot Springs Square, and for another 500 cars on Fountain Street.*
2. *Traffic improvements on Central Avenue and feeders to Central.*
3. *An amphitheatre for 300 persons at the east end of Arlington Lawn.*

[1212] Superintendent Campbell to Regional Director Thompson, 22 September 1971, D18 Model City.
[1213] Cromwell, Neyland, Truemper, Millett and Gatchell, *Summary Report of the Development Concept Plan, Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas*, August 11, 1972, HOSP 15477, 1-3.

4. *Commercial improvements along Central.*
5. *Landscaping the private side of Central.*
6. *Placing all overhead utility lines underground.*
7. *Creating an open plaza between Central and Broadway across from the Post Office.*
8. *Extending the promenade from the park to the convention center.*
9. *Refurbishing the present park administration building.*
10. *Refurbishing the bathhouses as follows:*
    a. *The Lamar – to provide upgraded therapeutic bathing facilities.*
    b. *The Buckstaff -- upgraded therapeutic bathing.*
    c. *The Ozark -- reoriented to provide cosmetic bathing.*
    d. *The Health Services (Quapaw) – cosmetic bathing.*
    e. *The Fordyce -- restaurant and shops as mentioned above.*
    f. *The Maurice -- new visitor center, as mentioned above.*
    g. *The Hale -- shops, as mentioned above.*
    h. *The Superior – this building would house the heat exchange unit which would be relocated from its present location on Arlington Lawn. This would open up more space on the lawn for activities and for visual impact, and would remove a source of noise irritation. The new complex can become a part of the interpretive experience.*
11. *West Promenade and shops:*
    a. *Future construction of a new upper level promenade behind the commercial structures on the west side of Central, opening the upper floors of these buildings for commercial redevelopment.*
    b. *Linking the two promenades (old and new) with a series of pedestrian overpasses above Central Avenue.*[1214]

The DCP called for NPS to take advantage of the 1938 congressional mandate to expand Hot Springs National Park and to launch a vigorous land acquisition program. This recommendation was already feasible because funding could now be secured through Land and Water Conservation Act of 1964. The DCP envisioned a myriad of new developments in the proposed park expansion zones with visitor information stations at all key entrances to the national park. New campgrounds accommodating recreational vehicles along Gulpha Gorge Road "extending along the edge of the park as close to Central Avenue as possible" along with future sites in the Mill Pond area. Tent campgrounds would be developed along the ridge of North Mountain and at the Bull Bayou Campground. Parking areas would also be featured adjacent to new campground areas. New trails in the expansion areas would include ten miles of hiking trails, six miles of equestrian trails, and three miles of bicycle trails. A minibus trail, originating from Hot Springs Square, would follow existing streets along a twenty mile route up Hot Springs Mountain, past historic homes to Mill Pond Campground, across to Whittington Park, out to Bull Bayou Campground, and then follow a one-lane trail along the mountain ridge to Sugarloaf, and back following the city street system. The bus would run on an

[1214] Ibid., 4-5.

hourly schedule, providing visitor orientation information and transportation between key park stops. Concessions in the new expansion area would include a bicycle rental shop and a horse stable.[1215]

As the master planning effort continued, in spring 1973, the Interpretation program launched its new American Indian and settler cultural exhibit with crude structures constructed and equipped with donated funds from Eastern National Park and Monument Association (ENP&MA). It operated atop Hot Springs Mountain until late November. While American Indian demonstrators were not obtainable, there was projectile point making and pottery making inside a reproduction Caddo dwelling which proved to be very popular with visitors. When trained flint knappers returned to school, whetstone sawing continued throughout the fall at the exhibit site. Interpreters focused on environmental education as much as possible in daily programs. A National Environmental Study Area (NESA) established in the park suffered when city schools lost a state grant to provide bus transportation. Nevertheless, some local teachers did participate with their students, as did outlying districts, who requested access to the park's NESA manual.[1216]

Also in 1973, the Bathhouse Row area was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register program came as result of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. It recognized the nation's significant historic properties at the national, state, and local level. Listing in the National Register was principally honorary, but for federally-owned properties and those potentially threatened by federally-funded actions under section 106 of the Act, an historic preservation review and compliance process went into effect involving the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Arkansas State Historic Preservation Office. Bathhouse Row Historic District was entered in the National Register on November 13, 1974, at the national level of significance. The historic district included the eight Row bathhouses, NPS Administration Building and the Grand Promenade. This introduced a new historic preservation emphasis by NPS to recognize and preserve the historic character of the Row. It began working with concessioners to keep their buildings from further deterioration.[1217]

At Gulpha Gorge Campground, NPS stopped collecting camping fees on August 9, 1973. The change resulted in occupancy rates increasing dramatically in the fall. NPS reversed course and began collecting camping fees again less than a year later in June 1974.

Launched at Hot Springs National Park in 1972, NPS land acquisition efforts resulted in 1,314 acres added to the park, followed by 883 acres in 1973, and 610 acres in 1974. With these new areas came the responsibility of removing dozens of unneeded

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[1215] Ibid., 6.
[1216] *Annual Report for 1973.* The NESA program continued to limp along with little support from the local school district. The NESA Teacher's Guide went into its third edition with much of the demand from beyond the local school system. See *Annual Report for 1974.*
[1217] *Annual Reports for 1973 and 1974*.

structures. One residential building in an out-lying area was retained for use by a park technician in 1973 and five others were retained as quarters for park personnel in 1974.. Coincidentally, speaking before a group of southern state representatives on land use and planning, Interior Secretary Rogers C. B. Morton visited the park on July 18 and 19, 1973. [1218]

SUPERINTENDENCY OF BERNARD GOODMAN, 1973-1977

During this confusing planning period, Superintendent Bernard T. Campbell retired on June 30, 1972, but agreed to remain as a re-employed annuitant for another year, leaving the position on June 30, 1973. NPS also changed leadership. President Richard M. Nixon fired NPS Director George B. Hartzog at the end of 1972 and replaced him with Ronald H. Walker. Director Walker appointed Superintendent Bernard Goodman to replace Campbell at Hot Springs National Park. Ten days before Goodman entered on duty on July 22, an NPS land acquisition office opened in the Medical Arts Building to continue purchasing 2,000 acres from willing sellers.[1219]

In his calendar year report for 1973, Superintendent Goodman reported that public relations between NPS and the local citizenry remained solid, but he cautioned policymakers as follows: "The mild apprehensions associated with various aspects of the Master Plan and the Development Concept Plan have been pretty well cleared up, but it is obvious that the planning process must come to a successful conclusion shortly if we are to continue to have broad-based local support." Goodman looked forward to Cromwell and Associates completing the DCP Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) soon.[1220]

The A/E contractor completed the draft DCP/EIS in August 1974. While NPS accepted both, because of conflicts with the approved Master Plan, a re-write was necessary. The task to prepare a Master Plan/DCP/EIS was assigned to the newly-established Denver Service Center (DSC) and would follow the planning effort accomplished by the A/E firm. An exasperated Superintendent Goodman reported that this new effort was now on hold "pending a policy decision on new tramways in the National Park System."[1221]

In 1974, Hot Springs National Park opened its first Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) non-resident camp. YCC, initiated nationwide in 1970 to provide summer work to young people on federally managed lands, was a way to introduce young Americans to conservation and assist with projects for various federal bureaus. At Hot Springs, the first YCC camp had thirty members with a $31,500 budget and through work provided had a return on investment of $47,768. The non-residential camp continued throughout the 1970s and early 1980s. In its first year, YCC assisted in completing the indoor walk-

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[1218] Ibid.
[1219] "Retiring 'Bernie' Campbell Reviews Changes in Spa," *Sentinel Record,* no date [circa 1 July 1973], File: National Park Service, Box 51, Manuscript Collection 534, Mary D. Hudgins Collection, Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.
[1220] *Annual Report for 1973.* Director Walker reinstituted the superintendents' annual reports and changed them from fiscal year to calendar year.
[1221] *Annual Report for 1974.*

in Caddo house by weaving cane mats and thatching the building with grass. ENP&MA funded a new sorghum mill for the cultural exhibit and a position to operate the information desk.

A Volunteers In Parks (VIP) program began in the early 1970s to assist the Interpretation Division, but in 1974, Superintendent Goodman noted that availability of funds for it "did not have the expected stimulus it was hoped to have." Numbers of VIPs slowly increased with people from a variety of backgrounds and talents. Most wore period dress or a VIP uniform vest to assist in their visibility among visitors.

Concession activity in 1974 revolved around exchanging contracts with special use permits. The first such special use permits were issued to the De Soto Bathhouse and the Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital. Bathing continued its precipitous decline, going under the 200,000 mark in 1974. At 196,550 baths given, it represented a fifteen percent decline from 1973 at 231,552 baths given.

In November 1974, the Maurice Bathhouse closed making it the second business on Bathhouse Row to cease operations.[1222] The following month, Health Services, Inc., the former Quapaw Bathhouse, instituted evening and Sunday hours of operation. Advertising itself as "Hot Springs' 'After Hour' Bath House," the later business hours of 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. weekdays, catered to late arrivals or for locals who were unable to bathe during the workday. It remained open on holidays as well. Health Service, Inc., represented a "united effort of the Bath Houses of Hot Springs to give the bathing public a greater variety of bathing hours." Its thermal whirlpool baths could be taken without a physician's prescription.[1223]

On March 8, 1975, the Alhambra Bathhouse terminated its special use permit for the thermal water. It went out of business citing the lack of patronage and high cost of salaries and supplies. This came during a year when park visitation hit 3,483,568. The higher numbers reflected a new counting system designed to reduce duplication as well as the larger land area of the national park.

Attendance at the cultural exhibit continued to set records. In 1975, there were 45,466 visitors counted, an increase of nearly 10,000 over the previous year. American Indian-related programs at interpretive programs tended to boost the numbers participating in quarry hikes to Indian Mountain.

In 1975, NPS first began taking steps to arrest deterioration of the Fordyce and Maurice bathhouses. It installed ventilation in both structures. In the Maurice, NPS used a machine to collect data on temperature and humidity levels. The year also saw two temporary quarters removed in the campground and the Whittington Park quarters and garage buildings. In the fall, utility crews installed a heat exchange unit into the heating

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[1222] *Annual Report for 1974.* The Pythian Bathhouse, catering to African Americans, closed for repairs in December 1974 but never reopened.

[1223] "Too Late for a Thermal Bath? Check Health Services, Incorporated, Before You Give Up!" promotional pamphlet, 1 December 1974, HOSP 7407.

system for the Administration Building. Utilizing thermal water, it represented the first building within the national park to utilize geothermal energy.[1224]

Land acquisition offices at the Southwest Regional Office and Washington Office combined efforts to speed the land program. By the end of 1975, land acquisition at Hot Springs National Park had resulted in a total land base of 4,379.81 acres. An additional ninety-nine tracts were added in 1976 covering 167 acres.[1225] A review of the program after five years occurred in 1977. More than five million dollars had been expended for property in the northeast and northwest parts of Garland County with the program about seventy-seven percent completed. While ensuring protection of the thermal springs recharge zone, the acquired lands were restored to natural conditions. Coordinating the program for the park was Management Assistant Hugh Crenshaw. As of September 30, 1977, there were 4,502.49 acres acquired of the approximately 5,800 authorized acres. Crenshaw estimated three million dollars in additional land would be purchased. While property in the Whittington and Park Avenue areas had already been acquired, Crenshaw identified the Music Mountain, Black Snake and Cedar Glades roads area and Stoneridge areas were also added. To be acquired were the Sleepy Valley, Pullman Heights, Heights and Hobson Heights Subdivisions along with some remaining tracts in the Whittington area.[1226]

Because negotiations with owners of the Fordyce and Maurice bathhouses were unsuccessful in acquiring the remaining possessory interests, NPS took possession via condemnation proceedings. This permitted emergency treatment to arrest the deterioration caused from leaking roofs. NPS permitted the owners to remove any personal property items before changing the locks on both buildings.[1227]

The death of the Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center's manager and physical therapist in June 1976 resulted in its closure. It reopened in November when a registered physical therapist was hired.

Interpretation began a phase-out of the cultural exhibit in 1976. It only operated during the summer months and was augmented by a cotton spinning demonstration. Other programs focused on the nation's bicentennial.

In November 1976, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) recommended a number of NPS advisory committees be abolished. On the list were two entities at Hot Springs National Park: the Federal Registration Board and the Examining Board for Technicians. Both had been relatively inactive and were targets for elimination. NPS public affairs officers were concerned that abolishing the two boards might be construed by local citizens as yet another attempt to eliminate the park from the national park system. OMB recommended both be renewed only through June 30, 1977. It opined:

[1224] *Annual Report for 1975.*
[1225] *Annual Reports for 1975 and 1976.*
[1226] "Land Bought by U.S. Park Service," *Sentinel Record*, 23 November 1977, Folder: Excess Property Removal—CY 1970s, Box 6, Accession 530.
[1227] *Annual Report for 1976*; and Superintendent Goodman to C. Powell Fordyce, letter, 29 November 1976, C3823.

"We agree that the two Hot Springs boards perform essential functions. However, these functions could more appropriately be performed through administrative mechanisms other than advisory committees, either through informal consultation by the park superintendant [sic] with qualified local doctors; or, if a more formal method is necessary, through State procedures for licensing physicians and technicians."[1228] True to form, Interior Secretary Cecil D. Andrus abolished both boards on June 30, 1977.

SUPERINTENDENCY OF RICHARD H. MAEDER, 1977-1981

Bernard Goodman transferred to Independence National Historical Park on June 19, 1977. His replacement as superintendent was Richard H. Maeder from Fort Laramie National Historic Site. Maeder entered on duty August 14, 1977.

The third bathhouse on Bathhouse Row to cease operations came on October 31, 1977. The Ozark Bathhouse closed its doors because of declining business. The Row bathhouses delivered 95,221 baths during the year, a 12.5 percent decrease from 1976. Park interpreters began offering tours of the Fordyce and Maurice bathhouses in early December and were surprised by the initial turnout.

RELEASE OF GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN, 1977

Published in October 1977, copies of the long-awaited General Management Plan (GMP) were available for distribution two months later. Superintendent Maeder held a public meeting in mid-December to launch the public review period.[1229] Produced by the Denver Service Center, the GMP was presented as a Proposal/Assessment and focused on Bathhouse Row and vicinity. Taking some ideas from the 1971 and 1974 planning documents, this GMP found it necessary to modify both plans because "new knowledge about the hot springs became available, Bathhouse Row Historic District was entered in the National Register of Historic Places, a second [sic] bathhouse on the row was vacated, and half as many people now take tub-baths as a decade ago." Already out of date upon its release by not recognizing closure of the Ozark Bathhouse, the GMP was intended to guide park management to the year 2000. It had as its primary focus that "most land in the park will remain in or will revert to 'as near its pre-settlement state as possible' to protect the recharge capacity of the hot springs." Further, the plan intended to guide the revitalization of Bathhouse Row and its general vicinity.[1230] Gone were the notions about Tivoli, living history demonstrations, pedestrian malls, and petting zoos. It represented a more traditional NPS GMP effort and de-emphasized any primary recreational aspect.

[1228] Quote from "William E. Bonsteel, Committee Management Secretariat, OMB, to Mary J. Howard, Committee Management Officer, Office of the Secretary of Interior,7 December 1976, Advisory Committee, HSNP Archives; and Public Affairs Office to Regional Director, 2 November 1976, A18 Examining Board for Technicians, 1944-1977.

[1229] *Annual Report for 1977.*

[1230] *Proposal/Assessment: General Management Plan, Hot Springs National Park (Bathhouse Row and Vicinity) Arkansas* (Denver, Colo.: Denver Service Center, National Park Service, October 1977), 5.

To revitalize the bathing industry, NPS encouraged bathhouse concessioners to "enliven their appeal to the public" by providing updated facilities to attract additional clientele. To make the national park more meaningful, NPS pledged to utilize the grand entrance as a focal point for visitor services. At the entrance area, park interpreters would help orient visitors to Bathhouse Row and the national park. In addition, the community would continue efforts to enhance the downtown area's appeal to tourists. Within the park, all vacant bathhouses were to be mothballed pending repairs and stabilization. The historic buildings would be preserved and adaptively reused. The Fordyce Bathhouse would serve as a visitor center/graphic arts center. Interpretive park rangers would utilize the second floor for offices, library, study collections, storage and training rooms. Maurice Bathhouse would become a theater specializing in 1920's productions and motion pictures. Thermal water displays and a West Mountain observation tower would complete visitor amenities.[1231]

Figure 182. Visitors mill about the Display Springs area, 1978 (HSNP 1970, National Park Service)

NPS emphasized the continued public use of thermal water. It suggested additional "opportunities for bathing in a more fashionable style to encourage all family members to bathe, to add physical fitness and cosmetic equipment and services that will form the basis of a health and beauty institute, and/or redesign, modernize, and spruce-up the interiors of the bathhouses." Some regulations would have to be amended or eliminated. Once the GMP was finalized, the practice of extending concession permits by one to three years—something non-conducive to investment in capital improvements—would cease and long-term contracts up to twenty years could be negotiated.[1232]

The GMP vision for the West Mountain observation tower and snack bar involved designing, building, operating, and maintaining it under a single concession. The concessioner would also operate a shuttle bus service to Bathhouse Row and back. Built east of an existing comfort station and parking lot the small area could not be expanded to accommodate private automobiles. If heavy visitation warranted, the shuttle bus service could be replaced with an aerial tramway. An alternative site recognized by the GMP was the former observation tower site on top of Hot Springs Mountain which had the necessary infrastructure already in place. Any tower development, however, would entail

[1231] Ibid., 6, 9, 15, and 19.

[1232] Ibid., 10. During the confusing 1970's planning era, after 1972, NPS discontinued granting traditional twenty-year contracts in favor of two-year terms or three-year terms to concessioners. In 1981, concession terms were negotiated for seven-year periods.

granting preferential rights to the former concessioner, Hot Springs Mountain Observatory Company.[1233]

NPS encouraged the City of Hot Springs to enact zoning for the west side of Central Avenue and preserve historic iron front downtown buildings there. It desired the city to construct an 800-car multilevel parking garage on the west side of Exchange Street between Bath and Mountain streets. The ground floor of the parking structure could also accommodate new commercial space. A block north would be the proposed "Hot Springs Square" opposite the Historic Entrance and Bathhouse Row. To create the square, Mountain Street would be closed to traffic and area buildings would be demolished. The immediate area would then be ideal for redevelopment into a shopping district potentially called DeSoto Mall.[1234]

In the analysis section, the GMP team expounded on what would occur should none of the proposals be implemented. It stated as follows:

> *"There is no indication that Hot Springs National Park faces immediate disaster if this project is not implemented. The more likely future course of the region, with no new development, is a continued gradual decline in the conditions of Bathhouse Row, further deterioration of commercial enterprises around the park, and a continuation of the presently unfavorable impression that the paucity of visitor activities leaves on many tourists attracted solely by the status of national park designation.*
>
> *"The basic problem is that therapeutic bathing and the spa society have almost disappeared from the American scene. The drastic decline in usage makes capital improvement difficult for the concessioners to finance. And as conditions deteriorate further, bathing will decline even more, creating a vicious cycle which may eventually cause Bathhouse Row to constitute a group of abandoned buildings, too expensive to operate but too significant to tear down."*[1235]

Southwest Regional Director John E. Cook approved the GMP On August 29, 1978. In December, an Interpretive Prospectus was also approved.

[1233] Ibid., 26, 31, 108 and 110. Panoramic views from Hot Springs Mountain, however, had two disadvantages. Neither Bathhouse Row nor the discharge area and gravel pits in Whittington Creek Valley would be visible.

[1234] Ibid., 37-39.

[1235] Ibid., 85. Team Captain and author of the Proposal/Assessment was W. Drew Chick, Jr.; Interpretive Planner William C. Bullard; Architect Frank L. Huntsman; Landscape Architect Gary W. Hurelle; Structural Engineer Maurice L. Paul; Interpretive Planner Nan V. Rickey; Interpretive Planner L. Clifford Soubier; Landscape Architect Larry Walling; and Concessions Specialist Andrew C. Wolfe—all of Denver Service Center. Hot Springs National Park superintendents Goodman and Maeder were also listed as team members.

Revised bathhouse regulations were published in the *Federal Register* on August 8, 1978. The revision removed references to the two abolished advisory boards and permitted the expanded use of thermal water for other than traditional therapeutic tub bathing.

Interpretive rangers continued to be amazed by the public interest in the bathhouse tours. Scheduled regularly during the summer months, tours were offered to the Fordyce Bathhouse and Health Services, Inc. Superintendent Maeder called the bathhouse tours "immensely successful" and noted that VIPs and Senior Community Aides were utilized for the tours. Meanwhile, preservation work on two shuttered bathhouses proceeded under contract. New roofs were installed on the Fordyce and Maurice bathhouses, ending the persistent water infiltration problem. In the Maurice, its stained glass panels were removed from the bath halls and placed in storage until the building could be rehabilitated.

The Buckstaff Bathhouse submitted plans for partial conversion to geothermal heat in 1978. NPS had hopes that the other bathhouses would follow suit to reduce their annual heating costs. It contracted for A/E services for a feasibility study to this end.[1236]

The fourth bathhouse on Bathhouse Row closed its doors at the close of business on October 31, 1978. The Hale Bathhouse succumbed to lack of business and its closure left only four remaining concessioners on the Row.

[1236] *Annual Report for 1978*; and Joe A. Caple, P.E., *Feasibility Study on Conversion of Bathhouse Heating Systems From Gas to Geo-Thermal Water* (Little Rock, Ark.: Cromwell, Neyland, Truemper, Levy and Gatchell, Inc., August 1978): 8, Library Vertical File: Feasibility Study—Geo-Thermal Heating Caple—1978. The study found there was "insufficient energy available at the temperatures necessary to use thermal water for complete heating of all six bathhouses with the original design conditions." It estimated conversion costs for the Buckstaff, Lamar, Ozark, Hale, Superior, and Health Services (Quapaw).

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Rejuvenation and Revitalization

Aware that the Hale ownership was not interested in renewing its lease, NPS issued an "Invitation for Proposal" in August 1978 calling for "imaginative new uses" for both the Hale and Ozark bathhouses. Two offers were submitted and one was accepted by a team from the Washington Office, Southwest Regional Office, Denver Service Center, and the park. Submitted by Charles E. Evans of St. Louis, Missouri, the Evans proposal called for installing Jacuzzi-type pools for family style thermal water bathing in both bathhouses. Evans was given a Statement of Requirements to complete in order to negotiate a contract. The bid fizzled when the proposer was unsuccessful in securing financing.[1237]

A park-wide inspection by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) of concessioner facilities the same month uncovered several violations of OSHA Safety and Health Standards, National Fire Protection Association life safety codes, and national electrical codes. While minor problems were immediately rectified, three principal problems were identified for correction: construction of additional exits, installation of fire alarm systems, and placement of illuminated fire exit signs.[1238]

A growing national organization opposed to federal land acquisition policies tried to organize new members within Hot Springs National Park. Charles Cushman, executive director of the National Park Inholders Association (NPIA) conducted a well-publicized meeting on August 24. With the assistance of NPIA's Hot Springs Advisory Board members, Cushman addressed a crowd of seventy local citizens. Also present were Superintendent Maeder and Brewster Lindner, Southwest Region, land acquisition division chief. During the two and a half hour meeting, Cushman launched into a "fast-paced monologue" concerning NPS land acquisition policies. He acknowledged that NPS had not been "as unreasonable or harassing in dealings with Hot Springs inholders as has been the case in other areas." Cushman's organization had filed suit in federal court against NPS charging the bureau did not comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. He said NPS failed to prepare any NEPA environmental impact statements on its land acquisition efforts and charged that NPS policy against any new construction within park boundaries constituted an illegal inverse condemnation. Through the Freedom of Information Act, Cushman's NPIA had notified all 34,000 inholders in national park units throughout the country advising them of their rights. Cushman asserted that one of NPIA's goals was to protect the local tax base which "is

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[1237] *Annual Reports for 1978 and 1979*; and "'New Uses' Sought For Two Historic Hot Springs National Park Bathhouses," National Park Service news release, Southwest Regional Office, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 8 October 1978, in Acquisition 530, Box 7, Leasing Information, Confidential; Not Sorted or Catalogued.
[1238] *Annual Report for 1978.*

being eroded in Hot Springs by the creeping cancer of the NPS." Another goal was "to protect the parks from the Park Service."

Charles Cushman cited a litany of supposed infractions from NPS land acquisition efforts throughout the country. His purpose was to stir local indignation against NPS where acquisition efforts had principally been among unwilling sellers. Such was not the case in Hot Springs, Arkansas, where willing sellers abounded. During the question and answer period, most of the inquiries were to regional lands chief Brewster Lindner on the mechanics of life estate calculations, how to make appointments with the appraiser, and when acquisition offers would be made. At the conclusion, a chagrined Cushman urged all local inholders to join NPIA and hold regular meetings to demonstrate to "NPS that they cannot treat inholders as second class citizens." Most left when Cushman mentioned $25 NPIA membership fees and passed out sample letters which could be sent to Congress.[1239]

Undeterred by the NPIA's local recruitment effort, the land acquisition program at Hot Springs National Park continued as before. In 1979, fifty-one new tracts of land were purchased totaling 98.43 acres. Twenty-two houses were declared surplus and sold through GSA for removal and former residential sites were restored to natural conditions. The first two declarations of taking on inholding properties, however, were also filed that year. Both considered threats or inappropriate land uses, a commercial gravel pit operation and an expanding commercial business were the targets of the declarations of taking actions.[1240] By 1979, 110 sellers had reserved a right of use and occupancy on tracts of residential property for periods of five to twenty-five years. Some reserved a life estate. By mid-year the park consisted of 3,817.26 acres. Remaining to be acquired were 190 tracts totaling 875.34 acres. Included in the program by potential donation were a Garland County tract of 45.08 acres and City of Hot Springs tract of 79.20 acres. To be acquired on an opportunity basis from the Hot Springs Municipal Water System were areas totaling 202.81 acres. NPS also identified 228.97 acres to be deleted from park boundaries for a potential realignment to provide a more identifiable and manageable boundary. Total cost of the land acquisition effort stood at $9,641,111.43[1241]

Spurred to act by Charles Cushman and the NPIA movement, NPS Director William Whalen mandated in August 1979 that each park with an active land acquisition program had to have an approved land acquisition plan by year's end. Whalen recognized that regional directors and superintendents were "out of the loop" because the

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[1239] Chief, Division of Land Acquisition, to Regional Director Cook, 1 September 1978, L1425, Folder: Inholders Association, Administrative Archives, Accession 530, Box 3 (not sorted or catalogued). The three members of the local board were Dr. Don Martin, Robert Bryant, and Norman Roscoe, all of whom were inholders.

[1240] *Annual Report for 1979.*

[1241] Superintendent Maeder to Regional Director Cook, 17 July 1979, L1425, no folder, Administrative Archives, Accession 530, Box 3 (not sorted or catalogued). Included as an attachment, "Hot Springs National Park, Status of Land Acquisition," June 1979. The two declarations of taking were as follows: Panyi tract (seventeen unit motel, retail liquor store, and a mobile home) and Reynolds Construction Company tract (expanding gravel removal operation). See Ibid., "Land Acquisition Issues and Responses," June 1979.

function was highly centralized in the Washington Office. To get field managers more involved, he hoped these plans would help them better understand the program's ramifications while at the same time diffusing the negative campaign being waged by Cushman and NPIA. Whalen conceded he may have helped exacerbate the situation because he took a strong stand on using the power of condemnation, especially in western parks where property owners seemingly were "'jerking around' NPS."[1242]

In compliance with Whalen's order, Superintendent Maeder on October 12 sent letters to 195 park inholders outlining the national park's land acquisition plan. Maeder called for a public meeting to discuss it at the Hot Springs Convention Center auditorium on November 15. Approximately eighty people attended and the draft plan was submitted to the Southwest Region on January 17, 1980. One of the side benefits of preparing the plan was identification of old streets and alleys within park boundaries and the presentation of twenty-three separate petitions to the city to vacate them. The Hot Springs City Council voted in favor of all of them.[1243]

Confirming that the on-going land acquisition program was focused correctly, NPS commissioned the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to study Hot Springs National Park. In a published report entitled *The Waters of Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas—Their Nature and Origin*, USGS meticulously analyzed the area and determined the combined flow of the forty-seven thermal springs ranged from 750,000 to 950,000 gallons per day with a combined temperature of sixty-two degrees Celsius. USGS noted that there had been a slight decline in temperature over time. It concluded:

> *"Tritium and Carbon-14 analyses of the water indicate that the water is a mixture of a very small amount of water less than 20 years old and a preponderance of water about 4,400 years old. The radioactivity and chemical concentration of the hot springs are similar to that of cold-water springs in the area. The dissolved solids concentrations range from 175 to 200 milligrams per liter. The main differences in the quality of the hot water, compared with the nearby cold ground water, are the high temperature and higher silica concentrations of the hot springs.*
>
> *"The geochemical data, flow measurements, and geologic structure of the region support the concept that virtually all the hot-springs water is of meteoric origin recharged locally. Recharge of the hot-springs artesian system is by infiltration of rainfall in the outcrop areas of the Big Fork Chert and Arkansas Novaculite. The water moves slowly to depth where it is heated by contact with rocks of high temperature. Highly permeable zones, related to jointing or faulting,*

[1242] Quotes from William Whalen, telephone conversation with author, 6 September 1989; and Ron Cockrell, *A Green-Shrouded Miracle: The Administrative History of Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, Ohio* (Omaha, Nebr.: Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service, 1992), 143-144.
[1243] *Annual Report for 1979.*

collect the heated water in the aquifer and provide avenues for the water to travel to the surface."[1244]

In March 1979, Judy Rozelle and Russ Pishnery, Branch of Concessions Management, Denver Service Center, prepared a feasibility study for a Hot Springs National Park observation tower. They concluded that a non-profit organization could build and operate a tower with construction costs amortized because the rate of interest on the investment would not attract private investment capital. They estimated such a tower could approach $1.5 million. Accordingly, while no NPS prospectus to potential concessioners would be issued, the DSC feasibility study would be shared with those who had expressed an interest in the endeavor. The study team recommended not pursuing the West Mountain location as preferred in the 1978 GMP because of its lack of utilities and parking facilities. In addition, adding these would adversely affect the park's budget and terrain. It recommended the Hot Springs Mountain location as the "most logical and practical location for a proposed tower."[1245]

Following up on the issue of granting a preference right to the former tower concessioner as mentioned in the GMP, the Southwest Regional Office submitted the question to Interior's field solicitor in Santa Fe. After evaluating the evidence, the solicitor's opinion was that the former concessioner had not performed satisfactorily under its previous contract with NPS. He reasoned that the contract was terminated because defects had developed in the tower and its repair was the concessioner's responsibility. It was an incorrect assumption made that the concessioner had operated satisfactorily because the defects caused the contract's cancellation and, therefore, no preferential right existed. The solicitor did, however, approve the concept of the City of Hot Springs through its chamber of commerce constructing and operating a new observation tower within Hot Springs National Park.[1246]

NPS awarded a $326,000 contract in 1979 for renovation for all thermal spring enclosures. The same year Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center changed ownership when all of its stock was purchased by Dewey W. Crow. NPS prepared an appraisal report to determine a fair rental rate should Crow's operation require use of the second floor. The bathhouse business continued to decline. The four remaining Bathhouse Row businesses gave 75,526 baths during 1979, a 15.3 percent drop from the 90,337 baths given in 1978.

[1244] Bedinger, M. S., F. J. Pearsons, Jr., J. E. Reed, R. T. Sniegocki, and C. G. Stone, *The Waters of Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas—Their Nature and Origin,* Geohydrology of Geothermal Systems, Geological Survey Professional Paper 1044-C (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979), C32, found in Library Vertical File: Waters of HSNP—Nature and Origin, 1979.

[1245] Judy Rozelle and Russ Pishnery, *Feasibility Study For An Observation Tower At Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas* (Denver, Colo.: Branch of Concessions Management, Denver Service Center, National Park Service, 1979), includes draft press release, Folder: Hot Springs Observation (Feasibility Study), Administrative Archives, Accession 530, Box 6 (not sorted or catalogued).

[1246] Gayle E. Manges, Department of the Interior, Office of the Solicitor, Field Solicitor, Santa Fe, to Regional Director Cook, October 1979, Folder: Observatory Tower, Accession 530, Box 2, Concessions Archives.

A new park-wide sign plan went into effect in 1979. All the replacement signs were made from aluminum. All the old wooden signs along park trails were removed. Signage measurements also for the first time included metric distances.

A building formerly used as a park quarters on Highway 71B was converted to a ranger station in fiscal year 1979.

The *Hot Springs National Park Land Acquisition Plan* received regional approval in April 1980. All park inholders on 1,115.08 acres of land had been informed in writing of the program and their ranking within it. In priority order for land acquisition were undeveloped, commercial, residential, and remnant streets and alleys. Inholdings were scattered throughout the national park and the active acquisition component was "winding down." It operated under the opportunity purchase concept within the availability of funds. Those who had not negotiated or accepted an offer for purchase, were regularly reminded of the government's open offer to purchase. Acquisition primarily consisted of fee ownership, but in certain instances easements could be sought by the government. According to the plan, development of undeveloped property was not permitted. Scenic easements on undeveloped tracts or residential tracts were also not appropriate.[1247]

The Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce purchased the remaining interests and assets of the former Hot Springs Mountain Observatory Company in February 1980 and stood ready to transfer the company to the City of Hot Springs Advertising and Promotion Commission, a non-profit organization, to construct a new tower. The commission, which began planning for a replacement almost as soon as the old tower was demolished, approved a design in 1980 to erect a new Hot Springs Mountain Tower standing 180 feet tall affording a panoramic view for visitors.[1248] Bids for the observation tower opened in July 1981 with a goal of having it underway or completed in time for the 150th anniversary of the establishment of Hot Springs Reservation in 1982. Funded by state issuance of Act 380 revenue bonds, the $1.5 million tower would become a symbol of the city and its national park. With two observation decks, the lower semi-enclosed and the upper completely open, the design was octagonal in shape and fifty feet in diameter. Each deck would feature four high-powered viewing telescopes. Connected to the ground with two high-speed elevators and an enclosed emergency stairway, the tower base held a 2,000 square foot souvenir shop with vending machines for soft drinks, candy, and chips. Proposed fees to ascend the tower were $2 for adults and $1.50 for children.[1249]

With the GMP in place and no settlement of their possessory rights in sight, the Fordyce family corporation filed suit in United States Court of Claims on April 8, 1980,

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[1247] *Hot Springs National Park Land Acquisition Plan* (Hot Springs, Ark.: National Park Service, February 1980), 2-7. Acting Southeast Regional Director Robert Kerr approved the plan on April 8, 1980.
[1248] Executive Vice President Les Green, Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce, to Superintendent Maeder, letter, 15 February 1980; and "History of the Hot Springs Mountain Tower, leaflet, 1980, both in Folder: Observatory Tower, Box 2, Concessions Archives, Accession 530.
[1249] "Bids Are Open For Observation Tower," *Sentinel Record*, 17 July 1981.

against the federal government.[1250] Both parties in *Fordyce et. al. v. United States* moved for a summary judgment in the case. On June 3, 1981, the United States Court of Claims unanimously ruled that the plaintiffs could recover "sound value" as defined in the National Park Concession Policies Act of 1965, rather than "book value" of the property. The court subsequently remanded the case to trial in order to determine actual value.[1251]

Meanwhile, NPS moved ahead on historic preservation activities at Fordyce Bathhouse. In October 1980, NPS awarded a $114,000 contract to repair and restore the stained glass ceilings inside Fordyce Bathhouse. As for the Maurice Bathhouse, plans to utilize it for a theater-museum were scrapped because congressional appropriations for its adaptive re-use "appeared 'so remote' the Park Service decided to consider 'something else.'"

NPS hoped to move forward with GMP plans for Hale Bathhouse to open as a theater and museum. Superintendent Maeder and Management Assistant Hugh Crenshaw began negotiating a contract with William Carroll, director of the "Hot Springs Experience" to utilize the Hale for a multi-media production on the history of Hot Springs, focusing on the thermal waters.[1252] On January 1, 1981, NPS announced it had negotiated a concessions contract with the Eye and Ear Company of Hot Springs, owned by William Carroll, to relocate Carroll's multi-media production to Hale Bathhouse. The first adaptive use of a bathhouse began in early 1981. Known as "The Hot Springs Experience Theatre and Galleria," William Carroll's company began modifying the Hale Bathhouse interior to meet modern requirements. The theater area, when not playing the twenty-five projector "Hot Springs Experience," would also be available for use by civic groups for meetings and forums. During the off-season, it would host classic films. Other areas of Hale Bathhouse included the Ludovicus Belding Art Gallery with exhibits by local artists and craftsmen and rotating historical exhibits. La Fete Café featured a menu of meat and cheese platters, sandwiches, pastries, and soft drinks. Victoria's Gifts and Victoria's Steam Cabinet Games, were two specialty shops selling respectively "turn-of-the-century art nouveaux items" and electronic games. The building's exterior was restored to its elegant historic appearance with streamers hanging from the restored sign. Employees wore clothing from the "Roaring 20's" encouraging visitors to come inside. While the art gallery, game room, gift, and snack shops opened in the spring, the theater became fully operational on June 16, complete with NPS permission to serve beer and wine. It operated for twenty-three days before it abruptly closed on July 8--with a short public announcement that owner William Carroll wished to sell and had relocated to Texas.[1253]

[1250] Acting Assistant Solicitor, Parks and Recreation, U. S. Department of the Interior, Charles P. Raynor to Director Whalen, 18 April 1980, and Samuel W. Fordyce, et al., Plaintiffs, v. United States of America, Defendant, No. 558-79L, United States Court of Claims, 8 April 1980, both in Management Archives, Accession 553.

[1251] C. Powell Fordyce to Superintendent Maeder, letter, 16 June, 1981, with attached copy of decision, Management Archives, Accession 533.

[1252] Larry Ault, "Restoration, Repair Work Start at Bathhouse Row in Hot Springs," *Arkansas Democrat*, 24 October 1980, Folder: Fordyce Bathhouse Court Case, Accession 691.

[1253] "NPS Announces Use For Hale Bathhouse," 1 January 1981, and "Hale Under Redevelopment: Local Bathhouse Makes Park History," 19 April 1981, both in *Sentinel Record*; Pam Reich, "Historic Bathhouse

Unbeknownst to the public, Carroll had admitted to Management Assistant Hugh Crenshaw that his wife had sued him for divorce and he expected to sign over all of his assets, including the business. While Carroll left for Texas, his attorney reported that the Hot Springs Experience Theatre and Galleria remained in Carroll's possession following the divorce decree settlement. However, Carroll never returned to Hot Springs and no one purchased his possessory interest in Hale Bathhouse. Carroll assigned his interests to the Arkansas Bank of Trust Company of Hot Springs on January 7, 1982, violating the concession agreement because it did not have prior approval of the secretary of the Interior. As a result, NPS declared him in default and terminated the contract on February 22, 1982. So full of promise, the innovative experiment at Hale Bathhouse had failed and the doors remained closed.[1254]

Figure 183. The short-lived "Hot Springs Experience Theater & Galleria" opened and closed in the Hale Bathhouse in 1981 (HSNP 2039, National Park Service)

HOT SPRINGS HEALTH SPA OPENS, 1981

Another renovation occurred at the Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center inside the long-vacant top floor. While the Libbey Center continued its therapeutic bathing operations on the ground floor, the upper level transformed into a modern health spa, complete with hot tubs, whirlpools, and separate exercise and locker rooms. Utilizing the thermal water, the Hot Springs Health Spa did not require medical supervision or prescription to use. Utilizing wall paper, carpet, cedar wood, and wicker furniture, the modern health club featured Universal gym equipment, saunas, steam cabinets, sitz baths, and private booths for massages. Available to both genders, Hot Springs Health Spa had a baby sitting service and classes in tap dance, ballet, yoga, and

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Row Falling Victim to Change," *Arkansas Democrat*, 10 May 1981; "Owner Moves, Theater Closed," *Arkansas Gazette*, 18 August 1981; and Acting Superintendent Crenshaw to William W. Carroll, letter, 15 May 1981, C3823 Eye and Ear Company (Hale Bathhouse), Box 2, Concessions Archives, Accession 530.

[1254] Management Assistant Crenshaw to Superintendent Giddings, 13 July 1981, C3823; Regional Director Robert Kerr to William Carroll, letter, 23 February 1982, C3823; Superintendent Giddings to Paul C. Rothert, Vice-President, Arkansas Bank and Trust, letter, 22 January 1982, C3823; and Regional Director Kerr to Vice-President Rothert, letter, 5 April 1982, C3823, all in Folder: Eye and Ear Company (Hale Bathhouse), Box 2, Concessions Archives, Accession 530.

aerobic and floor exercises. Health spa memberships were sold and patrons could pay $6 for a single visit. It opened on April 1, 1981.[1255]

Proposals for the re-use of the Maurice and Ozark Bathhouses went out with a prospectus in 1981. Five respondents replied by the deadline and only one was deemed acceptable: Jo Luck Wilson's renovation of Maurice Bathhouse. The former director of Arkansas Department of the Parks and Tourism, Wilson proposed to use the thermal water for geothermal heating, health, and beauty purposes. She submitted an architectural design for the Maurice to "modernize thermal water bathing on Bathhouse Row," but unfortunately, insufficient capital investment doomed the project.[1256]

Economic recession and high inflation had hit the U.S. in the late 1970s and early 1980s, helping bring about the election of former California Governor Ronald Reagan to the presidency. Upon taking office, President Reagan instituted a federal hiring freeze and proposed immediate budget cuts. For Hot Springs National Park, this meant two vacant positions could not be filled: park aid and maintenance worker. The park operated at twenty-three full-time equivalencies, twenty part-time positions, and thirteen summer seasonal employees. Fortunately, amendments to the National Historic Preservation Act in 1980 authorized a federal historic preservation tax incentives program to foster private sector rehabilitation of historic buildings while promoting economic revitalization. Managed jointly by NPS and the Internal Revenue Service in partnership with state historic preservation offices, the program was designed to reward private investment in rehabilitating historic buildings. With tax incentives, NPS also launched its Historic Property Leasing Program with guidelines forthcoming in 1982. As the sour economy doomed the Maurice and Ozark Bathhouse proposals, NPS hoped that future efforts would bear fruit.[1257]

NPS commissioned a study by Fayetteville, Arkansas, consulting geologist Kenneth F. Steele in May 1981, concerning returning one or more of the thermal springs to their natural free-flowing state. While there were already small display springs (Maurice, Indian, and Fordyce), Steele was asked to determine what effect, if any, would result on the surrounding tufa by returning thermal springs to their natural discharge. Tufa terraces grew when thermal water discharged at the surface with resulting calcite deposits. This natural process was not occurring at the display springs, according to Steele, because "sufficient carbon dioxide degassing is not allowed in the enclosed discharge system." Potential new discharge sites should be "slightly uphill of the tufa on a gentle slope in order to allow for carbon dioxide degassing before flowing onto the tufa" would be, in Steele's view, ideal for long-term thermal water displays.[1258]

[1255] "Health Spa Opens," *Sentinel Record*, 23 March 1981, and Pam Reich, "Historic Bathhouse Row Falling Victim to Change," *Arkansas Democrat*, 10 May 1981.
[1256] Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Kerr, 15 October 1981, C3817, Accession 530, Box 7, Leasing Information, Confidential; Not Sorted or Catalogued, HSNP Archives.
[1257] Steve Nichols, "Bad Economy Dooms Proposals for Bathhouses," *Sentinel Record*, 11 December 1981, and David Glenn, "Local Officials Wait," *Sentinel Record*, 24 February 1981.
[1258] Kenneth F. Steele, *Feasibility of Returning A Portion of the Hot Springs to Natural Discharge—Geological Aspects* (Fayetteville, Ark.: typewritten report for the National Park Service, 19 May 1981), 1, 4, 11-12.

The City of Hot Springs moved forward with a revitalization project called Hill Wheatley Plaza, named after a prominent downtown businessman and property owner. Planned by the Hot Springs Development Foundation in the spring of 1981, the parking area and plaza across Reserve Avenue from the NPS Administration Building and Visitor Center followed contemporary landscape architecture design. Its curvilinear style was meant to provide a dramatic improved appearance for Central Avenue and downtown with an easy pedestrian circulation pattern. NPS, while lacking authority to obligate appropriated funds outside authorized boundaries, was eager to provide thermal water to Hill Wheatley Plaza for a display fountain and jug fountain, augmenting the one in front of the Administration Building across the street.[1259]

Figure 184. Visitors at Hill Wheatley Plaza in downtown Hot Springs across from NPS Administration Building, early 1980s (HSNP 10532, National Park Service)

SUPERINTENDENCY OF ROGER GIDDINGS, 1981-2003

Figure 185. Roger Giddings (National Park Service)

In late spring 1981, Richard H. Maeder received a transfer to superintendent, Colonial National Historical Park. NPS Director Russell E. Dickenson named Roger Giddings, Grand Canyon National Park management assistant, to the position of superintendent at Hot Springs National Park. Giddings, a twenty-year NPS employee with a degree in wildlife management, held numerous previous positions throughout the bureau, including the Washington Office. Giddings entered on duty on June 28, 1981.

A positive factor favoring Hot Springs National Park was its popularity. In 1981, it ranked second in visitation among America's national parks with 5,301,994 visitors and it stood alone as the only national park in an urban area. Heaviest visitation occurred during the summer months of June, July, and August. Hot Springs yielded the top ranking only to Great Smoky Mountains National Park with 12,006,847 visitors. Superintendent Giddings remarked, "We are pleased that Hot Springs National Park is one of America's

[1259] Acting Associate Regional Director, Planning and Cultural Resources, Southwest Region, Thomas W. Lucke to Superintendent Maeder, 13 April 1981, D18, and Acting Superintendent Crenshaw to Regional Director Kerr, 4 June 1981, D18, Library Vertical File: Hill Wheatley Plaza.

favorite national parks. To be among the most visited national parks in the nation is an honor, and indicates Hot Springs has a lot to offer."[1260]

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICA'S FIRST NATIONAL PARK

To celebrate a century and a half since Congress reserved the Hot Springs of Arkansas on April 20, 1832, Roger Giddings and his staff worked with the city to stage a memorable celebration. Kicking off the schedule was a 150th Anniversary Art and Photo Exhibit and Bathhouse Tour, at Fordyce Bathhouse, April 11 to 20, 1982. Following a long tradition of musical events in the park, a U.S. Navy Band concert occurred on Arlington Lawn the evening of April 19. On April 20, a plethora of events filled the day. Groundbreaking ceremonies for the new observation tower took place on the summit of Hot Springs Mountain, followed by an encore performance of the U.S. Navy Band on Arlington Lawn which led to the official 150th Anniversary Presentation there with NPS Director Russell E. Dickenson. Immediately following was a luncheon at the Arlington Hotel. After lunch a parade filled Central Avenue. The City of Hot Springs issued an official proclamation declaring it "Hot Springs Reservation Day," and NPS offered free birthday cake and coffee at the park Administration Building. During regular operating hours on April 20, the thermal water concessioners offered a $1.50 discount on the regular price of a thermal water bath. Finally, until the end of May, the Little Theatre at the Mid-America Museum offered "I'm Told…," a collection of stories from older Hot Springs citizens reciting personal tales about the past.[1261]

Figure 186. Visitor Center and Park Headquarters sign with NPS arrowhead, 1984 (HSNP 4346.1, Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service)

Other anniversary-related events occurred the same week. On April 13, the historic Maurice Springs, an assortment of four thermal springs between the Maurice and Hale bathhouses, re-opened in a formal ceremony. Closed since the early 1940s because of deteriorated piping and persistent vandalism, the area became overgrown with

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[1260] Quotation from "Hot Springs National Park Is Second In Number of Visits To All National Parks," National Park Service news release, 16 June 1982, Press Releases, Management Archives, Accession 530. Ranked three through ten were Grand Teton (3,489,034), Acadia (3,273,095), Rocky Mountain (2,654,197), Yosemite (2,583,154), Grand Canyon (2,526,179), Olympic (2,482,305), Hawaii (2,367,911), and Yellowstone (2,018,848).

[1261] "Schedule of Events—150th Anniversary," *Sentinel Record*, 18 April 1982; and "Spa Marks 150 Memorable Years: He Speaks This Morning, Park Director Pays Visit," *Sentinel Record*, 20 April 1982.

vegetation and largely forgotten. With repairs to mortar joints, fountains, lampposts, a new protective gate, replacement concrete steps, and rejuvenated landscaping, the area came back to life. Visitors could now utilize a jug fountain and cup fountain and view the open thermal spring in its historic setting.[1262] On April 14, a special ceremony above the Stevens Balustrade on the Grand Promenade took place. At the event, Superintendent Giddings announced the Grand Promenade Trail was listed as a national recreation trail.[1263]

On November 13, 1982, the African American owned and operated National Baptist Hotel and Bathhouse closed. In operation since 1951, the facility in the Woodmen of the Union Building at 5021 Malvern Avenue was put up for sale the following year. It sat empty, condemned, and in danger of demolition for decades until, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1997, developers purchased and restored it to serve as housing for senior adults.[1264]

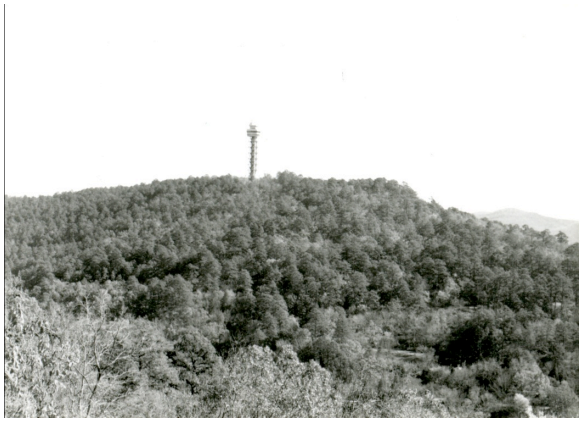

Figure 187. Perhaps the most visible icon of a revived Hot Springs, the modern observation tower is perched atop Hot Springs Mountain, November 10, 1988 (HSNP 10248, National Park Service)

In mid-December 1982, Roger Giddings realized what his predecessors had all dreamed about: opening a thermal spring and permitting it to cascade down Hot Springs Mountain. Located on the north end of Bathhouse Row, the thermal water flowed down the mountainside naturally approximately 100 feet to a pool on Arlington Lawn. In cool weather, its flow became more evident with steaming vapors rising from the water recapturing the historic "Valley of the Vapors" setting. As long as concessioners and the Hill Wheatley Plaza had sufficient thermal water volume, the opened spring would continue to flow at a rate of 45,000 gallons per day throughout each year.[1265]

[1262] "Historic Maurice Springs To Reopen After 40 Years," *Sentinel Record*, 13 April 1982; and Jerry Mitchell, "Maurice Springs Reopen After 60 Years," *Arkansas Democrat*, 18 April 1982. The later article focused on Hillary "Hill" Wheatley who claimed the springs had been closed since the 1920s, and he gave credit to Roger Giddings in reopening it. Praising the new superintendent, Wheatley said "We finally got a good live wire. It's what we've been needing for a long time."

[1263] Steve Nichols, "Popular Promenade Gains National Status," *Sentinel Record*, 14 April 1982. Giddings submitted the application to the Arkansas Parks and Tourism Commission for its review and approval, prior to submitting it to the NPS Southwest Regional Office and Washington Office. National recreation trails must be longer than 300 feet, managed in a satisfactory manner, and available to the public for at least ten years. In 1982, Arkansas ranked sixth among all states with thirty-one such trails.

[1264] Accessed September 20, 2012: http://www.theuzuriproject.org/history.html; Sharon Shugart, *Hot Springs of Arkansas Through the Years: A Chronology of Events* (Hot Springs, Ark.: Hot Springs National Park, National Park Service, 2004); and https://www.fhlb.com/press/2009/pr_20090227%282%29.htm.

[1265] "Hot Spring Reopened for View," *Sentinel Record*, 16 December 1982.

Resolution of the U.S. Court of Claims case filed by the Fordyce family partnership began in 1982. The court ordered a private appraiser to determine the family's possessory interest based on Fordyce Bathhouse's "sound value," defined as "reconstruction cost less depreciation evidenced by its condition and prospective serviceability in comparison with a new unit of like kind but not to exceed fair market value at time of government acquisition." The initial appraisal determined the possessory interest at $980,000,[1266] but further litigation yielded a final settlement of $152,000.[1267]

On June 3, 1983, the new $1.6 million Hot Springs Observation Tower opened to the public. After a brief ceremony, Mayor Jim Randall and other area residents took the first elevator up the 216-foot tower from the ground-floor gift shop. It stood fifty feet taller than its predecessor and included an open-air emergency egress stairway. The new tower quickly became a symbol of a proud city determined to rejuvenate and revitalize itself.[1268]

Discovering Historic Preservation

Private commercial interests in the downtown area, particularly those opposite Bathhouse Row, remained divided over supporting new development. When the Arkansas State Historic Preservation Office discussed establishing a potential Central Avenue historic district, few voiced support for the effort. A leading merchant, Hill Wheatley, who owned up to forty-five percent of the storefronts in the area, generally supported new development but he wanted to see progress made on rehabilitating the Row first. Wheatley's position made sense. If NPS did not act to rehabilitate its own historic buildings, why should they [local merchants] do so? With most of the Row empty and deteriorating and the opposite side of Central Avenue appearing derelict and shabby, it became clear that NPS needed to lead the way at Hot Springs National Park with historic preservation high on its civic agenda. After all, the Department of the Interior and National Park Service were the federal vanguard that developed and set the standards for historic preservation within the United States.[1269]

Superintendent Giddings found himself constrained by the 1978 GMP which focused primarily on Bathhouse Row and vicinity and emphasized the continuation of the bathing industry. By the early 1980s, the industry had all but collapsed with only two Bathhouse Row businesses struggling for survival. With Roger Giddings' support and advocacy, NPS decided to launch a new GMP/DCP for Bathhouse Row based upon

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[1266] Quotation from Acting Director Stan T. Albright to Assistant Solicitor, Parks and Recreation, L1425; and C. V. Barnes, CCIM, GRI, Realtor, *Appraisal Report of the Possessory Interest of Fordyce Bath House, A Partnership in The Fordyce Bath House, Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas* (Little Rock, Ark., typewritten report, December 1981), 54.

[1267] Southwest Region Associate Regional Director, Park Operations, Keith E. Miller to Superintendent Giddings, C3823, Management Archives Accession 553.

[1268] Roger Hedges, "New Tower Is Open To Public," *Sentinel Record*, 4 June 1983.

[1269] Louis Torres, *Historical Overview of Bathhouse Row, Hot Springs National Park* (Denver, Colo.: Denver Service Center, National Park Service, 1983), 21-22. The Hot Springs Central Avenue Historic District was first listed in the National Register of Historic Places on June 25, 1985, and subsequently amended with an expanded boundary on September 19, 2007.

historic preservation principles to find compatible uses for the old bathhouses other than the traditional thermal baths.[1270]

Giddings approved a sixteen item list of appropriate adaptive uses under the Concessions Policy Act of 1965 and Section 111 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Identified through an A/E investigative study, the proposed uses were as follows:

1. National Park Service Visitor Center
2. Fine Arts Center
3. Museum
4. Native arts and crafts center with production studios, exhibits, and sales
5. Nature Center
6. Health and beauty or physical fitness center
7. Recreation uses, such as indoor sport or amusement center
8. Medical/professional building
9. Restaurant
10. Ice Cream Parlor
11. Health Food Store
12. Gift Shop
13. Galleries for art/sculpture/crafts
14. Movie Theatre
15. Institutional/educational or governmental offices
16. Conference center

Because the buildings were so large, more than one activity could easily occupy a single bathhouse.[1271] An analysis in the Southwest Regional Office resulted in the conclusion that "we have a long way to go before we are even in a position to develop a lease proposal." The region considered it a priority to appoint a historic property realty officer. It recognized that issuing prospectuses for thermal bathing concessioners had not yielded a workable result and the best way forward was through the Historic Property Leasing Program. However, this required preparation of historic structure reports to guide all leased historic properties that needed substantial construction treatments. In addition, historic structure preservation guides (HSPGs) were also required as part of any new lease to spell out specific responsibilities for preservation maintenance of rehabilitated bathhouses.[1272]

Leasing a historic structure would take the responsibility for that business from the government and put it on the private enterprise entrepreneur. No longer would the

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[1270] Request for information by Senator Bumpers, reply sent to Washington Office via telephone 5 March 1985, A2623 Reports, Situation, Briefing Statements, 1-24-84 to 10-3-86.

[1271] Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Kerr, 14 January 1983, H30 Leasing of Historic Properties. Regulations for the Historic Leasing Program appear in 36 *C.F.R.* Part 18 and Special Directive 82-12.

[1272] Quotation from Chief, Division of Concessions, Southwest Region, Cloyd Kump to Associate Regional Director, Park Operations, Jack W. Neckles, 10 February 1983; and "Position Paper, Implementation of Historic Leasing Program, Hot Springs Bathhouses," in Box 7, Leasing Information, Confidential; Not Sorted or Catalogued, Accession 530.

government be liable for a possessory interest that had not depreciated out. As one source put it:

> *"Maybe it's easier to love a business somebody else has to worry about. The federal government wants to find out. That's why the Interior Department is working up leasing guidelines for historic structures on park land. Leases would take the monkey off the government's back and put it on private enterprise. There would be no buy-outs by Uncle Sam if a business in a bathhouse failed. Leases would run for 30 to 99 years, would not restrict profit-making for the business and could provide extensive tax shelters for investors under the Economic Recovery Act of 1981. Leases could provide for investors to pay for rehabilitation of historic structures in lieu of rent, putting ownership of the building in the government's hands when the lease is up. Proceeds from leases would go to the park service to preserve, maintain and administer historic structures."*[1273]

The Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 (Public Law 97-34) provided historic preservation tax incentives for rehabilitation projects which the secretary of the Interior designated as "Certified Rehabilitations" or "Certified Historic Structures." Because Bathhouse Row Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places, projects there qualified under the Tax Act for a twenty-five percent investment tax credit as of January 1, 1982. Under the regulations:

> *"The costs of rehabilitation must exceed the greater of $5,000 or the adjusted basis of the property. The monetary test to qualify for the tax credit must be met with a 24-month period or, for phased projects where architectural plans and specifications are completed before the rehabilitation begins, over a 60-month period. In addition, 75 percent of the existing exterior walls must remain in place as external walls in the rehabilitation process. The 25 percent investment tax credit can be combined with a 15-year cost recovery period for the adjusted basis of the property."*[1274]

Consistent with the Southwest Region's new policy, when Superior Bathhouse owners—unsuccessful in finding a new buyer of their bathhouse operations—requested NPS issue a prospectus for it to find a new concessioner in August 1983, Superintendent Giddings recommended against granting the request. Instead, he believed the best course was to settle the possessory interest and put Superior Bathhouse into the Historic Property Leasing Program. Regional Director Robert Kerr concurred, stating:

[1273] Anita Houk, "Bathhouse Row: Hot Springs' Bathhouses Have Fallen On Hard Times, And Uncle Sam's Scheme May Bail Them Out," *Mid-South: The Commercial Appeal*, Special Issue: "Hot Springs' Bath: Out of Hot Water?" 18 April 1982, Folder: Photocopied Clippings on HSNP, 1982.

[1274] *Adaptive Uses for Bathhouse Row, Hot Springs National Park* (Denver, Colo.: Concessions Branch, Professional Support Division, Denver Service Center, National Park Service, February 1984), 14, Box 8, Accession 530.

> *"Your memorandum serves to confirm my concerns that we should not be looking for adaptive uses under authority of the Concessions Act. Given the history of the bathing industry and in keeping with our responsibility for preserving the structures, I have concluded that it is time to move from the concessions program to the leasing authority of the National Historic Preservation Act as the most practical means of adaptively using the bathhouses."*

Kerr also reaffirmed the need for a new General Management Plan to address the future of Bathhouse Row.[1275]

At the close of business on November 5, 1983, Superior Bathhouse closed its doors to patrons for the last time. It became the fifth casualty to the declining bathhouse business on Bathhouse Row.[1276]

MAKING BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS

Following up on the Land Acquisition Plan and an environmental assessment done in 1980, a team of Southwest Region and park members evaluated the national park boundary in March 1983 to identify specific recommendations to implement. Their proposed boundary changes totaled a deletion of 299.22 acres, addition of 3.67 acres, for a total reduction of 295.55 acres. The team identified the following categories:

> *A. The deletion of tracts of land, some with improvements, that are not considered necessary for park operation and management or protection of the recharge area (-280.49 acres)*
>
> *B. The deletion of portions of tracts of land where acquisition would result in severance (-14.03 acres)*
>
> *C. The deletion of some tracts, presently in public ownership, that are and can be expected to be compatible with the management goals of the national park, such as city park land (-4.70 acres)*
>
> *D. The addition of severed lands which lie outside of the established boundary and have been acquired (+1.72 acres)*
>
> *E. The addition of severed lands which lie outside of the established boundary and would represent an uneconomic remnant if not acquired (+0.11 acres)*

[1275] Regional Director Kerr to Superintendent Giddings, 3 October 1983, and Giddings to Kerr, 7 September 1983, C3823, Box 7, Leasing Information, Confidential; Not Sorted or Catalogued, Accession 530.

[1276] Sharon Shugart, *Hot Springs of Arkansas Through the Years: A Chronology of Events* (Hot Springs, Ark.: Hot Springs National Park, National Park Service, 2004).

F. The addition of severed lands which lie outside of the established boundary and will result in a more manageable boundary while providing additional protection of Bull Bayou (+1.84 acres)

The team recommended the boundary changes be enacted by Congress prior to the completion of the park's Land Acquisition Plan, scheduled by mid-1984.[1277] The plan passed Washington Office review in January 1985, ready for the regional director's approval—but not before it was re-titled to de-emphasize its acquisition aspect to reflect prevailing Reagan-era Department of the Interior philosophy. It now became known as the Land Protection Plan.[1278]

Without mentioning the fact that President Ronald Reagan's Department of the Interior had intentionally starved federal land acquisition efforts by refusing to use the Land and Water Conservation Fund, Superintendent Giddings explained the NPS plan to modify the park's authorized boundary. Stating that the tracts proposed for deletion were not federally owned and were outside the defined thermal spring recharge area, he announced the "new boundary would run along roads and property lines instead of severing land parcels and heavily developed residential lots." The plan effectively excluded city-owned West End Park from the federal park boundary.[1279]

On February 6, 1984, Health Services, Inc., operating in the former Quapaw Bathhouse since 1968, closed its doors to patrons. Its board of directors appealed to NPS for permission to move its operations to the Superior Bathhouse, citing structural problems and safety hazards caused by a leaking roof and deteriorating skylights. The board, representing stockholders of other remaining Hot Springs bathhouses, admitted it could not afford roof repairs and did not want to expend funds for temporary interior work that did not solve the larger problem. With the Superior slated for the Historic Property Leasing Program, NPS denied the request. With Health Services, Inc., out of business, in early June 1984, Giddings announced the bathhouse, known for its dome of gold ceramic tile with blue classic designs, was reverting to its historic name: Quapaw Bathhouse. Simultaneously, Giddings added that the original large bronze letters and two original bronze "Quapaw Baths" plaques, which had been donated by the building's former owner, were being restored to the building's exterior. He asked other citizens with Quapaw artifacts willing to donate them to contact him.[1280] With the closure of Quapaw Bathhouse, only two operating bathhouses remained on Bathhouse Row: Lamar and Buckstaff bathhouses.

Another large rock landslide occurred on March 23, 1984. Adjacent to the Arlington Hotel, a slide on the southwest end of North Mountain came crashing down

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[1277] *Proposed Boundary Change, Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas* (Santa Fe, N. Mex.: Southwest Regional Office, National Park Service, December 1983), 4-6, Letter Document Box 4, Accession 6364.
[1278] Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Robert Kerr, 21 January 1985, A26 Reports, Biweekly, 12-6-84 to 12-27-85.
[1279] Mark Gregory, "Park Service Proposes Modifying Authorized Boundary," *Sentinel Record*, 20 January 1984.
[1280] Superintendent Giddings, memorandum to All Employees, 9 February 1984; and "Bathhouse to Take Former Name Again," *Sentinel Record*, 5 June 1984.

into an open parking lot on the hotel's northwest side on Central Avenue. Large boulders came close to the street and destroyed thirteen parked vehicles and damaged a parking deck. The rock slide took out a low retaining wall and fence designed to catch debris from the mountainside. Consulting geologists from the Arkansas Geological Commission recommended that one large boulder considered unstable be removed from the mountain and that Arlington Hotel not try to recover all of its parking lot. Debris from the rock slide left in place would help buttress the cut and stabilize the slope from future slides. The geologists ruled that the slide would not have occurred had the hillside's toe not been removed. A cursory look along Central Avenue to the northwest revealed similar man-made cuts and they identified a potential future slide site behind the Downtowner Motor Inn with joints similar to the Arlington slide site.[1281]

A NEW GMP/DCP BEGINS, 1984

The Concessions Branch in the Professional Support Division of the NPS Denver Service Center prepared in February 1984 *Adaptive Uses for Bathhouse Row, Hot Springs National Park.* As part of the on-going Development Concept Plan (DCP) for the new General Management Plan, the branch was asked to address the following issues: economic decline of the Central Avenue Business District, decline in demand for traditional bathing, the market for commercial space along Central Avenue, parking, and adaptive uses for the bathhouses. The team found that there were individuals and corporations interested in leasing the bathhouses for profitable adaptive uses already identified. They stated that reviving activity along Bathhouse Row "might provide the impetus needed to start improvements on the west side of Central Avenue." Real estate owners there were reluctant to invest in rehabilitation as this would necessitate an increase in rental charges to tenants. Tenants observed that there was little opportunity to attract local residents downtown because there were no longer any department stores there and were discouraged by parking meters and commercial pay lots. They believed NPS was remiss in allowing an almost vacant Bathhouse Row to present an "uninviting atmosphere" to visitors.

While past planning team efforts agreed that Central Avenue be treated holistically, many in the business community doubted NPS would "ever do anything with Bathhouse Row." These NPS planners posited that NPS become the leader and act first. Among their recommendations, the Denver-based team called for offering a bathhouse or a group of bathhouses for adaptive uses through the preparation of a Request for Proposal (RFP) with lease terms of at least fifteen years with options for renewal. Rehabilitation and other improvements to the buildings by the lessee should not be classified as a possessory interest. Ideally, there should be a prime lessee with privileges of subleasing.

[1281] William V. Bush and John David McFarland III, Arkansas Geological Commission, to Norman F. Williams, undated memorandum on Arlington Hotel Landslide, Library Vertical File: Arlington Hotel Landslide, Miscellaneous Information, 1984.

Figure 188. Fordyce Bathhouse men's bath hall with De Soto fountain and skylight, 1984 (HSNP 4346.30, Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service)

Prior to negotiating a lease, NPS should conduct a market and economic feasibility study to ensure any adaptive use or uses would be a financial success.[1282]

In March 1984, Giddings formally announced to the public the NPS was pursuing bathhouse leases through the Historic Property Leasing Program. No longer bound by the Concessions Policy Act, he explained the new program's tax incentives for those making improvements and that adaptive uses would "require a fairly substantial investment…. Whatever goes in them will have to be compatible" with the over-all park operation. The goal, Giddings explained, was to attract long-term tenants because, "We want businesses which will come to stay."[1283]

NPS continued to work toward a new GMP/DCP to permit leasing bathhouses for adaptive uses. The park's $1.1 million fiscal year 1985 budget included $500,000 to correct critical deficiencies in the bathhouses in order to get them ready to be leased.[1284] In June 1984, NPS's Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) sent Jack E. Boucher, staff photographer, and a summer team of architectural students to document Bathhouse Row. HABS came at the invitation of and through a grant provided by the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program (AHPP). In addition to the Row, HABS also documented the shuttered Pythian Bathhouse which was still under threat of demolition.[1285]

The service opened itself to criticism in the summer of 1984 when NPS unveiled its exhibit at the Louisiana World Exhibition in New Orleans. With the fair's theme of "The World of Rivers—Fresh Waters as a Source of Life," the NPS display failed to

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[1282] *Adaptive Uses for Bathhouse Row, Hot Springs National Park* (Denver, Colo.: Concessions Branch, Professional Support Division, Denver Service Center, National Park Service, February 1984), 1, 21-22, Box 8, Accession 530.

[1283] Philip Launius, "New Program Spurs Park Service In Search for Bathhouse Tenants," *Arkansas Gazette*, 29 March 1984.

[1284] Superintendent Giddings to Mrs. K. Juan Wheatley, letter, 29 November 1984, A381 Public Relations 1984.

[1285] Lynn Reichert, "Bathhouse Row Studied To Preserve Architectural Style," *Sentinel Record*, 19 June 1984; and Jaci Carfagno, "'HABS' Team In State For First Time Since Great Depression," no date, unidentified publication of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program. AHHP was also concerned that continued, unmitigated deterioration on Bathhouse Row might claim one or more of the bathhouses.

include in its coverage of water-oriented parks any mention of Hot Springs National Park. Arkansans were particularly upset about the omission; on "Arkansas Day," June 10, 1984, a delegation led by Governor Bill Clinton observed that the region's most popular national park had been slighted. One citizen protested to Director Russell Dickenson: "I was embarrassed for the Governor and the officials of Hot Springs who were part of the delegation to see firsthand the lack of support from the National Park Service for Arkansas' most highly attended attraction, Hot Springs National Park." He continued stating:

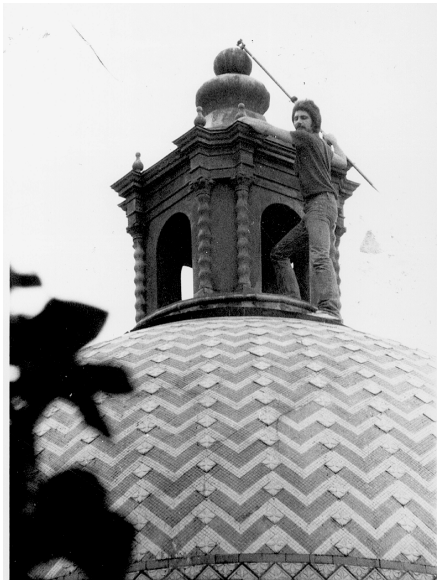

Figure 189. HABS team member Dan Wininski measures Quapaw Bathhouse dome and cupola, 1984 (HSNP 4346.197, Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service)

"I was frustrated because it is all too apparent that the regional officials of the National Park Service do not consider the nation's second [sic] oldest, and one of the highest attended, national parks worthy of being included in an exhibition which is located in the same area of the country as the Park itself—especially when you consider that a large number of the visitors to the World's Fair are being encouraged by both the State of Arkansas and the Hot Springs Advertising Commission to stop over in world-famous Hot Springs National Park."[1286]

Governor Bill Clinton also responded, expressing displeasure and disappointment. He asked Director Dickenson to correct the omission and offered the informational services of his office, the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, or "Park Superintendent, Roger Giddings, and his outstanding staff at the Park."[1287]

Tragedy struck on December 27, 1984, when a small plane crashed into West Mountain on an afternoon with thick fog. The Beechcraft Bonanza was flying over 100 miles per hour when it made a wrong turn after missing an attempt to land at Hot Springs Municipal Airport. The plane struck 200 feet from the first roadside overlook on West Mountain Drive. It was the first plane crash inside Hot Springs National Park and it claimed the lives of the pilot, his wife, and a passenger, all of whom lived in Iowa.[1288]

[1286] Don Pittman, President, Pittman & Associates, Inc., to Russell Dickerson [sic], letter, 11 June 1984, A3615 Complaints About Service and Personnel, 3-28-84 to 7-28-86.
[1287] Governor Bill Clinton to Russell Dickerson [sic], letter, 29 June 1984, A3615 Complaints About Service and Personnel, 3-28-84 to 7-28-86.
[1288] Jerry Mitchell, "Airplane Made 'Wrong Turn' Before Fatal Crash," *Sentinel Record*, 29 December 1984. Killed on impact were pilot, Jack W. Graf, 51, and Leah Graf, 54, of High Amana, Iowa, and Monte Murray, 27, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Leah Graf's daughter, Lorri Westrom, 27, survived the plane crash.

Internal NPS review of the draft GMP/DCP occurred in early 1985. The Southwest Region staff provided numerous comments to the Denver Service Center prior to the document being forward to the Washington Office for policy concurrence. The first issue raised was that the Ozark Bathhouse would serve as the park's visitor information and interpretation facility. The Southwest Region concurred that the Fordyce Bathhouse would be made available for leasing. Vacated space in the Administration Building would be used for park offices. The issue of parking for Bathhouse Row would be addressed with NPS working with the city and private interests to identify solutions. In addition, the issue of whether or not there were sufficient thermal water storage facilities needed to be addressed with a study to begin immediately with results included in the final plan. The region estimated that a new 500,000 to 1 million gallon storage facility might cost anywhere from one to two million dollars. Also, curatorial collection storage needed to be provided in the bathhouse visitor center; should adequate environmental controls prove to be not feasible or available space insufficient, remodeling one half of the Reserve Avenue duplex could be the backup plan. Following required historic preservation compliance procedures, several historic structures would be eliminated, including the vacant superintendent's residence, West Mountain comfort station, and employee quarters.[1289] The review process came as Senator Dale Bumpers (D.-Ark.), before a budget hearing of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, urged Interior Secretary Donald P. Hodel to expedite the GMP/DCP by no later than August 1. Senator Bumpers urged Hodel to go to Hot Springs and view the "deplorable" state of Bathhouse Row.[1290]

Congressional interest further intensified on April 9, 1985, when Congressmen Bruce Vento (D.-Minn.) and Austin Murphy (D.-Pa.), chairman and a member of the House Interior Committee's National Parks and Recreation Subcommittee, visited Hot Springs National Park. After touring Bathhouse Row and Hot Springs Mountain Tower, Vento declared: "It is a shame that this park has not received… the kind of attention it deserves. The elements are here, the pieces are here… Now we have to make it happen." Both representatives were invited by a local citizens group which originated from the Hot Springs Downtown Rotary Club and had expanded to include other members. The as yet unnamed local group led by attorney Clay Farrar, Jr., expressed three goals: relocating the visitor center to Fordyce Bathhouse, leasing the vacant bathhouses to private entrepreneurs, and forming a Hot Springs National Park Advisory Commission. The group also calculated that Hot Springs National Park received only twenty-one cents per park visit in federal funding compared to an average two dollars at other national parks.[1291] When Vento returned to Washington, D.C., he wrote to Acting NPS Director Mary Lou Grier, backing the efforts of the local support group and the Historic Property Leasing Program. Aware that the Ozark Bathhouse was the preferred visitor center location, Vento warned that the local community still backed the 1978 GMP goal of converting the Fordyce Bathhouse to a visitor center. Vento expressed displeasure at the existing interpretive facility stating:

[1289] Regional Director Kerr to Manager, Denver Service Center, 14 March 1985, D18 GMP/DCP.
[1290] "Senator Urges Secretary's Tour of Bathhouse Row," *Sentinel Record*, 6 March 1985.
[1291] Roger Hedges, "Spa Bath Houses Come Up For Air," *Sentinel Record*, 10 April 1985.

"The existing visitor center does not present a suitable orientation to the park, nor effectively communicates the park's cultural or natural significance. Frankly, my reaction to the visitor center was adverse. I do not believe that Hot Springs National Park or the National Park Service is well served by what is, at best, an inadequate presentation to the public. Considering the number of visitors at Hot Springs National Park, I believe it would be in the best interests of the Park Service to give the highest possible priority to obtaining funds for an adequate visitor center."[1292]

Figure 190. Water recedes from the street and sidewalk in front of Bathhouse Row after heavy rainfall, June 18, 1984 (HSNP 10009, National Park Service)

Grier responded that NPS was placing the Fordyce Bathhouse into the historic leasing program because several community members expressed interest in converting it to a health spa, an activity perpetuating the use of the thermal water for bathing. Should those private interests not come to fruition, NPS would consider using it for interpretive purposes. Grier stated the park would continue to solicit community input and had established a park newspaper for that purpose. It was also considering establishing a "Friends of Hot Springs National Park" organization, modeled on the community support group which had formed at Independence National Historical Park.[1293]

Local Congressman Beryl Anthony (D.-Ark.), who arranged the Vento-Murphy visit, told the same House Interior subcommittee that Hot Springs National Park was "decaying and dying" because of inadequate funding. Anthony proposed $5 million for park operations and to refurbish the Fordyce Bathhouse, nearly four times what NPS requested in fiscal year 1986. He termed NPS management under the Southwest Region "irresponsible. They have been bad managers of the public property under their trust." He urged Congress to tell NPS to "get off their rear ends" and lease the vacant bathhouses. Declaring that six of the eight Bathhouse Row establishments were closed, he added, "It's not good stewardship of public property if something remains vacant for 21 years." Declaring that downtown Hot Springs "is decaying and dying as the national park is decaying and dying," Anthony continued, "If you don't put in any money, the private sector's not going to put in any money."[1294]

[1292] Rep. Bruce F. Vento, Chairman, Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation, to Acting Director Grier, letter, 23 April 1985, A3615 Complaints About Service and Personnel, 3-28-84 to 7-28-86.
[1293] Acting Director Grier to Rep. Vento, letter, 31 May 1985, A3615 Complaints About Service and Personnel, 3-28-84 to 7-28-86.
[1294] "Anthony Assails National Park Service: Congressman Terms Management of Hot Springs National Park 'Irresponsible,'" *Arkansas Gazette*, 19 April 1985.

THE COMMUNITY AWAKENS: PLEA FOR THE PARK

Clay Farrar, Jr., and four other Hot Springs residents flew to Washington, D.C., in late April 1985 to attend a national chamber of commerce convention and to meet with NPS Chief Historical Architect Hugh Miller. Miller, head of NPS's Historic Property Leasing Program, had never been to Hot Springs, and the group hoped to influence him to act, primarily by assigning a full-time leasing specialist to coordinate leasing of the bathhouses. Farrar pledged to keep lobbying NPS to act. "The bottom line is, we're not going away," he said. Farrar's group hired Washington consultant Hershel Lipow to lobby for increased funding for Hot Springs National Park.[1295] Farrar kept speaking out against NPS intransigence before local groups, demanding increased funding and attention to be paid to Hot Springs National Park. It reached a wider audience when the National Trust for Historic Preservation's publication *Preservation News* highlighted the issue in a front-page article critical of NPS. "It is a failure of flexibility," Farrar declared. "The Park Service has created bureaucratic obstacles to re-leasing the buildings for other purposes." Farrar attributed it to dragging down the city's economy and that inaction contributed to downtown's woes.[1296]

Upon release of the GMP/DCP public review draft, Farrar and his Rotary National Park Committee went ballistic. In a *Sentinel Record* guest editorial entitled "Plea for the Park," Farrar wrote:

> *"Over the years, the citizens of Hot Springs have taken our National Park for granted. Most of us assumed the National Park Service has had a benevolent and caring attitude in its management of our Park. Most of us assumed the National Park Service had every reason to protect, preserve, and enhance our National Park.*
>
> *"We must now come to understand that our community has been in error trusting the good intentions of the decision makers of the National Park Service. We are only one of 48 National Parks. Each National Park is engaged in a battle for its fair share of the limited resources allocated to the National Park Service. National Parks such as Yellowstone have a natural constituency within the Park Service that gives an automatic advantage in resource allocation. However, our National Park has no such advantage. Therefore, we must come to realize that we must actively fight for the betterment of our National Park.*
>
> *"We come to a crucial event in the determination of the future of our National Park. Every 10 years or so, the Park Service develops its master plan for the future of Hot Springs National Park. This plan is the Bible of the Park. If a master plan does not properly address the needs of our National Park for particular projects and worthwhile objectives, then*

[1295] Roger Hedges, "Bath House Topic of Meet in Washington," *Sentinel Record*, 29 April 1985.
[1296] Michael Leccese, "Hot Springs Hiatus Seen Ending: But Locals Fault Park Service—Say Bath House Rentals Lagged," *Preservation News*, June 1985, and Dorothy Starnes, "Park Dollars at Lowest, Says Rotary Panel Chief," *Sentinel Record*, 12 June 1985.

those objectives are altogether precluded until the adoption of the next master plan."[1297]

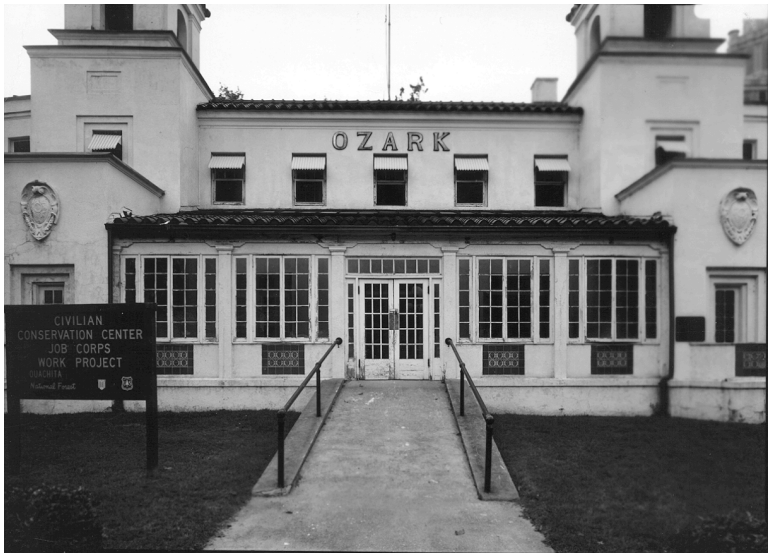

Figure 191. Ozark Bathhouse with Civilian Conservation Corps Jobs Corp Work Project sign on front lawn, 1984 (HSNP 4346.100, Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service)

Stating that public involvement in planning development was limited and that there was only one public meeting scheduled for the newest master plan, Farrar marshaled the citizenry, declaring, "The participation of interested Hot Springs' citizens is crucial. We must demonstrate to the Park Service the commitment of our community to the enhancement of our National Park." Noting that the congressional delegation would be in attendance, Farrar continued:

> *"Our failure to participate in future planning for Hot Springs National Park could result in the step by step dismantlement of our National Park. National Parks are like military bases. The Defense Department can slowly, but surely, dismantle the functions of a particular military base, so that one day that base is no longer needed. In a similar manner the National Park Service can dismantle a National Park. Our Rotary National Park Committee submits to the Hot Springs community that there is an underlying effort on the part of some Park Service officials to dismantle Hot Springs National Park.*
>
> *"What is at stake? The new proposed master plan is a catastrophe. Never has Hot Springs National Park been presented with such a negative plan. This plan has no vision for the enhancement of our National Park. Rather, the plan is a retreat from the worthwhile goals established in the 1978 master plan."*[1298]

Farrar noted the retreat from 1978 on the visitor center being located at the Fordyce Bathhouse. In 1985, NPS called for the existing Administration Building visitor center to be remodeled and remain in use. "This is a slap in the face of every citizen of Hot Springs. For 25 years the Park Service has recognized the need for a new visitors' center. Now the Park Service retreats from its Fordyce visitors' center plan, to a visitors' center plan so inadequate as to constitute a default of the obligation of the Park Service to

[1297] Clay Farrar, "Plea for the Park," guest editorial, *Sentinel Record*, 30 June 1985.
[1298] Ibid.

provide proper facilities for National Park visitors." He criticized the 1985 GMP's proposal that if leasing fails, NPS would "mothball" the empty bathhouses. He called for NPS first to improve the bathhouses so that they could be successfully leased. "The empty bath houses deteriorated during the period that the Park Service held title. It is the responsibility of the Park Service to at least return the empty bath houses to the condition they were in when vacated." He concluded, "In summary, the July 2 public hearing may well be the last chance to save our National Park, as an attractive and viable tourist attraction. Please take time to come to the public hearing to demonstrate the resolve of our community to 'save our Park.'"[1299]

Superintendent Giddings tried to temper public outrage by explaining the $5.4 million cost for converting the Fordyce to NPS use was deemed impractical in the current Reagan era of domestic budget reductions. Therefore, the modest $146,000 to renovate the existing visitor center had an advantage with adjacent parking in Hill Wheatley Plaza just steps away.[1300]

Two positive events transpired prior to the July 2 public meeting. First, on June 25, the Hot Springs Central Avenue Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Second, the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee approved $1,163,000 to begin the planning to convert the Fordyce Bathhouse to the park's visitor center. Congressman Beryl Anthony made the announcement in Little Rock where he also revealed that incoming NPS Director William Penn Mott, Jr., accepted his invitation to visit Hot Springs National Park on August 30-31.[1301]

Farrar's group, now calling itself the "Committee for Enhancement of Hot Springs National Park," helped temper the public outrage against NPS at the July 2 public meeting where more than 400 citizens appeared along with congressional representatives to voice their concerns. Held in the convention center auditorium, the Committee for Enhancement criticized the "stingy" 1985 NPS plan, called for its revision, and threatened legal action to make NPS act. The politically astute Roger Giddings wryly observed, "It looks like the Fordyce might make a very nice visitors center," to the crowd's sustained applause. A journalist observed, "Park service officials, including hearing moderator Douglas Faris and planning team captain Roger Brown, grew slightly red in the face at times during the congressional siege, but at the same time seemed amused and impressed by the Washington trio and the enthusiastic Hot Springs crowd."[1302] The well organized opposition submitted its written response to NPS at the conclusion of the public hearing.[1303]

[1299] Ibid.

[1300] Roger Hedges, "National Park Management Plan Scales Back Previous Proposals," *Sentinel Record*, 30 June 1985. Giddings necessarily had to be cost-conscience. Within six months, he held meetings with park staff to identify savings in park operations in the areas of utilities, travel, training, and supplies. See Superintendent Giddings to All Employees, 6 January 1986, A3815 Public Relations 1985-86.

[1301] News Release, National Park Service, National Register Listings for the Week of June 23, 1985, 5 July 1985; and Anthony Moser, "House Panel OK's Funding For New Hot Springs Center," *Arkansas Democrat*, 2 July 1985.

[1302] Roger Hedges, "New Park Plan 'Isn't Good Enough,' Claims a Congressional Delegation," 3 July 1985, and "Downtown's Fate Held in City's Own Hands," 4 July 1985, both in *Sentinel Record.* Giddings

More criticism of the draft GMP/DCP came from State Historic Preservation Officer Wilson Stiles who lambasted Southwest Regional Director Kerr on its historic preservation aspects. He advised against demolishing the old superintendent's residence, deeming it premature to label the historic structure excess to the park's needs. He encouraged it be conveyed via covenants to prevent its demolition. Similarly, Stiles called out NPS on the West Mountain comfort stations: "You call for demolition, and it's only because you can't afford to repair them at this time. But you're willing to spend $17,500 to demolish and record them. This is inexcusable."[1304]

Figure 192. Superior Bathhouse, 1984 (HSNP 4346.128, Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service)

Three weeks later, NPS issued a request for proposals for five historic bathhouses, notably reserving the Fordyce Bathhouse from the program. NPS called for proposals to be submitted over the next two months covering a single bathhouse, a combination, or all five. While considering lease terms up to ninety-nine years, the bureau preferred to issue leases of thirty or forty years.[1305]

An off-shoot of the public debate over the draft GMP involved thermal water rates. The draft plan proposed NPS initiate a gradual increase of rates in order for the government to recover its costs to operate and maintain the water system, estimated at $200,000 annually. It proposed setting separate prices for hot and cool water so that elevated costs for the cooling system could be recovered from the users. The local debate centered around rates rising from twenty-five cents per thousand gallons to that of the rate for city water, or $2.30 for the first thousand gallons and $1.14 for each additional thousand gallons monthly. This resulted in a concerted lobbying campaign against any rate increase with the argument being that increased rates would adversely impact

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reported to Southwest Region the congressional delegation's and public unanimous opposition to the 1985 retreats from the 1978 plan. See Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Kerr, 12 July 1985, A26 Reports, Biweekly, 12-6-84 to 12-27-85.

[1303] Committee for Enhancement of Hot Springs National Park, Inc., *Hot Springs' Response To Proposed General Management Plan*, National Park Service Public Hearing, July 2, 1985, Hot Springs National Park.

[1304] Wilson Stiles, Arkansas SHPO, to Regional Director Kerr, 16 July 1985, H4217, Box 6, Management Archives, Accession 530.

[1305] National Park Service, *Request for Proposals: For Lease of Five Historic Bathhouses: The Hale, The Maurice, The Ozark, The Quapaw, The Superior; Hot Springs National Park, Garland County, Arkansas,* 22 July 1985.

financial stability of users. They also argued it was NPS's responsibility under federal law to make the thermal water available for public use. NPS planners and managers reached a compromise. No rate changes would occur until such time as a study of the park's thermal water system could be accomplished. The compromise stated that such a study would include:

> *"storage needs, efficiency, economics and other factors relevant to optimum utilization and conservation of the thermal waters. Any subsequent change in the rate structure will not increase the rates charged for thermal water used in traditional therapeutic bathing; will be published for public review prior to adoption; will reflect statutory priorities for use of thermal water; and may include higher rates for non-traditional, lower-priority, or high volume use and to recover NPS costs to operate and maintain the system."*[1306]

As promised, NPS Director William Penn Mott, Jr., came to Hot Springs National Park on August 30, 1985 for an inspection tour. Mott's theme throughout his visit was "You've got to think big. You can't win by just piddling along with the minor stuff." Mott's encouragement to city leaders and the business community to "think big" struck a resonant chord throughout the city and inspired an infectious enthusiasm. Director Mott's entourage included U.S. Senator Dale Bumpers and Congressman Beryl Anthony, an administrative aide to Senator David Pryor, and Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton. The group focused on the provisions of the draft GMP/DCP and NPS's new reaffirmation for the Fordyce Bathhouse as the park's visitor center. Mott directed Superintendent Giddings to work with the Committee for Enhancement of Hot Springs National Park and urge members to travel to Lowell, Massachusetts, to study the historic preservation program and activities of Lowell National Historical Park. Mott stated that NPS needed to be more imaginative with regard to bathhouse leasing. He recommended the community seek congressional authorization to form a national park advisory commission. Mott also pledged that an NPS planning team would draft an interpretive prospectus and establish a professional interpretive program.[1307]

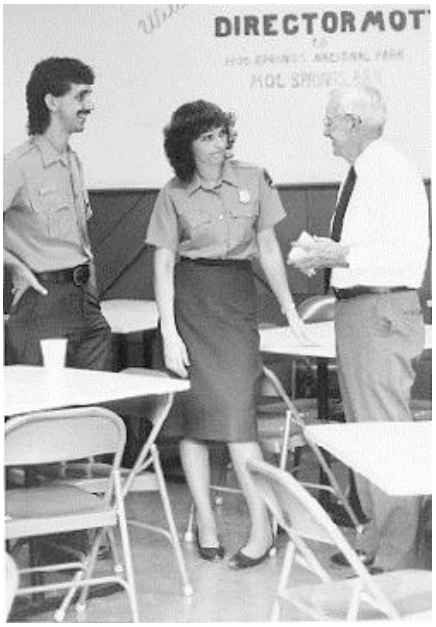

Figure 193. NPS Director William Penn Mott, Jr., talks with maintenance workers Tim Jarrell and Sami Bailey, 1985 (HSNP 10265, National Park Service)

[1306] "Hot Springs National Park, Thermal Water Rates," 26 August 1985, Briefing Statements File, A2623 Reports, Situation, Briefing Statements 1-24-84 to 10-3-86.

[1307] Roger Hedges, "Park Chief Pushes 'Think Big' Themes," *Sentinel Record*, 31 August 1985; Clay Farrar to Director Mott, letter 9 September 1985, Management Archives, Accession 533; and Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Kerr, 12 September 1985, A26 Reports, Biweekly, 12-6-84 to 12-27-85. Members of the interpretive planning team arrived September 9-13 and consisted of Larry

Figure 194. Stevens Balustrade at formal entrance, 1984 (HSNP 4346.147, Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service)

HISTORIC LEASING PROGRAM BEGINS, 1985

In mid-October, NPS received eighteen proposals from prospective tenants in the first phase of the Historic Property Leasing Program. They included plans for food service, overnight accommodations, performing and fine arts, retail sales, and medical and health uses. Some envisioned using the thermal water, others did not. NPS clearly stated that the five bathhouses would require substantial rehabilitation and capital investment. Those accepted from the first phase would enter a second phase involving submission of specific rehabilitation and investment plans for the structures.[1308] Because one of the proposals involved a microbrewery, a phenomenon growing in popularity in the U.S. in the 1980s, Giddings asked for a field solicitor to render a legal review because the specialty beer would be made from the thermal water. Visitors could view the brewing process and the beer could be sold on the premises or within the city limits. Neither Interior nor the NPS had a policy regarding a microbrewery. Giddings reasoned that "if a policy on a Servicewide or Departmentwide basis cannot be achieved in time for us to respond to the proposer at the start of Phase II of the proposal process, we will

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Tillman, Bill Brown, Kip Stowell, and Jerry Ward of Harpers Ferry Center; Marilyn Hof, Gary Johnson, and Ruth Eitel of Denver Service Center; and Dan Murphy of Southwest Regional Office.

[1308] "18 Proposals on Bathhouses Taken; Park Service Now to Seek Specific Plans to Decide Tenants for 5 Sites," *Arkansas Gazette*, 15 October 1985.

establish a park practice which will reject the establishment of a brewery operation in the park."[1309]

Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton decided to forego the congressional route when, on November 6 in a luncheon meeting with the Hot Springs Downtown Rotary Club he announced his own "Governor's Advisory Commission on Hot Springs National Park." Clinton, accompanied by Arkansas First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, named thirteen individuals to the new commission. Clinton wanted to "make it clear the national park is not just a Hot Springs priority… but a state priority." As the state's number-one leading tourist attraction, Clinton viewed Hot Springs National Park as an important entity for which the state would now play an active role in seeking more federal aid for development. Clinton declared, "I have become convinced that I needed to do something as your governor, as well as a Hot Springs native, to demonstrate that the state of Arkansas is willing to do something to help you with the redevelopment of Hot Springs. I'm going to stick with this until the bitter end and I think you will (too)…. I hope this is another small step in what will be a great revival."[1310]

Clinton's pronouncement came as yet another Row bathhouse went out of business. When the Lamar Bathhouse closed its doors to customers at 11:45 a.m. on November 16, 1985, it left the Buckstaff Bathhouse as the lone business on Bathhouse Row serving visitors the therapeutic thermal baths. Before issuing a concessions prospectus, Roger Giddings opted to put the Lamar into the Historic Property Leasing Program.[1311]

Governor Clinton's new advisory commission soon tested its authority by passing a formal resolution calling on NPS to allow the Hot Springs Advertising and Tourist Promotion Commission, operators of the observation tower, additional time before charging it a three percent franchise fee. Owed under the concession contract and due on June 1, Southwest Regional Director Robert Kerr informed the city by a November 7 letter that the collection deadline had long passed and the required fee needed to be paid. Commission Chairman Clay Farrar appealed to Kerr stating that while the tower's first two years of operation were a success, collecting a franchise fee was not justified. Farrar requested that a five year moratorium be invoked in order for the tower to establish a more long-term profitability. Kerr denied the request, arguing that the tower's sizeable profit margin made it "one of the highest rates of return enjoyed by any concessioner operating in the National Park Service" and that if the franchise fee was not paid by

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[1309] Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Kerr, 7 November 1985, D18, Box 7, Leasing Information, Confidential; Not Sorted or Catalogued, Accession 530.
[1310] Roger Hedges, "Spa Meetings Draw Governor, First Lady; Governor Names 13 to Commission on National Park," *Sentinel Record*, 7 November 1985. Appointees were Clay Farrar, Jr.; Mayor Jim Randall; City Attorney Carol Crow, Jr.; Eric Jackson; Mark Fleischner; Louis Kleinman; Leland Hilborn; Mike Sigman; David Love; Lewis Lyle; Stan Miller; Gwendolyn Cupp; and L. W. "Bill" Clark.
[1311] Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Kerr, 20 November 1985, A26 Reports, Biweekly, 12-6-84 to 12-27-85; and Roger Hedges, "Downtown Loses Another Tradition as Lamar Bath House Closes Doors," *Sentinel Record*, 16 November 1985.

December 26, the city would be in default.[1312] Despite Governor Clinton's commission's advocacy, the franchise fee was paid.

Willful disregard of government regulations and requirements resulted in termination of the De Soto Hotel-Motor Lodge and Bathhouse special use permit for the thermal water. Warned in August and October 1985 that the business consistently neglected to supply a list of employees and the positions they occupy to the superintendent on a monthly basis, NPS spelled out the consequence of this inaction was termination of the De Soto's thermal water supply. NPS followed through on January 1, 1986, and shut-off the water at its source. Final termination of the permit followed on August 8, in advance of the business being sold at a bankruptcy auction on August 22.[1313]

Eighteen proposals were received by January 17, 1986, for phase two of the Historic Property Leasing Program initiative. Closer examination of the proposals revealed only six were actually feasible and worthy of further consideration, A panel from the Washington Office and Southwest Regional Office had forty-five days to evaluate the proposals for the rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of the Superior, Hale, Maurice, Quapaw, and Ozark bathhouses. January also marked the initiation of approval from the Washington Office to begin spending $2.08 million earmarked for the Fordyce rehabilitation. The largess was bittersweet, however, because at the same time the park's budget was cut 4.3 percent ($49,500) for fiscal year 1986, leaving $1,100,600 to operate. In addition to reduced work schedules, the tight budget meant relinquishing GSA vehicles, cutting ranger patrols, not filling vacant positions, and eliminating eight summer seasonals.[1314]

Funding for numerous projects, however, continued into 1986. Rehabilitation of the thermal storage and distribution system entered the fourth stage by replacing the main lines in front of Bathhouse Row at a cost of $500,000. Another contract involved replacing the heat exchangers for the thermal water ($50,000). NPS also contracted to replace the entire electrical system for Bathhouse Row ($200,000) and rehabilitated the light standards ($75,000). This work also completed the burial of all electrical lines in the area. Electrical upgrades and rewiring were also accomplished for the Administration Building, three employee quarters, curatorial storage building, and water pumping system to the Hot Springs Mountain Tower ($111,000). The Stevens Balustrade stonework behind the Maurice and Fordyce Bathhouses saw rehabilitation accomplished during the year ($50,000) as did the Grand Promenade's brick walkway ($300,000). The parking

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[1312] Clay Farrar, Jr., Chairman, Governor's Advisory Commission on Hot Springs National Park, to Regional Director Robert Kerr, letter, 5 December 1985; and Kerr to Farrar, letter, 18 December 1985, both in A1619 Advisory Board on National Parks, Arkansas Governor's Advisory Commission 11-7-85 to 10-28-86.

[1313] Superintendent Giddings to Jeng Chen, Desoto Hotel-Motor Lodge, certified letters, 5 November 1985 and 8 August 1986, C3823; and "De Soto Sold at Auction," *Sentinel Record*, 26 August 1986, all in De Soto folder, HOSP 530, Box 2, Concessions Archives. The winning (and only) bid was from Hill Wheatley.

[1314] "Park Service Reports 18 Proposals Qualified for Bath House Phase II," *Sentinel Record*, 17 January 1986; and "Information Provided [to] Lew Lyle, Governor's Advisory Commission," no date, A1619 Advisory Board on National Parks, Arkansas Governor's Advisory Commission, 11-7-85 to 10-28-86.

beneath the magnolia trees along Central Avenue received a layer of St. Augustine sod ($8,000) and a new sprinkling system ($7,000). Rehabilitation at the Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center ($200,000) and placement of iron rails and rock work for the thermal cascade display and tufa trail at Arlington Lawn ($9,000) also occurred. Bathhouse renovations included a roof replacement for the Ozark ($50,000) and rehabilitation of the Fordyce marquee ($75,000). Also during fiscal year 1986, Hot Springs National Park staff "entered the computer age" by purchasing equipment and supplies ($65,000).[1315]

The Governor's Advisory Commission on Hot Springs National Park adopted a resolution on January 22, 1986, aimed at assisting in the revitalization of the downtown business district. Noting the presence of certain undesirable businesses which conflicted with their vision of a family tourist center, the commission noted the presence of topless bars, adult bookstores and similar adult entertainment establishments defined as lewd under Arkansas law. It called on state and local governments to apply strict adherence and enforcement of laws and regulations to control them. In other words, the commission went on record as opposing further licensing or granting permits to such detrimental entities.[1316]

Also in January, Superintendent Sandy Walter of Lowell National Historical Park visited Hot Springs and advised the city to establish an historic preservation standards board. She heralded the experience of Lowell, Massachusetts, which had created a local heritage park with a restoration standards board in 1977. The resulting revitalization effort inspired Congress to establish a national historical park there in partnership with city efforts. In partnership with the Lowell Historic Preservation Commission overseeing development projects, grants, and loans, the city enjoyed an influx of 700,000 visitors in 1985. Its unemployment rate dropped from thirteen percent in 1975 to less than four percent. Equally impressive, for every one dollar in public spending, fourteen dollars in private sector funding went into Lowell's historic preservation revitalization effort.[1317] The Lowell superintendent offered hope for a similar transformation in Hot Springs. Walter recommended removing the unsightly canopy and overabundance of signage to recreate a more historic ambience in downtown Hot Springs.

On February 28, 1986, Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton announced that his native Hot Springs was officially enrolled in Main Street Arkansas, a state program affiliated with the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street U.S.A. program. While it made available the National Trust's consulting and training services, the city pledged $45,000 for three years to finance a Main Street director and related planning efforts. The city also received a $500,000 grant from the Arkansas Industrial Development Commission to be used for downtown sidewalk and street upgrades.[1318] The city launched a Central Business Improvement District (CBID) in the downtown historic

[1315] "Information Provided [to] Lew Lyle, Governor's Advisory Commission," no date, A1619 Advisory Board on National Parks, Arkansas Governor's Advisory Commission, 11-7-85 to 10-28-86.
[1316] "Resolution," Governor's Commission on Hot Springs National Park, 22 January 1986, A1619 Advisory Board on National Parks, Arkansas Governor's Advisory Commission, 11-7-85 to 10-28-86.
[1317] Bob Kowalski, "Park Chief Pushes Restoration Board," *Sentinel Record*, 23 January 1986.
[1318] Roger Hedges, "State's Main Street a 'Go' for Spa City," *Sentinel Record*, 1 March 1986.

district area approved by two-thirds of the property owners who agreed to pay a special tax for use in the district as approved by a board of directors. Up to $500,000 in CBID funds would be matched by the state to further fuel the engine of downtown revitalization.[1319] As a visible sign of change, the ugly pedestrian canopy opposite Bathhouse Row on Central Avenue soon came down.

A non-traditional thermal water use request from the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center (HSRC) to pump water on its property for HSRC geothermal heating purposes initiated a profound debate within NPS and Interior. The March 1985 HSRC request finally brought an answer a year later: No. Interior's Santa Fe Field Solicitor Gayle E. Manges opined that the HSRC request was a utility use, adding, "Even without considering possible NEPA concerns and depletion of the thermal waters, the legislation for the Park does not authorize use of the hot water within the Park for other than bathhouses and bathhouse uses incidental thereto." Recognizing that a legislative remedy could be sought, Regional Director Robert Kerr pondered the potential unknown damage caused by pumping within the park's thermal recharge zone. He declared, "Until we have conclusive proof that there will be no adverse impacts upon the springs, I must refuse the HSRC request in order to protect the park's primary resources."[1320]

Superintendent Giddings announced on March 14, 1986, that NPS would negotiate a lease with Arkansas businessman Melvyn Bell for the five vacant Bathhouse Row bathhouses. Bell, chairman and chief executive officer of Environmental Systems Company of LittleRock, a hazardous waste disposal firm, and recent purchaser of the Magic Springs amusement park outside of Hot Springs, had the best proposal out of the two-phase Request for Proposals exercise that commenced in July 1985. Giddings declared,

> *"Mr. Bell's proposal successfully demonstrated that he and his development team have the vision, the finances, the management capability, and the architectural expertise to carry out this major rehabilitation project. We anticipate that the adaptive uses of the Superior, Hale, Maurice, Quapaw, and Ozark Bathhouses will be instrumental in the revitalization of downtown Hot Springs."*

Giddings urged patience, stating "Because the lease negotiations will be complex, we do not anticipate having a signed lease overnight. The rehabilitation of these magnificent bathhouses requires a significant investment on Mr. Bell's part, and there will surely be considerable discussion between him and the National Park Service before we finalize a lease agreement."[1321] Estimated cost for the renovation work was set at $8.25 million.

[1319] Briefing Statements, Main Street U.S.A. and Central Business Improvement District, May 1986, May 1986, A2623 Reports, Situation, Briefing Statements 1-24-84 to 10-3-86.
[1320] Interior Field Solicitor Gayle E. Manges to Regional Director Kerr, 25 February 1986; and Regional Director Kerr to Superintendent Giddings, 5 March 1986, N3617, Library Vertical File: Thermal Heating of Buildings, Administrative Correspondence, HSNP Archives.
[1321] "National Park Service to Negotiate Bathhouse Lease with Melvyn Bell of Little Rock," press release, 14 March 1986, A1619 Advisory Board on National Parks, Arkansas Governor's Advisory Commission, 11-7-85 to 10-28-86.

The Bell proposal called for the following building uses: Superior Bathhouse, museum for mechanical musical instruments; Hale Bathhouse, bed and breakfast inn; Maurice Bathhouse, restaurant with office space on second floor; Quapaw Bathhouse, physical fitness health spa; and Ozark Bathhouse, arts center.[1322] Proposed uses for the Maurice and Quapaw were subsequently switched.[1323]

Funding for NPS projects received intense scrutiny in Congress during 1986 as the Reagan administration sought to reign in federal domestic spending. When Hot Springs National Park appeared on a list of 138 national park areas where new entrance fees were to be charged, Senator Dale Bumpers (D.-Ark.) questioned it. Director Mott responded it would be "downright impossible… even if you thought it was a good idea to begin with." On March 11, Mott exempted the park from entrance fees. At that same hearing, the NPS director acknowledged the administration's budget neglected to include funding for the Fordyce rehabilitation, stating "We have not requested funds for the next fiscal year due to the budget restrictions. However, I can say that the long-range outlook for the Fordyce Bathhouse looks very favorable." Bumpers concurred, stating he intended to introduce an amendment adding on funds to the current year's $2.1 million appropriation to complete the three year project. Three members of the governor's commission traveled to Washington, D.C., in late April to ensure that Mott and Bumpers carried through with their promises.[1324]

Congress also accommodated Hot Springs' interests in pending tax reform legislation, granting a twenty-five percent credit for bathhouse rehabilitation. Melvyn Bell had gone on record stating he would lose $1.5 million without the tax credit in the overall $10 million bathhouse rehabilitation. Already inserted into the Senate version, Rep. Beryl Anthony (D.-Ark.) amended the House version to include it as well.[1325] While Bell's representatives commenced intense negotiations with NPS on May 14, the tax overhaul bill progressed through Congress with a "transition rule" intact. In effect, it exempted the bathhouse rehabilitation from a provision reducing historic preservation tax credits from twenty-five to twenty percent. House and Senate conferees voted to retain the exemption on September 18. Senator David Pryor (D.-Ark.) declared, "The inclusion of this transition rule fulfills a federal commitment to encourage the development and restoration of the historic bathhouses in Hot Springs National Park. This legislation, together with the support being given by the National Park Service and the Department of the Interior, represents a major step in bringing about a revitalized downtown area for Hot Springs."[1326]

[1322] Melvyn Bell, *Proposal for the Lease of Five Historic Bathhouses* (Little Rock, Ark.: privately published, 17 January 1986), Management Archives, Accession 553; and Mark Gregory and Lynn Kutter, "Magic Springs Buyers to Negotiate Bath House Lease," *Sentinel Record*, 15 March 1986.
[1323] Charles Witsell, Jr., A.I.A., to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Cultural Resources, Eldon G. Reyer, letter, 26 November 1986; and Reyer to Melvyn Bell, letter, 29 January 1987, H30.
[1324] Quotes from "Hot Springs Exempted From New Entry Fees: Outlook Seen as 'Favorable' on Bathhouse," *Arkansas Gazette*, 12 March 1986; and Roger Hedges, "National Park 'Thinking Big' After Washington, D.C., Meet," *Sentinel Record*, 12 May 1986.
[1325] Mark Gregory, "'Mysterious' Investor to Buy Local Golf Club," *Sentinel Record*, 20 May 1986.
[1326] Acting Regional Director Donald A. Dayton to Melvyn Bell, letter, 7 July 1986, H30; and "Hot Springs Renovation Exempted from Tax Bill," *Arkansas Gazette*, 19 September 1986.

Four years in the making and a result of a re-write following public and congressional criticism, NPS released the final GMP/DCP in June 1986. It effectively updated the 1978 plan, addressed the entire national park, and incorporated the Historic Property Leasing Program into the park's management. Most importantly, the GMP embraced Fordyce Bathhouse as the new visitor center and retained the twenty-five cents per 1,000 gallon charge for thermal spring water utilized for therapeutic purposes.[1327] An offshoot of the GMP and Director Mott's personal interest was authorization for a thermal water study. During his August 1985 visit, Mott expressed "strong concern" that NPS lacked scientific data on the thermal springs and its recharge area. Much of the recharge zone was thought to be outside park boundaries but there was no conclusive scientific proof. Mott assigned NPS Associate Director for Natural Resources Richard Briceland to the matter. Briceland subsequently advocated a study involving drilling of deep and shallow wells to ascertain the thermal aquifer, complete with temperature and volume recording equipment. The initial two phases of the four year effort was set at almost $1 million. Briceland, joined by Tom Lucke, chief, Division of Water Resources Branch in Fort Collins, Colorado, secured $20,000 annually for the first three years of the thermal study. Goals of the project included ascertaining the volume of flow, determining any changes in flow, and if new or updated pipelines and reservoirs were required.[1328]

On the heels of the June 1986 GMP came the park's first Interpretive Prospectus approved in September 1986. This fulfilled Director Mott's August 1985 pledge to update the park's interpretive program. Prepared by the Interpretive Planning Division of the NPS Harpers Ferry Center, the prospectus effectively outlined a professional parkwide interpretation program for Hot Springs National Park.[1329]

NPS Director William Penn Mott, Jr., returned to Hot Springs on October 3, 1986, for meetings with Southwest Regional Director John E. Cook, Superintendent Roger Giddings and staff, and Melvyn Bell to review plans for bathhouse adaptive uses. Two weeks prior to Mott's visit, asbestos removal got underway inside Fordyce Bathhouse and opening of contractor bids for the exterior rehabilitation occurred. Bell announced that he would likely sign a lease for the five bathhouse's rehabilitation within thirty to sixty days. He anticipated construction commencing in the summer of 1987 and occupancy occurring the following year. Mott was honored at a reception at the Arlington Hotel where he received a "Descendant of De Soto Award." The director remarked to a journalist that he felt something special in Hot Springs, declaring, "When I'm in Gettysburg, I feel I'm following in the footsteps of Lincoln. Here, I feel I'm

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[1327]U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *General Management Plan, Development Concept Plan, Hot Springs National Park, Garland County, Arkansas* (Denver, Colo.; Denver Service Center, National Park Service, June, 1986). Southwest Regional Director Robert I Kerr approved the document on April 29, 1986; and Briefing Statement, General Management Plan, Development Concept Plan, May 1986, A2623 Reports, Situation, Briefing Statements 1-24-84 to 10-3-86.

[1328] Briefing Statement, Thermal Water Study, May 1986, A2623 Reports, Situation, Briefing Statements 1-24-84 to 10-3-86.

[1329]U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *Interpretive Prospectus, Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas* (Harpers Ferry, W. Va.: Harpers Ferry Center, National Park Service, September 1986).

following in the footsteps of De Soto. I like that." Afterward, he stood on the hotel's veranda as marshal for the Aspencade convention's motorcycle parade up Central Avenue. The director credited the Arkansas congressional delegation with seeing that Hot Springs National Park received funding to complete the Fordyce by 1988, enabling the park to become "one of the great crown jewels" of the National Park Service. He added, "I can tell you this is going to be a very exciting project" once the new visitor center opened to the public.[1330]

Behind the scenes, lease negotiations with Melvyn Bell progressed slowly. As yet unresolved were several items before any lease could be signed. Among them were verification of Bell's assets, length of lease, annual rental payments, insurance coverage, surety bond, subleasing, and overall impact of the tax reform legislation on limited partnerships and similar tax shelters.[1331] As October and November passed and Bell's sixty day self-imposed deadline expired, a nervous Roger Giddings dealt with an increasingly inquisitive local citizenry. In early December, scaffolding began to surround the exterior of Fordyce Bathhouse as Landmark Restoration and Waterproofing Company of Dallas, Texas, began the $369,000 rehabilitation of the building's exterior. No other progress could readily be seen taking place along Bathhouse Row. The final draft of a lease was expected to be forwarded from the Washington Office to Melvyn Bell. Superintendent Giddings said he was "certain" the lease would be signed by year's end and labeled rumors that Bell wanted to put a casino in one of the bathhouses "ridiculous."[1332] In mid-December, the mayor and city manager of Hot Springs traveled to Little Rock for a two and half hour meeting with Bell "to open the lines of communication." Results of the meeting were not discussed with the media.[1333]

With no lease for the five bathhouses signed, December passed into January and a new calendar year. A calm Superintendent Giddings claimed not to be worried about the lease as negotiations with Bell continued. He discounted rumors about asbestos removal, stating the five bathhouses had less asbestos than did the Fordyce. However, three days later, Bell stated publicly that indeed, asbestos removal was the outstanding issue. A "surprised" Roger Giddings explained that the hazardous material in question was principally in the form of insulation wrapped around thermal water pipes and boiler components, most of which could be sealed through encapsulation, approved protective coverings, and by painting or extra wrapping. Restricted access to those areas could also be a remedy in place of having all the asbestos removed.[1334]

[1330] Quotations in Roger Hedges, "Park Boss Says Spa Near 'Big,'" *Sentinel Record*, 4 October 1986, and "Bathhouses to Reopen During '88," *Arkansas Gazette*, 4 October 1986; Mark Gregory, "Bath House Lease Pact Expected in 2 Months," *Sentinel Record*, 4 October 1986; and Briefing Statement, Meetings at Hot Springs National Park, October 3, 1986, A2623 Reports, Situation, Briefing Statements 1-24-84 to 10-3-86.

[1331] Briefing Statement, Meetings at Hot Springs National Park, October 3, 1986, A2623 Reports, Situation, Briefing Statements 1-24-84 to 10-3-86.

[1332] Roger Hedges, "Lease Draft Anticipated," *Sentinel Record*, 5 December 1986.

[1333] Roger Hedges, "Spa's Leaders Mum on Meet with Investor," *Sentinel Record*, 20 December 1986.

[1334] Roger Hedges, "Park Boss Calm Despite Lack of Lease Pact," 14 January 1987, G. D. Golden, "Asbestos Halts Lease For Spas, Investor Says," 17 January 1987, and "Pact Safe From Asbestos," 21 January 1987, all in *Sentinel Record.*

Funding to complete the Fordyce rehabilitation came in early 1987 in the form of a $5.1 million earmark added to the NPS budget. Acknowledging his appreciation, Superintendent Giddings took the opportunity to point out that his park's annual operating budget was not adequate to perform at satisfactory levels when the new facility opened to the public. He pointed out that additional staffing, equipment, materials vehicles, utility costs, and other needs for park operations were required, estimated at $450,000 annually. That figure did not include supplemental construction in the immediate area for landscaping, handicapped access, walks, trails, roads, wayside exhibits, building repairs, and upgrading the thermal water storage system, all of which was detailed in the GMP/DCP. Giddings remained hopeful that the federal legislators would act to increase the park's annual budget.[1335] By mid-year, however, it became clear that the Fordyce rehabilitation would come in about $1 million below appropriated funds. Giddings relayed the good news to Clay Farrar, Jr., chairman of the Governor's Advisory Commission, but stated that construction funds could not be transferred into operating funds. Outside of the federal arena, the state commissioners could advocate for the annual budget increase, raising it from $1.2 million to an additional minimum of $235,000, if not the ideal of $450,000. Giddings also let it be known to the commission that a new thermal water reservoir estimated at $1.5 to $2 million was also a vital park need.[1336]

Figure 195. Conservator Mel Hayes repairing a window in the first floor Fordyce Bathhouse men's cooling room, April 22, 1987 (HSNP 10141, National Park Service)

MELVYN BELL SIGNS A LEASE, 1987

Negotiations with Melvyn Bell and his associates on a lease stretched into spring 1987. NPS negotiators felt that "Bell has been dragging his feet" from the onset with government requests for information unmet and written requests for lease changes

[1335] Superintendent Giddings to Senator David Pryor and Congressman Beryl F. Anthony, Jr., letters, 6 March 1987, A38. The legislative remedy came in December 1987 with $225,000 in operating funds added to Hot Springs National Park's annual budget. See "Park Service Funds to Increase," *Sentinel Record*, 18 December 1987.

[1336] Superintendent Giddings to Clay Farrar, Jr., letter, 28 May 1987, A1619 Advisory Board on National Parks, 3-13-87 to 2-5-88.

followed by long periods of silent inaction. Progress came only via telephone conversations with little in writing coming out of the potential lessee's Little Rock office. Exasperated NPS negotiators called a late April face to face meeting to finalize the lease. The Little Rock meeting between NPS Southwest Region staff, Superintendent Giddings, and Bell resulted in most of the outstanding items being revised to mutual satisfaction, but two areas remained unresolved. Bell wanted to delete a required clause stating, "In addition, the Director may terminate this lease for the convenience of the Government at any time, subject to any rights the Lessee may have under the law to seek compensation for such termination." The sovereign right of the government to cancel any lease agreement at its discretion had to be included to remain a legal document. The other bone of contention involved the government's requirement to receive rental income as soon as the facilities became operational. Under the Historic Property Leasing Program, congressional intent was to not only put surplus historic buildings into productive use, but to receive income to contribute to those structure's ongoing maintenance, preservation, and administration. Southwest Regional Director John Cook informed Melvyn Bell "I would hope that they don't put an end to our negotiations. However, if they are not acceptable to you, we will need formal notification in writing so that we can seek alternative means of finding tenants for the buildings."[1337]

Figure 196. Lease signing ceremony on Arlington Lawn with Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton looking over the shoulder of investor Melvyn Bell, August 28, 1987 (Courtesy of Hot Springs *Sentinel-Record)*

On May 28, 1987, upon recommendation of the National Park System Advisory Board, Secretary of the Interior Donald P. Hodel certified the Bathhouse Row National Historic Landmark (NHL). Already listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district, the Row was now recognized as a landmark at the national level of significance for its architectural features and as the largest collection of grand bathhouses in North America. The NHL district designation helped elevate the profile of Hot Springs National Park as well as reinvigorate efforts to rejuvenate downtown Hot Springs.[1338]

A breakthrough in the lease negotiation logjam occurred in August 1987 with news that a mutually acceptable lease for the five bathhouses was at hand. Park staff

[1337] Survey Historian Diane Jung to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Cultural Resources, Eldon Reyer, trip report, 13 October 1987 A26; Southwest Regional Director Cook to Melvyn Bell, letter, 14 May 1987, H3021; and Mark Gregory, "Cancellation Measure Causes 'Stumbling': Clause Slows Talks on Bathhouse Leases, *Sentinel Record*, 24 June 1987.

[1338] Marla Henson, "Bathhouse Row Named U.S. Historic Landmark," *Arkansas Gazette*, 3 June 1987.

scrambled to organize a celebratory lease signing ceremony on Arlington Lawn on August 28. A local support group of park volunteers called "Friends of the Fordyce" dressed in period costumes and served lemonade for the event. In attendance for NPS were Southwest Region Deputy Regional Director Don Dayton, Associate Regional Director Eldon Reyer, and Superintendent Roger Giddings. Honored guests included Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton, U.S. Senators Dale Bumpers and David Pryor, U.S. Representatives Beryl Anthony, Jr., and Tommy Robinson (D.-Ark.), and Hot Springs Mayor Jon L. Starr as master of ceremonies. With a theme of "We're In Hot Water Again!," the event included a letter from NPS Director Mott which called the lease "the most ambitious leasing program in the history of the National Park Service, possibly of any agency of the federal government." Governor Clinton, a Hot Springs native, joyously remarked that Hot Springs had "lost its way" during the two-decade-long economic decline but was now "building a future based on its past," a future "brighter than ever." Melvyn Bell signed the lease which had a term of fifty years before a crowd of 500 onlookers. Concerning the contentious cancellation clause, he wryly remarked, "They had a tough time convincing me that all the other leases in the country were written that way." The lease signing began a 285 day period for Bell to submit approved rehabilitation plans before construction could commence.[1339] Historic structure reports for each bathhouse were due in 150 days.

Figure 197. Superintendent Roger Giddings reviews construction plans with Friends of the Fordyce President Ruth Smith and Sentinel Record manager Wallace Ballantine, November 18, 1988 (HSNP 10146, National Park Service)

Three months later, the impractical millionaire was back in the headlines discussing tunneling through West Mountain and building a sky tram connecting his Magic Springs theme park to the Mid-America Museum, all involving federal park land. "We have a lot of ideas," Bell declared. "I broached one of these to (Hot Springs National Park Superintendent) Roger Giddings and he about passed out." He estimated the flood control tunnel at $25 million and the

[1339] Quotations from Doug Thompson, "Bell Given Bathhouses at Signing: Is Eager to Begin Asbestos Removal," *Arkansas Democrat*, 29 August 1987; Mark Gregory, "Bell, Park Service to Sign Unique Lease," *Sentinel Record*, 28 August 1987; and "We're In Hot Water Again!" Bathhouse Row Lease Signing Ceremony Program, August 28, 1987, HOSP 3295, Oversize Document Portfolio. Friends of the Fordyce formalized its existence primarily to assist the park with the grand opening of the Fordyce Visitor Center. The group of volunteers had participated in costumed interpretive tours of bathhouses and fund raising activities for furnishings in the new visitor center.

elevated tram at $10 million. Bell also foresaw erecting a glass-enclosed pedestrian mall on West Mountain above the downtown area.[1340]

A near disaster occurred on February 4, 1988, when a loaded gasoline tanker truck overturned on the Gulpha Gorge Road cut-off. The tanker exploded and burned. Fortunately, quick action by local, state, and federal responders kept the natural resource damage to a minimum.[1341]

While NPS continued to perform a number of stabilization projects on the Lamar Bathhouse in advance of offering it for lease, the agency did make the building available in the summer of 1988 for an assortment of activities planned by the Hot Springs Arts Center. Utilizing the Lamar, the non-profit organization secured a special use permit in order to offer a number of free events to the public, including art exhibits, photography workshops, films, art classes, educational programs, and a piano concert.[1342]

Citing the Privacy Act of 1974, NPS had been successful in keeping terms of the Bell lease from the public during negotiations. Once signed, however, the lease became susceptible to public scrutiny under the Freedom of Information Act. The Hot Springs *Sentinel Record* obtained a copy and divulged its contents in May 1988. Leading the newspaper's coverage was the provision that Bell could terminate in advance of construction by paying $10,000 to the National Park Service without obligation "as though the lease never existed." Official possession of the bathhouses occurred whenever rehabilitation construction commenced with a signed statement between Bell and Superintendent Giddings. Rental payments were set to begin the first year of operation at $11,000, and escalating to $22,000 the second year, and $33,000 the third year. Rent reduction included costs of asbestos removal amortized over the fifty-year lease. If the lease was revoked or terminated, the lessee could not claim compensation for asbestos removal. A lease

Figure 198. Friends of the Fordyce pose on the front porch of the historic bathhouse before receiving a ranger-guided tour, May 30, 1987 (HSNP 10142, National Park Service)

[1340] Mark Gregory, "Bell's Ideas for Tram, Mountain Tunnel Make Eyes Pop in Spa City," *Arkansas Democrat*, 22 November 1987.
[1341] Superintendent Giddings to Melinda Gassaway, editor, *Sentinel Record*, 4 February 1988, A3415 Commendations 1-27-87 to 7-27-88.
[1342] Shelia Y. Scott, "Bathhouse Opens Doors Thursday," *Sentinel Record*, 15 May 1988.

amendment extended the 150-day period to produce historic structure reports to 246 days for the Superior draft and 338 days for the remaining bathhouses. Another provision dealt with termination. Should the lessee fail to perform any of the lease conditions, the NPS director could give a sixty day notice to forfeit the agreement.[1343]

Even with an extension, Bell failed to meet the deadline for the Superior Bathhouse historic structure report. Another amendment was necessary to deliver it by early September and the other four documents by early December. While the reports were being prepared, an NPS contractor installed new city water, gas, and sewer lines as well as conduits for telephone and cable lines along Bathhouse Row. Time, money, and ground disturbance were avoided by running the new utilities through abandoned sixty-year-old thermal water pipes. Partial renovation work occurred on the Lamar Bathhouse with painting and roof replacement as NPS readied it for a request for proposals under the Historic Property Leasing Program. Bell's architectural firm met the September deadline for the Superior Bathhouse, but rumblings in the state media reported that he was experiencing problems with his personal financial portfolio in the aftermath of the previous year's stock market crash. In the meantime, Bell dropped plans for a bed and breakfast on Bathhouse Row and proposed the Hale Bathhouse be used as his wife's business called "Architectural Antiques."[1344]

While in the state for a political event, Secretary of the Interior Donald P. Hodel had a whirlwind tour of Hot Springs National Park on September 23. The secretary and his wife walked along Bathhouse Row and toured the renovations taking place at the Fordyce Bathhouse before visiting the Buckstaff next door. He made a political speech in the lobby of the Arlington Hotel where he acknowledged "some financial concerns" experienced by Melvyn Bell but did not have specifics to share with journalists.[1345] While briefing statements prepared for Hodel's visit did not mention Bell's financial difficulties, Hodel was briefed on the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center's request to pump water for geothermal heating of its campus. A contracted scientific study determined the request would pump more thermal water than the combined springs produced. In addition, pumping from the HSRC well would reduce the natural springs flow within the park—an aspect which made it unacceptable.[1346]

[1343] Mark Gregory, "Prior to Construction on Bathhouses Investor Can Break Lease for $10,000," *Sentinel Record*, 18 May 1988.

[1344] Mark Gregory, "Park Service Amends Investor's Bath House Lease," 1 July 1988, "Bath House Leases' Demands Increase, Park Official Says," 7 September 1988, and "Investor Seeks Shift in Use of Bath Houses," 7 July 1988, all in *Sentinel Record.* The business, featuring antique furniture and fixtures, was well known in Little Rock. It would occupy the first floor while the second floor would become a cooperative art gallery for Arkansas visual artists. See Rick Cobb, President, Bell Equities, Inc., to Superintendent Giddings, letter, 26 September 1988.

[1345] Mark Gregory, "Interior Secretary Visits Spa on Whirlwind Tour," *Sentinel Record*, 24 September 1988. See also Doug Thompson, "Interior Secretary Tours Hot Springs Before GOP Event," *Arkansas Democrat*, 24 September 1988.

[1346] Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center geothermal heating briefing statement, A2623, Reports, Situation, Briefing Statements 2-5-86 to 8-16-88. The geothermal engineering study was conducted by Coury & Associates of Wheatridge, Colorado.

In October 1988, the Southwest Regional Office prepared legislative support data for a congressional boundary change. NPS proposed to exclude 297.80 acres and add 1.7 acres of land. This would result in a net reduction of 296.10 acres for Hot Springs National Park. Deleted lands were deemed unnecessary for park management and operations and were outside the recharge zone of the thermal springs. Instead of splitting properties, the new boundary lines would be more discernible by following roads and excluding a city park. This left 5,838.89 acres within the authorized boundary. To date, NPS had acquired 4,834.86 acres or eighty-three percent of authorized park land. By June 30, 1988, the federal government had expended $12,074,136 to acquire private inholding tracts. One hundred twenty properties were subject to reservations of use and occupancy for periods of life or specified terms. Approximately 115 structures were sold through the General Services Administration for removal.[1347]

PLAYING 'HARDBALL' WITH BELL

The Southwest Region reassessed the Service's position regarding Melvyn Bell and the Historic Property Leasing Program at Hot Springs National Park in December 1988. Regional Director John Cook decided to postpone issuing the request for proposals for Lamar Bathhouse until April 1989. Cook concurred that historic preservation interests would be best served if NPS completed the required historic structure reports for bathhouses instead of requiring the lessee to complete them. However, he ruled that NPS would proceed under terms of the Bell lease, stating "He will be charged with completing the HSR's to our satisfaction or be held in breach of his lease." Advising on critical input from the Washington Office on reviews of the bathhouse-related documents, Cook directed Superintendent Giddings as follows:

> *"I believe the remarks from Washington provide us a clear, concise signal that it is time to play hardball with Bell. We have been more than accommodating to Bell, and it has not returned any dividends.*
>
> *"You are hereby directed to inform Bell that he has until December 31, 1988* [changed to January 13, 1989]*, to supply a $15,000 surety bond as stipulated in the lease. If he does not, we will cancel his lease for failure to comply with its conditions. Moreover, it serves no purpose to continue any dialogue with Bell regarding lease amendments until he submits the surety bond.*
>
> *"In future dealings with Bell, you must be firm. Insist that the HSR's be professionally completed and in a timely manner. You and members of the Regional Office staff conferred with Bell's architectural team about the HSR's. They were shown how to streamline the process, and we delineated the primary architectural components of the buildings. We will not approve any major modifications to the buildings until the HSR's are completed. The latest deadline for HSR submission was December, and it will not be met. Please convey to Bell that completion of*

[1347] "Legislative Support Data, Hot Springs National Park, Proposed Boundary Change" (Santa Fe, N. Mex.: Southwest Regional Office, National Park Service) 1, 12-13.

> *the HSR's will be extended to April 30 but not beyond that date. If he fails to comply, he is in violation of the lease.*
>
> *"The time has come to force Bell to live up to his end of the agreement. Nobody wants to see the lease fail. However, if it means returning to square one, we must be prepared for that commitment. To date, one thing is self-evident—we have accomplished little and the buildings are suffering neglect. It is time for action."*[1348]

Cook's "get tough policy" was devised by Department of the Interior Solicitor Lars Hanslin and Washington Office Leasing Coordinator Susan Harrison. In the fifteen months from the hoopla over signing the lease, the consensus view was that "nothing of importance has transpired that indicates Mr. Bell is prepared to fulfill his obligations to the lease agreement." While Cook gave Superintendent Roger Giddings strict instructions on how to proceed with future dealings with Bell, NPS officials all hoped the new policy would motivate and compel the lessee to act without having to void the lease. In the meantime, the bathhouses continued to deteriorate. As Cook told Director Mott, "Bell must live up to his commitment or we must provide emergency stabilization to the structures."[1349] Mott concurred, stating, "I agree with your assessment of the Bell Historic Leasing Program. We have been fair with him and now it's time for him to shape up or we will have to cancel the lease for noncompliance. We must be firm."[1350]

Superintendent Giddings dutifully informed Bell of the NPS position and simultaneously informed the local press of the impasse on the required pre-construction reports and $15,000 surety bond. Due on January 13, Giddings said the surety bond was "to ensure a level of performance. The time is now for it to be submitted. We cannot delay the project any longer." The Little Rock press speculated that Bell and his wife may have suffered as much as $15.6 million in stock market losses.[1351] Bell made the January 13 deadline by submitting the required surety bond, but press reports continued about stock losses and non-payment of property taxes in Little Rock and Hot Springs.[1352] Fortunately, Bell's architectural firm completed the required historic structure reports in late April. Plans for the re-use of two bathhouses also changed. The Ozark was now to be utilized as a fishing artifacts museum and the Quapaw to be utilized as a spa. These new uses were planned to compliment Bell's scheme to renovate properties across Central Avenue. The previous fall, Bell leased seven buildings with twenty-two

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[1348] Regional Director John Cook to Superintendent Giddings, 13 December 1988, H30, found in Folder 135, Box 15, MSS 117, William Penn Mott, Jr., Papers 1985-1989, Special Collections, Clemson University Libraries, Clemson, South Carolina.

[1349] Regional Director Cook to Director Mott, 15 December 1988, H3021, found in Folder 135, Box 15, MSS 117, William Penn Mott, Jr., Papers 1985-1989, Special Collections, Clemson University Libraries, Clemson, South Carolina.

[1350] Director Mott to Regional Director Cook, 21 December 1988, Folder 135, Box 15, MSS 117, William Penn Mott, Jr., Papers 1985-1989, Special Collections, Clemson University Libraries, Clemson, South Carolina.

[1351] Mark Gregory, "Bell Required to Post Bond, Meet Deadlines or Lose Lease," *Sentinel Record*, 12 January 1989.

[1352] Mark Gregory, "Bell Heads Off Default on Loan [sic]," *Arkansas Democrat*, 14 January 1989.

storefronts and three parking lots opposite Bathhouse Row from downtown property owner Hill Wheatley.[1353]

At the same time Superintendent Giddings was dealing with the recalcitrant Bell, he received notice from the General Services Administration (GSA) that Housing and Urban Development (HUD) had identified sixteen excess houses NPS had turned over to GSA for sale and removal from the park as suitable for the homeless under provisions of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. GSA reported that a notice would soon appear in the *Federal Register* offering the properties for rent. Giddings appealed to Regional Director Cook stating, "We are dismayed that HUD would consider retaining buildings in a national park that have been acquired for the express purpose of removing them to preserve and protect the natural resources of the area. If this ruling is allowed to stand, the whole purpose of the park's Land Protection Plan will be in jeopardy."[1354] GSA subsequently began returning all excess property requests suitable for homeless leasing to NPS including twenty-six to Hot Springs National Park in March 1990. Attempts to have GSA resume public sales proved unsuccessful. Five months later, the inventory of vacant structures reached forty-four but many of them had been vandalized and had become a public relations dilemma with weed-choked lawns and angry neighbors complaining about the eyesores. Some were in such deplorable condition that they needed demolition or burning to solve the problem.[1355]

The issue reached its apex in 1991 when a neighborhood association went public with its long-standing grievances. Shining a spotlight on the large number of abandoned, vandalized houses within the adjacent national park, the Park Avenue Community Association charged NPS with abandoning its pledge to protect the environment and restore the former residential areas to natural, wilderness conditions. Rather, NPS had "created unkempt slums out of once well-kept neighborhoods" which now stood as "an environmental malignancy." In response to the adverse publicity, Superintendent Giddings promised an expedited removal of derelict properties. He requested that GSA release all unsold structures back to NPS in order that they could be demolished by contractors and then have the lots restored to natural conditions. In the ensuing months, Giddings worked closely with the neighborhood association to assuage its concerns.[1356]

[1353] Mark Gregory, "Bell Submits Reports on 4 Bathhouse Plans," *Arkansas Democrat*, 29 April 1989; and Dave Wannemacher, "Bell Plans Fishing Museum," *Arkansas Gazette*, 28 April 1989. The Hot Springs Arts Center dropped its bid to locate its operations in the Ozark Bathhouse.

[1354] Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Cook, 13 January 1989, L1425 Excess Property Removal, CY 1989, Box 6, HOSP 530. The new act required NPS to notify HUD that it had surplus property available at which time HUD published notices of availability in the *Federal Register* giving interested parties thirty days to apply for one of the structures for the purpose of assisting the homeless. If there were no interested parties, HUD, in ninety to 120 days, notified GSA to proceed with public sale(s). NPS also had to assess the properties for historical and archeological significance. See Mark Gregory, "Act to Benefit Homeless Burdens National Park," *Sentinel Record*, 2 July 1989.

[1355] Doyle Marshall, Acting Director of Real Estate Sales, General Services Administration, to National Park Service, Southwest Region, 2 March 1990; Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Cook, 6 August 1990, L1425, both in Folder Excess Property Removal, CY 1989, Box 6, Accession 530.

[1356] "Association: NPS Abandons Pledge," letter to the editor, Park Avenue Community Association, *Sentinel Record*, 4 August 1991; Greg Harton, "Park Avenue Residents Promised Quick Removal of Run-

On Bathhouse Row progress continued to be made. While the request for proposals to lease the Lamar Bathhouse did go forward in April 1989, concerns were voiced within the bureau about Melvyn Bell's intransigence and the worsening structural conditions along Bathhouse Row. As NPS urged Bell to initiate repairs on roofs, windows, and doors, Giddings recommended preparing new requests for proposals be readied for issue should Bell fail to honor the terms of his lease. A condition assessment prepared for the Superior, Hale, Maurice, and Quapaw bathhouses revealed deterioration had reached a "critical stage" jeopardizing structural integrity and loss of historic fabric. Indeed, two bathhouses were in "danger of eminent collapse" and Giddings alerted the Southwest Regional Office that emergency action was required to install new roofs. He estimated the cost at $500,000, or less if park maintenance staff performed the work.[1357] In June, it received only two proposals for the Lamar: Melvyn L. Bell and Brian D. Reilly, a local chiropractor. Bell proposed a health spa with bathing and exercise while Reilly wished to relocate his chiropractic clinic to the Lamar and offer thermal baths. With only two proposers, NPS re-advertised for additional proposals two months later.[1358]

Figure 199. NPS Director James Ridenour delivers keynote address at grand opening ceremony on front steps of Fordyce Bathhouse Visitor Center, May 13, 1989. (Courtesy of Hot Springs *Sentinel-Record)*

On May 11, 1989, the City of Hot Springs launched a four-day celebration called "The Rebirth of the American Spa" to honor the grand opening of the NPS Fordyce Bathhouse Visitor Center. Restored to its former glory on Bathhouse Row, Fordyce Bathhouse stood as the cornerstone of Hot Springs' renaissance and revitalization. An editorial writer heaped praise on the park staff as follows: "The professional expertise and official guardianship provided by staff and employees of Hot Springs National Park have shown us how public and private entities can join together in a major undertaking which symbolizes the true

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Down Houses," *Sentinel Record*, 9 August 1991; Superintendent Giddings to Richard R. Raley, Director of Real Estate Sales, GSA, letter, 9 October 1991, L1425.

[1357] *Request for Proposals for Lease of Lamar Bathhouse, Hot Springs National Park, Garland County, Arkansas,* NPS, 1989; Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Cook, 15 March 1989, D24, Box 27, D22-D26 un-accessioned. Curiously, Giddings did not name the two bathhouses.

[1358] Mark Gregory, "Businessmen Submit Bath House Proposals," 20 June 1989, and "Park Service Invites Added Bids on Bath House," 8 August 1989, both in *Sentinel Record*.

spirit of democracy and enterprise."[1359] The official grand opening ceremony occurred on May 13 on the building's front plaza and steps with Regional Director John Cook serving as master of ceremonies. Special remarks were delivered by Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton, Senator Dale Bumpers, Senator David Pyror, and Congressman Beryl Anthony, Jr. NPS Director James Ridenour, in his keynote address, declared:

> *"Hot Springs is leading us once again. The Fordyce has been restored in all its splendor and renewed in ways that would better serve our times. It is an excellent example of a concept that has gained great importance as we try to merge the needs of the future with the preservation of the past. Adaptive use is a simple idea with an unimposing name, but it is an essential element of the revitalization of towns and cities across America."*

The $4.5 million project was spearheaded by the NPS Denver Service Center which installed modern heating and cooling systems into a building which lacked both, and the Harpers Ferry Center-designed exhibits compatible with an historic furnishings plan.[1360] The most praised exhibit among visitors was the thermal bathing video disk which gave a full explanation of what the baths entailed. Giddings reported that "The narrative and cinematography give visitors solid assurance about a process they have tended to be nervous and uncertain about." Further, the exhibit helped "very much in taking some of the pressure off the Information Desk, which we really wanted to happen." In fact, the video exhibit was so effective that the "mediocre business" at Buckstaff Bathhouse "approximately doubled."[1361]

During the same season that the Fordyce opened to visitors, NPS prepared to implement a Landscape Management Plan for Bathhouse Row, the result of seven years of historical research. The plan established guidelines for maintaining the historic landscape, proposed linkages of parkland with the downtown area, and recommended appropriate street furniture. It called for replacement of the entire Row sidewalk along with diseased and damaged magnolia trees. It included planting ornamental shrubs and installation of new lawns around the bathhouses and the Grand Promenade as well as drainage improvements. On Arlington Lawn, NPS planned to build a 200-seat rock amphitheatre and adjacent thermal water cascade. Bids for the work came in September 1989 with the contract award going to The Heller Company of Hot Springs.[1362]

[1359] "Editorial," *Sentinel Record*, 11 May 1989.

[1360] *Hot Springs National Park, Grand Opening Dedication, Fordyce Bathhouse Visitor Center, May 13, 1989*, program; and Thomas Sweeney, "Bathing Beauty: Fordyce Reopens as Visitor Center," *Preservation News: National Trust for Historic Preservation* (June 1989), 1.

[1361] Superintendent Giddings to Manager, Harpers Ferry Center, David G. Wright, 17 January 1990, K3015, found in boxed files from Superior Bathhouse.

[1362] *Landscape Management Plan, Hot Springs National Park* (Denver, Colo.: National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1989), preparers were: Landscape Architect s Jim Cowley and Gary Johnson, and Researcher Diane Rhodes; "Hot Springs Revived," *Landscape Architecture*, (September 1990), 18; and R. I. Jackson, "Fordyce Opens Era For Visitors," 13 May 1989, and Mark Gregory, "Park Service Opens Landscaping Bids, "13 September 1989, both in *Sentinel Record.*

In the fall of 1987, the city of Hot Springs first requested NPS consider a voluntary annexation of park land so that as a promotional tool it could boast of having a national park completely within its boundaries. The city manager argued that since the city provided law enforcement assistance, communications, and fire protection to a portion of the national park, it would be mutually beneficial to have the entire area subject to city services. In passing the request through Interior's field solicitor in Santa Fe, Superintendent Giddings wished to know if the annexation would have any effect on law enforcement responsibility. The solicitor opined that it would not, stating,

> *"Hot Springs National Park is established and controlled by Title 16, United States Code, Sections 361-374. Law enforcement jurisdiction is specifically set out in several statutes. The State of Arkansas, for example, is granted taxation authority within the park by 16 U.S.C., Sec. 365. The Secretary of the Interior is authorized by 16 U.S.C., Sec. 363 to enact rules and regulations concerning the use of water. Under 16 U.S.C., Sec. 372, the park is under the 'sole and exclusive jurisdiction' of the United States. All of these jurisdictional requirements would remain unchanged if the city were to 'annex' the park."*

The solicitor urged caution concerning the city manager's suggestion that NPS request a voluntary annexation because it would authorize the City Board of Directors to proceed without a vote of city residents. He advised, "It may be that the city hopes to gain additional tax revenue or some other benefit through a sensitive or unpopular annexation that affects private interests within the park. It would be best for NPS to avoid initiating such a controversy."[1363] Although Giddings informed the city of the legal aspects of the issue, he declined to make a recommendation for annexation until 1991 when it became clear that Mid-America Park, a mixed use cultural, educational, and industrial area, wished to be annexed, but national park land separated it from the city. Remaining officially neutral, NPS proceeded with an environmental assessment and draft petition for consideration.[1364]

Restoration of a portion of the Oertel Trail System on Hot Springs and North Mountains came in 1990. Only one of the original 1915 monuments in the elaborate system could be found. NPS decided to restore part of the Oertel system of graduated exercise to augment a local physical exercise program called the "Volksmarsch" which began in 1983. That activity subsequently built upon a physical exercise loop-path laid out in Whittington Park in 1979.[1365]

[1363] Michael Wright, City Manager, City of Hot Springs, to Superintendent Giddings, letter, 18 September 1987; Gayle E. Manges, Field Solicitor, Southwest Region, to Regional Director Cook, NPS.SA.0404, 4 January 1988; and Superintendent Giddings to Lance Hudnell, Deputy City Manager, City of Hot Springs, letter, 30 May 1989, W30, all in Box 8, Management Archives, Accession 530.

[1364] Mayor Melinda Baran, City of Hot Springs, to Superintendent Giddings, letter, 9 July 1991; draft "Decree of Annexation" petition, Roger Giddings to Garland County Court, no date; Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Cook, 16 August 1991, W1823; Regional Director Cook to Mayor Baran, letter, 3 September 1991, L1425; and Giddings to Cook, 18 November 1991, L32, all in box 8, Management Archives, Accession 530.

[1365] "Portion of Trails to Live Again," *Sentinel Record*, 11 February 1990.

A threatened lawsuit temporarily halted progress in implementing the Landscape Management Plan in late 1989 as construction workers neared the thermal water cascade on Arlington Lawn where they were set to widen the pathway and add small display pools. Environmental concerns were voiced concerning archeological resources, impact on the flow of the thermal springs through jackhammering, and impacts to blue-green algae and tiny freshwater crustaceans known as ostracods. When their concerns were not satisfied, in February 1990, three Hot Springs residents filed in U.S. District Court for the Western District of Arkansas to halt construction in Arlington Lawn for failure to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).

Pratt Remmel, Jr., Jeff Ohlfs, and Brian D. Reilly sued the government to halt the construction by the Heller Company for failing to adequately consider the environment. Ohlfs, an NPS ranger; and Reilly, the local chiropractor who wished to lease the Lamar Bathhouse; and Remmel, a private citizen, filed suit against Secretary of the Interior Manuel Lujan, NPS Director James Ridenour, Southwest Regional Director John Cook, Denver Service Center Manager John Reynolds, Superintendent Roger Giddings, and the Heller Company, charging that the NEPA violation on Arlington Lawn required either an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. Specifically, the complaint alleged construction of the amphitheatre on Arlington Lawn violated the intent of Congress to provide a breathing space at the end of Bathhouse Row and could destroy rare algae in the thermal water.[1366] A judge subsequently denied the plaintiff's request on March 9, ruling that studies done in 1977 and 1985 were considered valid evidence to negate any adverse effects. Undeterred, the group filed an appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals, 8th Circuit in St. Louis, and won an injunction on March 21. On April 6, a judge upheld the previous ruling and permitted the construction to proceed unless the local group could pay a $400 per day bond to halt it. On advice of the U.S. attorney, NPS issued a notice to proceed to the contractor on May 4. By October 1990, construction work was completed causing the federal court to dismiss the lawsuit as moot.[1367]

Figure 200. Floodwater filled the Administration Building basement control room ruining the pumps and metering equipment, May 20, 1990 (HSNP 17935.1, National Park Service)

THE FLOOD OF 1990

Another historic flash flood ravaged downtown Hot Springs and Bathhouse Row on the night of May 19, 1990, as

[1366] Mark Gregory, "Park Service Halts Change for Cascade," 25 January 1990, and R. L. Jackson, "Local Group Sues to Block Park Construction Project," 16 February 1990, both in *Sentinel Record*.
[1367] Cynthia Jordan, "Bid to Halt Bathhouse Row Work Lost," *Arkansas Gazette*, 10 March 1990; and R. L. Jackson, "Judge Blocks Work Opening on Park Project," 21 March 1990, Mark Gregory, "Court Ruling Allows Work," 7 April 1990, R. L. Jackson, "Work Resumes on Park Project," 9 May 1990, and Mark Gregory, "Court Dismisses Suit on Park Construction," 12 October 1990, all in *Sentinel Record*.

thirteen inches of rain fell within a seven-hour period generating a rapid run-off which flowed like a raging river down Central Avenue. The wall of water filled basements and gushed three feet inside buildings. Vehicles, pavement, and other debris littered the manicured Row landscape and submerged the wooden sign in front of the Fordyce Bathhouse Visitor Center. One person drowned and the damage estimate total was set at $5.3 million. The Fordyce basement flooding filled the public restrooms, storage areas, and controls for the heating, air conditioning, and electrical systems. In the Administration Building, the basement control center for the thermal water system was inundated. Floodwater covered the two distribution pumps and contaminated the thermal reservoir. Superintendent Giddings ordered the thermal water system shut down for a week until the entire system could be decontaminated and the pumps repaired.

An NPS Damage Assessment Team made up of members from Southwest Regional Office, Denver Service Center, and the park convened May 22 and 23. In addition to the thermal water system and Bathhouse Row cleanup, the team assessed heavy damage from mud slides to the scenic mountain drives, Gulpha Gorge Campground, Whittington Park, and several other developed park areas. They estimated repair costs at $2,990,000, with $280,000 required immediately for repairs for safety, cleanup, visitor use, and restoring the thermal water system. A separate Denver Service Center estimate was made for removing asbestos in the eight Row basements which came to $2,017,015. Staff was instructed not to enter basements without proper gear to prevent inhalation of asbestos fibers. Fortunately, this restriction did not apply to the Administration Building which had been previously abated.[1368]

Figure 201. Debris scattered across Bathhouse Row lawns from a restoration project "upstream," May 20, 1990 (HSNP 17935.3, National Park Service)

In the flood's aftermath, the Governor's Advisory Commission on Hot Springs National Park, operating on the committee level for several years, reactivated and began lobbying Congress for flood recovery funding. The commission also made the pitch for an additional $1.13 million in operational funding and $2.03 million in unfinished

[1368] *The Flood of 1990*, interpretive flyer published for distribution to visitors, Hot Springs National Park, 1990; "Floods Quash Arkansas' Hot Springs; Southwestern States Tally the Damage as Raging Rivers Recede," *The Washington Post*, 22 May 1990; U.S. Geological Survey, Water Resources Investigations Report 92-4007, *Flood of May 19-20, 1990, in the Vicinity of Hot Springs, Arkansas*, Prepared in Cooperation with Arkansas Power and Light Company, Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Little Rock, Ark.: U.S. Geological Survey, 1992), 4, 8; and Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Cook, 24 May and 13 June 1990, A7627, boxed files from Superior Bathhouse.

construction work. The operational aspect covered running the Fordyce Visitor Center, landscaping, and law enforcement, and demolition of forty-nine vacant houses. The Governor's Advisory Commission's flood control committee had already succeeded in obtaining authorization for a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers study on the flooding problem to find economically feasible solutions. At mid-year, the draft Corps study was under review. Its second phase would cost almost $1 million to be split between the federal government and the city.[1369] Historic preservation played a large role in the flood control study review process. Recognizing the presence of Bathhouse Row NHL and the downtown historic district, Arkansas State Historic Preservation Officer Cathy Buford determined that the Hot Springs Creek Arch Culvert was potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. As such, the federal agencies involved should consider alternatives to extensive modifications to it, including boring a new tunnel parallel to the Creek Arch. Similarly, the Whittington Park area was also National Register-eligible, and any construction of federal flood control structures there would have an adverse effect per Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.[1370]

Tunneling beneath West Mountain was one of the options considered in the Corps' study. It envisioned boring up to a 6,000 foot long by thirty foot wide tunnel through West Mountain to divert floodwater from Whittington Avenue to Broadway Avenue. An alarmed Superintendent Giddings informed Southwest Regional Director Cook this "would probably exceed the impacts in Yosemite created by the Hetch Hetchy Dam." Giddings informed local citizens that he was opposed to the idea, but at $30 to $50 million, he also thought the idea would never go forward, particularly with the city expected to pay half of the cost. Instead, he preferred a more practical approach: flood-proofing buildings. On the Row, NPS intended to remove all asbestos from bathhouse basements and move all operations to upper floors. Measures would also be taken to make windows and doors water-tight to prevent infiltration of floodwater.[1371]

The year 1990 marked the escalation of intense public criticism of Little Rock investor Melvyn Bell's exclusive lease with the National Park Service. In January, the Central Business Improvement District (CBID) Commission criticized Bell's lack of attendance at CBID meetings. Fellow commissioner Hill Wheatley spoke up and charged that Bell owed him more than $45,000 in back rent. An examination of tax records revealed Bell owed more than $33,000 plus late fees in Garland County property taxes alone, and thousands more on leased property and other development land in the area. Further, Bell had yet to conduct any routine maintenance on his five leased bathhouses. Superintendent Giddings told reporters "Our busy season is going to be starting soon, and we'd like visitors to see some progress. I know that Mr. Bell has very, very many projects and businesses. I hope he gives the park properties priority, and feel he will

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[1369] Mark Gregory, "Advisory Panel to Push for Park Repair Funds," *Sentinel Record*, 1 June 1990.
[1370] Cathy Buford to V. C. Ahlrich, Chief, Planning Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, letter, 18 July 1990, A7627, boxed administrative files from Superior Bathhouse.
[1371] Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Cook, 3 December 1990, A76, boxed administrative files from Superior Bathhouse; and Elizabeth Lowry, "Tunnel Planned to Stop Flooding: Park Service Doesn't Like Idea," *Arkansas Gazette*, 30 November 1990. H.R. 5314, draft legislation funding for a three-year Corps of Engineers feasibility flood control study for Hot Springs, was introduced in mid-August in Congress. See Giddings to Cook, 17 August 1990, A7627.

benefit very greatly if he does."[1372] An exasperated editorial in the *Sentinel Record* lambasted Bell for his "back-and-forth, wait-and-see dealings with the National Park Service" and his foot-dragging on renovating Bathhouse Row. The writer declared,

> *"Hot Springs has put its own history on the auction block. The Spa City has allowed part of its main street heritage—already in serious jeopardy because of years of neglect—to decline even farther because of a 'hostile takeover' by one individual who is having trouble keeping his commitment to revitalize a portion of the 300 block of Central Avenue. Financial setbacks, ups and downs, windfalls and shortfalls are nothing new to Bell whose proclivity for 'thinking big' is obviously stronger than his penchant for practicality."*[1373]

Cognizant of the criticism and irked by a demonstrable lack of activity, NPS delivered an ultimatum to Bell. In a February 9, 1990 letter, Southwest Regional Director Cook wrote: "We must ask you to either initiate rehabilitation of the structures, or we will terminate the lease." Cook added, "We were hoping that the Hot Springs Historic Property Lease would become the model for the rest of the National Park Service. Unfortunately, it has become a major disappointment." Cook said that since signing the lease in September 1987, "nothing of substance has transpired to convince us that you will renovate Bathhouse Row." Cook charged that Bell had failed to address NPS comments on five draft historic structure reports, deliver the final reports, and supply an updated $15,000 surety bond. NPS had amended the lease three times granting extensions to the deadline for finalizing the reports. Under lease terms, Bell now had sixty days to address the deficiencies or risk lease termination. The ultimatum worked. On April 16, Giddings received the reports and updated bond. Following final review and approval of the individual historic structure reports, NPS granted Bell formal possession of the Superior, Maurice, Hale, Quapaw, and Ozark bathhouses. Beginning on August 13, 1990, Bell had thirty months in which to begin and complete rehabilitation of the leased bathhouses.[1374]

In order to assess the condition of the deteriorated bathhouses, NPS contracted with an Austin, Texas, architecture and planning firm to look at six of the roofs and make recommendations about preserving significant architectural features. To save them from catastrophic deterioration, the firm recommended remedial action be taken immediately in priority order on the following: Maurice, Quapaw, Ozark, Hale, Superior, and Lamar bathhouses. Their report stated,

> *"These buildings are currently in a rapid and steadily increasing state of deterioration. No manmade structure can last indefinitely without some long term program of repair and maintenance. The causes of this*

[1372] "Bell at Odds with Hot Springs Businessmen," *Arkansas Gazette*, 9 February 1990.
[1373] Editorial, *Sentinel Record*, 9 February 1990.
[1374] Mark Gregory, "Bell Told Improve Bath Houses Or Else," 6 March 1990, "Bell Hits Lease Deadline for Reports," 17 April 1990, and "Park Service Notifies Bell of Deadline," all in *Sentinel Record*. The newspaper also mentioned reports that Bell planned to convert several buildings leased from Hill Wheatley on the west side of Central Avenue opposite the Row into a 100-room hotel with a restaurant.

> *deterioration are many and varied. The buildings need a defined long term maintenance program that will be carried out by contracted lessees or the National Park Service to stop the current deterioration process."*

The primary culprit was moisture penetration from two sources: leaking roofs and high humidity. The analysis recommended each floor be separately ventilated by two or more window fans drawing air through louvered windows on opposite walls. Total cost for immediate modifications and repairs was set at $1.2 million.[1375]

Disappointed by the lack of competitive proposals for leasing the Lamar Bathhouse, Superintendent Giddings announced that NPS no longer wished to lease the building. Instead, NPS would, when funding became available, convert the Lamar to a park facility to augment operations in the Fordyce. As a supplemental visitor use facility, it might include a theatre, artifact/curatorial storage, office space, library, and storage of park supplies and materials. With increasing visitation, Giddings wanted park staff to be located on Bathhouse Row, not at a maintenance building or duplex houses elsewhere. Located adjacent to the Administration Building, utilizing the Lamar for NPS administrative operational purposes just made good sense.[1376]

[1375] *Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas, Bathhouse Roof Investigation, October 22, 1990* (Austin, Tex.: Cox/Croslin and Associates, 1990), 5, 144, 149.

[1376] Mark Gregory, "Park Service Will Convert Lamar," *Sentinel Record*, 22 February 1990. NPS rejected Dr. Brian Reilly's proposal to relocate his chiropractor practice to the Lamar because of his financing plan. See "Interior Department Explains Rejection of Chiropractor's Bid," *Sentinel Record*, 5 September 1991.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Bathhouse Row Reborn

The first priority during fiscal year 1991 involved repairing the flood-damaged Fordyce Bathhouse Visitor Center. Fans circulated warm moist air during summer and fall months, while electric and kerosene heaters warmed the first two floors during cold weather. Workers made repairs to damaged plaster walls and wood paneling affected by lack of humidity controls. Basement renovations saw renovation of bathrooms and measures to keep future flooding from penetrating there, primarily by installing short concrete walls around basement windows. The work also included a new roof and drainage system. Rainwater from the roof would now drain into a 70,000 gallon reservoir beneath the basement into the same reservoir containing excess cold and thermal spring water. Once reservoir water reached a certain level, pumps expelled the water into Hot Springs Creek Arch beneath Central Avenue.[1377]

Hot Springs National Park played host to a combined Southwest and Midwest Region Superintendent's Conference held March 9-13, 1991. Southwest Regional Director John E. Cook and Midwest Regional Director Don H. Castleberry led the conference with a theme of "Protecting the Past, Managing the Present, and Investing in the Future" which was open to park managers from seventy-one NPS units. The conference, coinciding with the agency's seventy-fifth anniversary, began with a Sunday evening registration and reception at the Fordyce, and daily meetings were held at the Arlington Hotel. Giddings and his staff provided conferees with a guided tour of the national park.[1378]

As 1991 began, the negative press concerning Melvyn Bell intensified. The Hot Springs *Sentinel Record* denounced Melvyn Bell as a "Master Procrastinator" with a lock on downtown Hot Springs properties for which "it appears as though he has thrown away the key." An editorial writer denounced Bell's "grandiose design to turn Bathhouse Row and the heart of the city's business district into a revitalized mecca for tourists has been just that—a far-fetched fantasy that has flopped for lack of financial backing and support, a fantasy that has fizzled for lack of follow-through." The newspaper continued:

> *"While Bell has balked, other would-be entrepreneurs have walked, leaving Hot Springs residents and visitors to gawk in disillusionment at the boarded-up windows, the closed doors, the crumbling facades, the empty promises.*
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> *"Melvyn Bell has not put his money where his mouth is.*

[1377] Elizabeth Lowry, "Bathhouse Trying to Dry Out from '90 Floods," *Arkansas Gazette*, 6 March 1991; and Mark Gregory, "Park Service Aims at Fordyce Repairs," *Sentinel Record*, 16 January 1991.
[1378] Mark Gregory, "Park Bosses to Meet in Spa," *Sentinel Record*, 8 March 1991.

"And there are more and more of us who think he never will.

"And there are more and more of us who think National Park Service officials should learn how to talk back.

"If they don't know what to say to Mr. Bell, try this for starters:

"'Lead, follow, or get the heck out of Dodge.'"[1379]

Exasperated and alarmed with the lack of action on bathhouse rehabilitation, Giddings ordered park Architectural Historian Laura Soulliere Harrison to evaluate the five structures in February 1991. In her report adroitly titled *Water, Water Everywhere*, Harrison documented conditions in the Superior, Hale, Maurice, Quapaw, and Ozark bathhouses included in the 1987 lease with Melvyn Bell. Harrison undertook to describe changes over the six month period since Bell took possession by performing a walk-through, taking photographs, noting observations on plans and charts, and comparing existing conditions to the Cox/Croslin roof report and historic structure reports prepared by Bell's architectural firm. She acknowledged that some damage dated to the May 1990 flood and NPS maintenance staff affirmed that the buildings had not been cleaned or swept since spring 1989. Every room was affected by mildew, plaster and paint deterioration. Harrison did not investigate the basements which were off-limits until removal of asbestos-covered debris by a licensed hazardous waste disposal contractor had been performed.

Harrison found that the bathhouses shared common problems ranging from leaking roofs and walls, structural problems caused by construction atop of fill, and "large accumulations of interior moisture caused by inadequate ventilation, condensation, moisture problems caused by construction on top of or adjacent to hot springs, inadequate and poorly-maintained roof-drainage systems." She asserted: "The nationally significant bathhouses are deteriorating at an accelerated and alarming rate." The cumulative effect of delayed maintenance was readily apparent with standing water evident on the floors of the Hale, Quapaw, Maurice, and Ozark bathhouses. Considerable amounts of ceiling and wall plaster had already fallen in each bathhouse. Roofs and gutters had failed. Pigeons had occupied the Quapaw and Maurice. Since August 1990, Hale Bathhouse's room 203's ceiling partially collapsed destroying an historic light fixture and the south end chimney cap had fallen apart. At Quapaw Bathhouse, structural deterioration in the lobby's west wall and west side base of its golden dome was in extremely serious condition. Harrison noted that since Bell took possession the only known work accomplished by the lessee was clearing away the vegetation in back of the Superior and Hale. On February 15, NPS maintenance staff began sweeping out the bathhouses and washing windows on the Central Avenue elevations. Finally, Harrison recommended historic structure preservation guides prepared by Denver Service Center for Maurice, Ozark, Hale and Quapaw be followed, and one be prepared for Superior Bathhouse. On all structures, NPS immediately should follow basic preservation treatments and

[1379] Editorial, *Sentinel Record*, 16 January 1991.

specifications for maintenance, including monthly inspections to monitor conditions over time and take corrective action when necessary.[1380]

BELL LEASE TERMINATION, 1991

The Harrison report pushed NPS over the edge and towards action to end the nearly four-year lease impasse. On February 27, 1991, Regional Director Cook ordered Melvyn Bell to begin rehabilitation work immediately on "roofs, exterior walls, windows and doors, electrical, plumbing and mechanical systems, and interior walls, ceilings and floors."[1381] Congressman Beryl Anthony (D.-Ark.) told Bell "If you now find that you will not be able to honor your commitment, I am requesting you step aside so that we can start soliciting proposals from companies that have performed restoration projects in other areas."[1382] Anthony sought to find a federally guaranteed loan through the Farmers Home Administration to assist Bell with financing. As spring 1991 wore on, Cook issued a June 3 deadline to commence, starting with asbestos removal, and if not, NPS was willing to cancel the lease by mutual consent. Press reports revealed that the investor had recently undergone heart bypass surgery, auctioned off his antiques, and filed for divorce.[1383] On May 17, citing health reasons, Bell and NPS terminated the lease. Giddings made preparations to issue another request for proposals while initiating basic preservation measures. NPS returned the $10,000 performance bond to Bell.[1384]

A tidal wave of media coverage hit Hot Springs after the announcement, culminating in an eight-minute segment on Cable News Network that was viewed worldwide on May 23-24. The coverage allowed the superintendent and mayor the opportunity to advertise the availability of the bathhouses for lease. Stunned by the failed endeavor, Hot Springs Mayor Melinda Baran called on Secretary of the Interior Manuel to come for a visit and talk about rehabilitating Bathhouse Row. Baran wanted federal funding to repair the Row and develop it as an international culture center. Leasing bathhouses to foreign governments as cultural centers would include thermal baths in the style of that country's traditional bath practices. In addition, the mayor wanted to discuss flood control with the secretary because potential investors were not likely to develop bathhouses which could be "swept away in the next flood."[1385]

In the interim, former NPS Director William Penn Mott, Jr., absent from the city for five years, visited Hot Springs at the invitation of the downtown Rotary Club. Mott,

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[1380] Laura Soulliere Harrison, *Water, Water Everywhere: A Brief Investigation of Deterioration in the Superior, Hale, Maurice, Quapaw, and Ozark Bathhouses* (Hot Springs, Ark.: National Park Service, February 1991), 2-4.
[1381] Elizabeth Lowry, "Immediate Renovation Ordered on Bathhouses," *Arkansas Gazette*, 6 March 1991.
[1382] Mark Gregory, "Investor, Solon Schedule Meet," *Sentinel Record*, 26 March 1991.
[1383] Nancy Pfister, "Lawmaker Wants to Aid Melvyn Bell," *Arkansas Gazette*, 27 March 1991; Mark Gregory, "LR Investor Given June Deadline," *Sentinel Record*, 3 May 1991; and "Park Service Willing to Cancel Leases With Bell," *Arkansas Gazette*, 4 May 1991.
[1384] Mark Gregory, "After 3½ Years, Bell Quits Bathhouse Lease," *Arkansas Democrat*, 18 May 1991.
[1385] Ruth Mitchell, "Hot Springs Held Hostage," *Arkansas Business*, 24 June 1991, 12-13; and Mark Gregory, "Mayor Wants Interior Help For Bath Houses," *Sentinel Record*, 1 June 1991.

who had urged the city to "think big," expressed his pleasure in the city's progress. Mott, serving as special assistant to the NPS Western Region and advising on planning efforts for the Presidio, Yosemite, Santa Monica Mountains, Guam, and Saipan park units, advocated a non-profit group, similar to the existing Friends of the Fordyce, shepherd bathhouse rehabilitation. He reasoned that while the private sector traditionally did not work too well with government agencies, a non-profit group led by a manager with marketing and promotion skills would be an ideal fit. Mott also advised that a social sciences study was needed to determine who was coming to Hot Springs National Park, why, what their expectations were once they arrived, and if those expectations were fulfilled or not. He called on the city to develop a marketing program for the park and to work on a public swimming facility featuring the thermal water.[1386]

Interior Secretary Lujan arrived in Hot Springs on July 2, 1991. Invited by Congressman Beryl Anthony, Lujan met with civic leaders before touring Hot Springs National Park. At a luncheon, the secretary told community leaders to formalize their plans for downtown and Bathhouse Row and to work together through partnerships with the federal government. Lujan declared, "What will help most is a financial commitment from the city and from the state. It's hard to go to Congress and say 'we need money for this and we need it all from the federal government.' The president believes in partnerships between government and the private sector, and so do I."[1387] In response to Lujan's visit, Congressman Anthony called a town meeting on August 19 to get public input on uses for the empty bathhouses. Ideas ranged from outdoor public pools to a museum for American Indians. Clay Farrar, Jr., chairman of the Governor's Advisory Commission on Hot Springs National Park, stated, "We ought to get into the idea of having the waters available at an affordable rate" because people were no longer willing to spend $25 for a bath. Therefore, he argued, NPS needed to broaden the appeal for use of thermal water.[1388]

Farrar made news when he stated at the meeting that if the Maurice Bathhouse was not renovated soon, it would have to be demolished. While this claim was subsequently dispelled publically by NPS, discussion of demolishing Maurice Bathhouse was indeed being considered among planners within the agency. Giddings argued that NPS needed to evaluate all preservation options first "before we leap" in favor of demolition, which would constitute an adverse effect to the national historic landmark. Noting that there were local opponents to demolition, Giddings informed the Southwest Regional Office, "Perhaps we should touch base with various entities involved in historic property protection before we (the NPS) move forward with such an alternative." He

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[1386] Mark Gregory, "Ex-Park Director Pleased With Progress Downtown," *Sentinel Record*, 20 June 1991.
[1387] Doug Thompson, "Lujan Finds City Anxious to Lease Bathhouse Row," *Arkansas Democrat*, 3 July 1991. See also, "Greg Harton, "Interior Boss Keys on Partnerships," *Sentinel Record*, 3 July 1991.
[1388] Greg Harton, "Area Residents Offer Solutions for Bath Houses," *Sentinel Record*, 20 August 1991. See Elizabeth Narramore, "Prompt Renovation Demanded to Save Maurice Bathhouse," *Arkansas Gazette*, 20 August 1991, and Doug Thompson, "Maurice Bathhouse Structurally Sound, Park Official Says," *Arkansas Democrat*, 21 August 1991.

added, "The Maurice may be ugly and in poor condition, but it is still an important piece of the history of Bathhouse Row."[1389]

In response to Mott and Lujan's visits, the Hot Springs National Park and Spa Development Foundation (HSNPSDF) formed as a non-profit advocacy group to assist the effort to lease the bathhouses and develop a public thermal pool concept. The foundation urged the city to conduct a feasibility study for its outdoor thermal pool concept. In addition to determining the economic feasibility of building the pools, it would also determine the locations. It proposed to build a "glorified wading pool" consisting of three to ten pools of varying sizes and temperatures. Foundation chair, Clay Farrar, Jr., said the pools should imitate natural rock designs of spas in Baden Baden, Germany. Revenue bonds would be used to build the pool facility with admission fees and gift shop proceeds paying off the bonds.

At the end of 1991, NPS announced it would lease the five vacant bathhouses in two phases with the Superior and Hale available by late 1992. Because those two were in relatively better shape than the rest, Giddings revealed that NPS would first concentrate on roof replacements and asbestos removal on those two bathhouses at the north end of Bathhouse Row.[1390]

Nine months after NPS and Melvyn Bell terminated their lease, Bell also terminated his forty-year lease with Hill Wheatley. Gone was the grandiose scheme to convert commercial buildings opposite Bathhouse Row into a hotel and restaurant. Bell also relinquished control over the Medical Arts Building. Wheatley's nephew, manager of the assortment of downtown properties, immediately set about leasing buildings to new tenants. By late spring 1992, there were no empty downtown storefronts along eight blocks of Central Avenue. In some older establishments, business had increased twenty-five percent since the 1990 flood. The revitalization effort had blossomed in the historic district which was now punctuated by unique shops.[1391]

The Hot Springs National Park and Spa Development Foundation (HSNPSDF), along with the Hot Springs Advertising and Promotion Commission, moved ahead with a marketing analysis and set the schedule for the year when NPS acquiesced and delayed its plan to fast-track bathhouse leasing until the analysis was completed. HSNPSDF also began devising an outdoor thermal pool concept similar to what existed in Glenwood Springs, Colorado, with an assortment of smaller pools surrounded by shops and aesthetically pleasing landscapes. The park's surplus thermal water would fill the pools.

[1389] Superintendent Giddings to Assistant Regional Director, Planning, Douglas G. Farris, 19 May 1992, D18, boxed management files from Superior Bathhouse. See Elizabeth Narramore, "Prompt Renovation Demanded to Save Maurice Bathhouse," *Arkansas Gazette*, 20 August 1991, and Doug Thompson, "Maurice Bathhouse Structurally Sound, Park Official Says," *Arkansas Democrat*, 21 August 1991.
[1390] Mark Gregory, "Spa Groups Press Study of Pool Plan" and "Park Service to Split Bath House Leases," 31 December 1991, and "City to Help Market Park Service's Leases," 3 January 1992, all in *Sentinel Record.*
[1391] Mark Gregory, "Bell, Wheatley Break Lease on Spa Properties," *Sentinel Record*, 13 February 1992; and Kim Harper, "A Winning Combination: Historic Setting and Unique Shops Lead to Revival of Downtown Hot Springs," *Arkansas Business*, 25 May 1992.

A feasibility study indicated such an entity could be profitable and could be operated by the city, much like the mountain observation tower.[1392] The long-awaited marketing analysis, prepared by Chicago-based Economics Research Associates (ERA), conducted its report under the assumption that the bathhouses would be leased as a single entity and that one developer would rehabilitate them. It conflicted with NPS statements that each bathhouse would be offered separately to avoid a repeat of Bell's failure. The ERA study recommended a private developer, partnered with a public agency or a non-profit organization, to redevelop Bathhouse Row. It also advised NPS to delay offering any lease until after the November general election, to take advantage of publicity generated by Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton's presidential bid.[1393]

The man who inspired the ERA effort and who also inspired the city to "think big," William Penn Mott, Jr., died on September 21, 1992, at age 82. Of the former NPS director, Hot Springs Mayor Melinda Baran stated, "He told us to 'think big' and work hard. We're on the brink of something wonderful. I'm sorry he's not going to be here to see it."[1394]

As the nation absorbed the reality of electing Bill Clinton as forty-second president of the United States, two events occurred in December 1992 to shakeup Hot Springs National Park. On December 1, all NPS offices vacated the Administration Building so it could undergo asbestos removal and other rehabilitation. Superintendent Giddings, Assistant Superintendent Dale Moss, and the remainder of the administrative division, relocated to offices on the third floor of the Landmark Building at 1 Market Place. The temporary move was set to last for nine months while the more than $1 million project was underway. On December 11, Giddings announced the park would be operating under a reduced budget in fiscal year 1993 because of a servicewide $48 million budget shortfall. For the park, it meant a two percent cutback by curtailing summer operating hours at Fordyce Bathhouse Visitor Center, fewer ranger patrols, and only half of its normal seasonal staff.[1395]

Annexation continued to be an issue in 1992 as the city pressed for incorporation of the remainder of Hot Springs National Park within its municipal boundaries. A petition for annexation prepared in Roger Giddings' name went forward prompting an affected neighborhood association to demand that it be withdrawn, a request which Giddings granted. Explaining his move and reverting to a neutral position on leaving two-fifths of the park outside city limits, he stated, "We didn't want anyone to be

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[1392] Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Cook, 21 February 1992, H3021; Mark Gregory, "Park Service Delays Bathhouse Leasing Plan," *Sentinel Record*, 6 April 1992; and Giddings to Cook, 17 June 1992, A38. Giddings opined, "Personally, I do not believe the success of such a hot pool complex in Hot Springs (where it can be 90-100 degrees about 90 days of the summer) can be compared to Glenwood Springs where summer temperatures are much less."

[1393] Mark Gregory, "Park Service to Lease Old Spas Individually," *Sentinel Record*, 20 August 1992; and "Study Recommends Leasing Bathhouses As Group, Mixed Use," *Arkansas Democrat*, 21 August 1992.

[1394] Mark Gregory, "Former Park Service Director Dies at 82," *Sentinel Record*, (23 September 1992).

[1395] Mark Gregory, "National Park Offices Move to Landmark," 1 December 1992, "Hot Springs National Park Forced to Reduce Services," 11 December 1992, and "HS One of 17 National Parks Facing Budget Cutbacks," 27 May 1993, all in *Sentinel Record*. Seasonal staff went from twenty-eight to fourteen positions.

negatively impacted by what was proposed. Of course we want to be good neighbors to the city and a good neighbor to the county, but we found that it's very difficult to be totally positive to both." The controversy led to the city placing the issue on the ballot in November.[1396] It made the Hot Springs Board of Directors explain their motive to voters. From 1980 to 1990, Hot Springs lost population to areas surrounding the nearby lakes, 35,800 to 32,500. While the city shrank, the surrounding county area grew. Loss of population translated into loss of state tax dollars. In order to improve city services, it was necessary to expand the city. The goal was now to reach 50,000 by the year 2000. Previous annexation proposals had been separate packages presented as all-or-nothing and were routinely defeated by voters. The result in November 1992 was no different.[1397]

Consistent with the NPS Land Protection Plan, Congressman Jay Dickey (R.-Ark.) introduced legislation on March 17, 1993, to change Hot Springs National Park's boundary by deleting 297.8 acres of privately-owned property and adding 1.7 acres. Senator Dale Bumpers (D.-Ark.) introduced a companion bill in the Senate. All of the deleted areas fell outside the springs' recharge zone. It represented the first modification since 1938 when Congress authorized expansion of the national park. With the deletion, it would leave about 700 acres yet to be purchased and set the final boundary to 5,500 acres. In June and July, the House and Senate approved the bills. The legislation appeared on President Clinton's desk for signature on August 2.[1398]

New regulations proposed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 threatened to close two cold springs that dispensed some of the oldest water in Hot Springs National Park. Happy Hollow and Whittington Avenue springs, containing water dating 6,000 to 8,000 years old, did not receive treatment required for public consumption. Superintendent Giddings noted that thermal water was exempt from the new regulations being put into effect by the State of Arkansas effective in July and that the cold water springs were very popular. Giddings reported that the springs could keep flowing only if NPS received funding to design, install, and maintain an adequate state-approved treatment system. At present, the water passed through a filtering and settling system that treated the cold water with ultraviolet light. The alternative was to add either chlorine or use an ozone-injection treatment.

[1396] Quotation from Greg Harton, "Official: Annexation of Park Dropped," *Sentinel Record*, 4 March 1992; George S. Drakes, President, River Oaks Property Owners Association, to Superintendent Giddings, letter, 26 February 1992; and Superintendent Giddings to Judge Williams, Garland County Judge, letter, 2 March 1992, L32.

[1397] "Hot Springs City Voters: Please Read," full-page advertisement from Hot Springs Board of Directors, 30 October 1992, and Greg Harton, "Directors Consider Annexation Proposals," 27 August 1992, and "Annexation: Some See Opportunity While Others See Red," 28 October 1992, all in *Sentinel Record*. In the 2000 U.S. Census, Hot Springs population reached 35,750, but in 2010, it fell back to 35,193--well short of the coveted 50,000 goal.

[1398] Mark Gregory, "Dickey Introduces Bill to Change National Park Boundary," 18 March 1993, and Dickey Bats for Boundary Change," 12 May 1993, both in *Sentinel Record*; and Terry Lemons, "House OKs Cutting Developed Land From Hot Springs Park," 22 June 1993, "Hot Springs Park Boundary Change Gets Favorable Recommendation," 1 July 1993, and "Law Changes Boundaries of Hot Springs National Park," 13 August 1993, all in *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. The bills were H.R. 1347 and S. 752. Clinton's successor, Governor Jim Guy Tucker, reauthorized the Governor's Advisory Commission on Hot Springs National Park. See "Gov. Tucker Reauthorizes Park Panel," *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, 29 June 1993.

Failure to meet the new EPA regulations would incur NPS an administrative penalty of up to $5,000 a day and a court penalty of up to $25,000 per day for continued violation. As the deadline approached, a compromise was reached in Washington worked out by Congressman Jay Dickey (R.-Ark.), the EPA, and state authorities. It permitted a one year reprieve while NPS installed an Arkansas Department of Health-approved nonchemical treatment system utilizing ozone. It was an acceptable compromise. However, the only drawback, Giddings announced, would be at Whittington Avenue Spring, which had a high iron content. Some of the iron would precipitate out during ozone treatment.[1399]

Three proposals were received by NPS for leasing the Superior and Hale Bathhouses in 1993. Two were from chiropractic firms, the familiar Dr. Brian Reilly's Family Care Chiropractic Center, and a firm operated by a Mexican national. Reilly bid on just the Superior with his clinic and a new type of spa and walk-through display museum. The foreign proposer offered a training center for fine art and antique restoration and a massage school at the Superior and Hale, respectively. The other proposal came from Belz Enterprises of Memphis, Tennessee, known as one of the largest real estate developers in the South and owners and restorers of the Peabody Hotel in Memphis. Belz proposed creating a women's spa in Superior Bathhouse and a restaurant/entertainment center in Hale Bathhouse. Only the Reilly and Belz proposals advanced for further consideration.

In mid-July, NPS announced it would not be until winter that lease awards would be made. NPS began extensive exterior and interior work on the two structures. NPS awarded a $1.4 million contract to Rankin Construction Company of North Little Rock on September 30, 1993, to complete the rehabilitation work within 300 days. At the Hale, workers needed to replace steel I-beam supports which had nearly rusted through. Other work included replacing the roof on the Superior and repairing tile roof areas on the Hale; replacing the skylight over the men's bath hall in the Hale; structural work on the Superior's east wall to repair damage from a thermal spring; repairing all windows, doors, cornices, downspouts, and gutters; flood-proofing basement windows; painting; and installing ventilation systems. The lessee would be responsible for repairing interior walls, installing new electrical, plumbing, heating, and air conditioning systems, installing elevators and exterior awnings.[1400]

Working behind the scenes to secure a lease for Belz Enterprises was Clay Farrar, Jr., former chairman of the Hot Springs Development Committee. Farrar took a select group from the Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce to Memphis in mid-October. Farrar, a personal acquaintance of John Dudas, construction project manager for Belz Enterprises, stressed the urgency of finalizing their proposal on the bathhouses by the November 1 deadline. Dudas informed the group that the corporation was committed to

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[1399] Mark Gregory, "Federal Rules May Close Two Cold Springs," *Sentinel Record*, 21 March 1993, and "2 Popular Cold Water Springs in Hot Springs Given Reprieve," *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, 22 June 1993.
[1400] Mark Gregory, "Superior, Hale Bath Houses Attract Bids from Three Firms," 5 January 1993, "Park Service Shows Interest in Two Bathhouse Lease Proposals," 16 April 1993, and "NPS to Award Hale, Superior Leases by Winter," 14 July 1993, all in *Sentinel Record*; and Superintendent Giddings to John Dudas, Belz Enterprises, letter 13 October 1993, H3021.

finishing ongoing projects before undertaking new ones but acknowledged the Hot Springs project appeared to be worthwhile. He cautioned that corporate leaders viewed it as too small a project. Nonetheless, the lobbying effort succeeded and Belz met the deadline. Reports circulated that Dr. Reilly was experiencing difficulty in securing financial backing. At Superintendent Giddings prompting, NPS looked favorably toward the Belz Enterprises as the potential lessee. On December 1, NPS announced its choice of Belz to negotiate a lease for both bathhouses, stating, "The Belz proposal successfully demonstrated concepts for uses of the bathhouses compatible with the national park, financial capability to complete the rehabilitation project, and managerial competence as evidence by the restoration and operation of the Peabody Hotel in Memphis, and other financially successful business undertakings."[1401]
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FLOOD CONTROL THREATENS WEST MOUNTAIN, 1993

While NPS focused on Bathhouse Row, flood mitigation activities were also ongoing. Flood control and environmental impacts of tunneling under West Mountain were discussed in an environmental feasibility analysis for surface and subsurface exploration for building a tunnel having minimal risk to the hot springs. To do so required drilling a series of test wells. A joint hydrogeologic report and environmental assessment prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg District, and NPS Southwest Regional Office centered around the Corps' proposed special use permit to drill a total of twenty-five wells—seventeen test wells and eight monitoring wells. Thirteen were within Hot Springs National Park. To divert flood water away from Central Avenue, it would be necessary for the proposed tunnel entrance to pierce West Mountain at an elevation believed to be below the natural water table.[1402]

Based on these findings, Regional Director Cook concluded construction of a flood control tunnel would be in derogation of the values for which the park was established. This preliminary NPS decision to deny a drilling permit prompted local officials to meet with NPS Director Roger Kennedy in late August. Kennedy ordered NPS technical and management officials to review all data related to flooding and deliver a range of alternatives to him by the end of September. Alternatives would mitigate business district flooding while allowing NPS to fulfill its stewardship mission. The recommendations included flood-proofing buildings along Central Avenue, adopting a flood warning system to trigger community action during flood events, lowering Central Avenue and constructing a box culvert to convey 100-year floods, and improving the flood conveyance capacity of the historic Creek Arch. The team rejected alternatives to

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[1401] Historic Leasing Coordinator Art Gomez to Regional Director Cook, e-mail, 21 October 1993; and NPS news release, "National Park Service to Negotiate Bathhouse Lease with Belz Enterprises of Memphis, Tennessee," 1 December 1993. Dr. Reilly tried to appeal the decision but was told there was no appeal process. See Mark Gregory, "HS Chiropractor Appeals Loss of Bath House Lease," *Sentinel Record*, 19 December 1993.

[1402] M.S. Bedinger, *Hot Springs Arkansas Flood Control Study: The Environmental Feasibility of Exploring For and Constructing a Flood Control Tunnel Under West Mountain, January 13, 1993* (Vicksburg, Miss.: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1993) 13; and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and National Park Service, *West Mountain Hydrogeologic Investigation, Hot Springs National Park, Garland County, Arkansas, Environmental Assessment* (May 1993), 1, 4, 10.

construct dry dams within the park and the tunnel through West Mountain. They found that "utilizing the resources of a national park for a major flood control structure would be unprecedented, and in violation of the General Authorities Act regarding derogation of park values." Further, it conflicted with *NPS Management Policies* (Chapter 8:10) which stated, "A special park use may be permitted only if the activity has been judged by the superintendent not to cause derogation of the values and purposes for which the park was established, unless directly and specifically authorized by federal law."[1403]

Director Roger Kennedy mulled over the advice and embraced Cook's decision. While pledging NPS would continue working with the Corps to study all possible flood control options, he refused to issue a permit to drill test wells to determine feasibility of tunneling through West Mountain. He declared, "We share with the citizens of Hot Springs a commitment both to better ways to prevent future flooding of Central Avenue and to the integrity of the hot springs for which we are all trustees. They must never be compromised—not at all."[1404] City officials, declaring a stalemate between the two federal agencies, proposed an early December "summit" and invited Director Kennedy to attend. It wanted to present its own alternative—a drainage ditch between West Mountain and downtown buildings. The ditch, covered by a steel grate, could serve as a secondary downtown route for delivery trucks. City hopes were dashed when Kennedy declined, citing scheduling conflicts.[1405] In June 1994, NPS agreed to discuss the option of excavating the east slope of West Mountain in back of downtown buildings to create space for a grate-covered ditch that could also serve as a traffic lane. This came despite doubts that the sheer rock walls would stand up over time and the adverse visual or aesthetic impact it would have on the historic district. Having examined twenty scenarios over the course of six years, the feasibility of this option looked dubious.[1406]

In early 1994, NPS issued a new request for proposals for leasing the Ozark, Quapaw, and Maurice Bathhouses with proposals due on August 1. NPS planned exterior rehabilitation of the Quapaw and Ozark Bathhouses in 1994 with the work to be performed by park maintenance staff assisted by the Southwest Regional Office Preservation Crew.[1407]

[1403] *Hot Springs Flood Mitigation Proposal*, submitted to Director Roger Kennedy, September 30, 1993, prepared by NPS Water Resources Division, Southwest Regional Office, and Hot Springs National Park.
[1404] "National Park Service Documents Flood Control Alternatives," NPS News Release, Washington, D.C., October 22, 1993.
[1405] Mark Gregory, "National Park Service Director to Visit Spa for Flood 'Summit,'" 10 November 1993, and "Flood Control Summit a Washout Without NPS Director," 2 December 1993, both in *Sentinel Record*. As for the environmental assessment, Cook signed the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) by selecting the "no action" alternative, effectively denying the special use permit for drilling. He thanked Director Kennedy for his personal involvement and for "taking a strong stand on this issue." See Regional Director Cook to Director Kennedy, 4 January 1994, L7619 and Cook to Col. Stanley G. Phernambucq, District Engineer, letter, 8 February 1994, L7619.
[1406] Mark Gregory, "Flood Control Channel Stalemate Broken," *Sentinel Record*, 16 June 1994. If feasible, NPS believed that Congress would exclude the sloped area outside of the national park boundary.
[1407] National Park Service, *Request for Proposals for Lease of Ozark, Quapaw, and Maurice Historic Bathhouses, Hot Springs National Park, Garland County, Arkansas*, 1994; and Superintendent Giddings to Tracy Crowley, Office of Senator Dale Bumpers, letter, 4 February 1994, H3021.

NPS began working with Belz Enterprises on a draft lease for the Superior and Hale Bathhouses as city authorities explored an option for a federal grant providing eighty percent funding for a new Transportation Plaza. To be located across Central Avenue from Bathhouse Row, Belz officials were acutely concerned about the critical need for a downtown parking facility. It may have contributed to the corporation's ultimate decision to back out of the proposed partnership. Following preliminary inspection of the bathhouses, John J. Dudas, vice president for Belz Enterprises, delivered a bombshell. In a May 19, 1994, letter to Superintendent Giddings, Dudas announced the company was pulling out of the deal. He wrote: "After careful consideration and the development of a better understanding of the property, we have reached the following conclusions:

> *1. It will be difficult for us to position these individual historic buildings as a cohesive commercial center as we originally envisioned. Consequently, each building will probably require a distinctive user who will not necessarily be dependent on the occupants of the other building.*
>
> *2. It will be difficult to market the second floor spaces for traditional retail users.*
>
> *3. The extent of additional renovation that will probably be required in order to accommodate a user will be substantial both in terms of cost and human resources.*
>
> *4. The time that is available for us to work on the bath houses continues to be severely limited due to our commitments to other projects. These other pressures have not diminished as we originally projected.*
>
> *For the above reasons, we believe that Belz is not the appropriate entity to develop the project. We think that the project will be better developed by independent entrepreneurs or corporations who would take on each building as an unique and special project."*[1408]

News of the Belz decision prompted Director Kennedy to ask for a physical condition report on the vacant bathhouses and an assessment on the rate of their deterioration. Prepared by the Denver Service Center, the report also included estimates for lead paint abatement and accessibility measures to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. The assessment found the Maurice Bathhouse to be in the worst physical condition, while the Quapaw's ornate dome faced imminent collapse. The director was informed that "The dome will collapse if not stabilized as soon as possible. It consists of a steel frame covered with lath and plaster on to which decorative patterned tile was applied. The steel frame has rusted to the point that it no longer exists; the plaster shell is supporting itself! The tile is delaminating from the plaster base." Construction costs for the four bathhouses came to $4.8 million; lead paint abatement

[1408] Quote from Dudas to Giddings, letter, 10 May 1994; Dudas to Dolores Justus, Greater Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce, letter, 21 March 1994; and Giddings to Dudas, 29 March 1994, H3021. Giddings held up the release of the Dudas letter until he received a news media inquiry concerning the status of the leasing program. See Giddings to Dudas, letter, 27 May 1994, H3021.

came to $5.7 million, and ADA changes came to $575,000—a total of more than $11 million.[1409]

Historic preservation of a nineteenth-century bathhouse feature was at issue in September 1994 when the NPS maintenance crew installing a French drain behind the Hale Bathhouse encountered the "hot cave." Forerunner of a modern-day sauna, the Hale Bathhouse hot cave was five feet wide, six feet high, and L-shaped. Options included allowing visitors to have access, resealing it, or sealing it behind a transparent door linked to the bathhouse's foundation with an air-tight concrete block seal. Superintendent Giddings decided on the latter option with a door inside the Hale to provide access "on rare occasions" and "to maintain the heat and humidity" of the hot cave. Clay deposits in the wall crevices still bore the fingerprints of bathers from decades past.[1410]

With two failed attempts at historic leasing, Superintendent Giddings entertained an idea proposed by Daniel Carey, Southern Regional Office, National Trust for Historic Preservation, to list Bathhouse Row on the Trust's "America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places." He informed Regional Director Cook, "I believe there is a great benefit in such an action. It also appears to be in total agreement with the direction given us to seek out new and creative ways to preserve resources. Almost everybody knows the condition of our bathhouses and all the help they need." While the idea first germinated in 1994, the actual National Trust listing did not occur until a decade later, in 2003, with a "deterioration, neglect" notation.[1411]

NPS received three responses on August 1, 1994, to lease the Maurice, Ozark, and Quapaw Bathhouses, two by chiropractors and one from a brew pub/restaurateur. Once again, local chiropractor Brian D. Reilly submitted a proposal, but unlike his previous two unsuccessful attempts, this one was radically different. For the Maurice, all but the historic façade would remain, while the inside became a three-level, 150-car parking garage. Similarly, the historic features of the Ozark and Quapaw bathhouses would remain, but the interiors would give way to excavations to create several cascading thermal pools representing different eras of bathing while at the same time serving as a flood-control measure. Chiropractor John Bomar from Arkadelphia proposed a combination thermal spa and health and wellness center with the basement of one of the buildings featuring an interpretive Quapaw village. The third proposer, Carlton P. McCrary from Little Rock, envisioned using the Ozark as a microbrewery pub/restaurant where the thermal water would be used to make beer. Upstairs would be a mechanical game room for family entertainment. After evaluating the three options, NPS rejected Reilly and Bomar's proposals, but accepted McCrary's.[1412]

[1409] Manager Kenneth Raithel, Jr., Central Team, Denver Service Center, to Superintendent Giddings, 10 May 1994, D34.

[1410] Mark Gregory, "Park Service to Preserve Hot Cave," *Sentinel Record*, 7 September 1994.

[1411] Daniel Carey, National Trust for Historic Preservation, to Superintendent Giddings, letter, 26 April 1994; and Giddings to Cook, 16 May 1994, H30.

[1412] Steven Mross, "Park Service Receives Bathhouse Lease Bids," *Sentinel Record*, 3 August 1994, and Mark Gregory, "To Brew Or To Heal, Spa City Park Facing Bath Water Choices," *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, 11 August 1994. At the time, only three microbrewery permits had been issued in Arkansas: Little Rock, Fayetteville, and Fort Smith. Mark Gregory, "Report: Bath House Brewery Bid Accepted,"

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON TO THE RESCUE?

Substantial lobbying activity on behalf of Hot Springs National Park's decaying bathhouses occurred in Washington, D.C. in 1994. Rep. Jay Dickey (R.-Ark.) even pressured the White House and the nation's first president from Arkansas, Bill Clinton. In a letter to Dickey, President Clinton expressed concern about the backlog of park maintenance and rehabilitation projects. Clinton wrote:

> *"Enhancing our national parks by reducing this backlog is one of* [Interior] *Secretary* [Bruce] *Babbitt's highest priorities. As one of my investment initiatives, my Administration is proposing additional funding for improving and maintaining the national parks. However, as you know, major increases in such funding are difficult to find as we also try to reduce the federal deficit and put the nation's fiscal house in order. Another initiative for the National Park Service includes increased park fees, with part of those funds automatically remaining with the National Park Service for authorized purposes, such as the Hot Springs bathhouses rehabilitation.*
>
> *"I have provided the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of the Interior with copies of your letter. While my FY 1995 Budget is already before Congress, my Administration will review your request within the context of preparing the FY 1996 Budget. Your support for my National Park Service initiatives will facilitate and expedite rehabilitation of the bathhouses. I would appreciate your help."*

Simply signed "Bill" beneath the typewritten body of the letter, President Clinton hand-wrote, "I'll see what I can do. Money is tight, as you know."[1413] While a House subcommittee rejected additional funding, the Senate voted to approve $1.2 million for limited repairs to three bathhouses. The funding would pay for new roofs for the Maurice, Ozark, and Quapaw, as well as flood-proof them, make structural repairs, and provide adequate ventilation. The Senate appropriation bill now had to be considered by a joint conference committee. In late September, a compromise amount was reached of $800,000.[1414]

What, if anything, the president had to do with securing the necessary funding for bathhouse rehabilitation is not yet known, but his interest in his boyhood hometown and national park continued through his presidency and beyond. Sadly, he next returned to

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Sentinel Record, 10 September 1994. State law permitted a restaurant to brew up to 1,500 barrels, or about 46,000 gallons of beer annually. The law specified it could only be sold at the restaurant, and not bottled for sale elsewhere.

[1413] Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Cook, 7 July 1994, D18, transmitting faxed copy of letter: President Bill Clinton, The White House, to Representative Dickey, 22 June 1994.

[1414] Mark Gregory, "Senate Approves $1.2 Million for Bath House Repairs," 29 July 1994, and "Federal Funding Approved for Spa Bath House Repairs," 24 September 1994, both in *Sentinel Record*.

Arkansas after his mother, Virginia Clinton Kelley, died from breast cancer in Hot Springs on January 6, 1994. The First Family stayed at Lake Hamilton Resort to attend her funeral in Hot Springs and subsequent burial next to her first husband, William "Bill" Jefferson Blythe, Jr., in Rose Hill Cemetery, Hope, Arkansas.[1415] On a more cheerful note, the president was back for a weekend in July 1994 to attend his thirtieth class reunion at Hot Springs High School. Clinton and White House staff stayed at the Arlington Resort Hotel and Spa July 23 and 24. While Clinton had been to the Arlington Hotel many times, it was the first time he stayed overnight as a guest.[1416] Clinton's Interior secretary, Bruce Babbitt, arrived in Hot Springs on October 10, 1994, to campaign for Jay Bradford, Democratic congressional candidate running against Rep. Jay Dickey. Babbitt accused the Republican congressman of not supporting Hot Springs National Park, declaring, "One reason that I'm here is Jay Dickey in the last two years has yet to say the words 'Hot Springs' in my presence, even once"—a charge Dickey denied. On a walking tour of Bathhouse Row, guided by Superintendent Giddings, Secretary Babbitt was surrounded by Democratic candidates running for county offices. During a press conference at the Arlington Resort Hotel, Babbitt praised Arkansas' two Democratic U.S. senators, Dale Bumpers and David Pryor, as the real federal benefactors of the national park, stating "The bottom line is that the squeaky wheel gets the grease." Again criticizing Dickey, the secretary stated that the "GOP contract on America," which the congressman had recently signed, "could bring this (bathhouse revitalization) to a screeching halt." Before leaving the city, Babbitt received a briefing from local officials on the stalled flood control project for downtown Hot Springs.[1417]

President Clinton's boyhood home at 1011 Park Avenue in Hot Springs was nominated and listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1995. A May ceremony was held at the home during "President Bill Clinton Week" with remarks from childhood friend David Leopoulous and a letter from the president read by his step-father, Dick Kelley. The Clinton's lived in the house from 1954 to 1961. During the period,

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[1415] Born Virginia Dell Cassidy, on June 6, 1923, the future president's mother married Blythe on September 3, 1943. Killed in a car accident in Missouri in May 1946, he did not live to see the birth of his son, William Jefferson Blythe III on August 19, 1946, in Hope, Arkansas. The widow remarried in 1950 to Hot Springs Buick dealer Roger Clinton, and had another son, Roger Jr., on July 25, 1956. The couple divorced in 1961, but soon after remarried, and eldest son and future president legally took his step-father's last name, becoming known as William Jefferson Clinton. Roger Clinton, Sr., died from liver cancer in 1967. Two years later, Virginia married Jeff Dwire, who succumbed to diabetes in 1974. In 1982, she married fourth husband Richard Kelley and resided in Hot Springs. See David Maraniss, "The Woman Who Shaped the President, *Washington Post*, 7 January 1994, found online 21 February 2013 at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/special/clinton/stories/kelley010794.htm and "Virginia Clinton Kelley," http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=4566

[1416] Denise Sanders, "Arlington Staff Proud to Say 'The President Stayed Here,'" *Sentinel Record*, 31 July 1994.

[1417] Mark Gregory, "Interior Secretary Stumps for Bradford," *Sentinel Record*, 11 October 1994. Dickey was re-elected in the November 1994 mid-term election. Babbitt derisively referred to the "GOP Contract with America" in which more than 300 Republican candidates running for Congress pledged to restore a Reaganesque agenda in Washington once winning control of the House, to include such things as tax cuts and a balanced budget amendment.

NPS placed red, white, and blue patriotic bunting on the Fordyce Bathhouse Visitor Center which featured a special presidential exhibit.[1418]

The beginning weeks of 1995 brought about the end of all flood control efforts involving proposed West Mountain test wells, tunnel, and diversion channel. After listening to a groundswell of public opposition, the Hot Springs City Board of Directors voted unanimously to inform the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to cease its Hot Springs flood control work.[1419]

Tragedy first struck on West Mountain on January 10, 1995, when a twin-engine airplane slammed into the fog-shrouded promontory. The pilot and two men died when the airplane struck the mountain's north side near Sunset Trail. In similar circumstances to the December 1984 crash, visibility was only about 50 feet.[1420] Another West Mountain tragedy came on Veteran's Day 1995, when a woman was killed and two others injured after hearing "growling thunder" and the back wall of an1891 building collapsed. Falling boulders from West Mountain struck the building at 126 Central Avenue, causing the second floor to collapse onto the first. After being freed by Hot Springs firefighters, the woman was pronounced dead at a local hospital. The landslide occurred on the opposite side of the street from the 1984 rockslide in an area Arkansas state geologist called unstable.[1421] A 1997 study conducted by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) identified thirteen high risk downtown areas for potential rockslides and recommended several methods to stabilize rock walls, including "rock and gunite removal, draped wire mesh and steel traps, spot and pattern bolting, ground anchors, drainage ditches and vegetation removal, and fencing." It lacked specificity as to where those techniques should be implemented, but the FEMA study estimated stabilizing the entire downtown area from rockslides would cost $3 million.[1422]

ABATING LEAD PAINT ON THE ROW, 1995

The magnitude of on-going rehabilitation work along Bathhouse Row came into sharper focus in 1995 when requirements imposed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) concerning lead-based paint linked to health problems went into effect. Lead-based paint permeated the historic bathhouses and strict EPA guidelines mandated its removal during construction activity. It understandably slowed the rehabilitation process and increased costs. Nonetheless, in an effort to show progress, NPS made plans

[1418] "Clinton Home Noted," 9 February 1995, and "Historic Home," 18 May 1995, both in *Sentinel Record*. NPS managers began assessing the house as a contender for a Clinton-related unit of the National Park System.
[1419] Superintendent Giddings to Jan Schmitt, Southwest Regional Office, e-mail, 11 January 1995.
[1420] Michelle Hillier, "Crash Kills 3 on Foggy Hot Springs Peak," *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, 11 January 1995.
[1421] Karen Y. Erickson, "Mountain Crumbles Onto Downtown Shops; One Killed," and Melinda Gassaway, "Hot Springs National Park Spokesman: 'State Geologist Has Always Said That Area's Unstable," both in *Sentinel Record*, 12 November 1995. Surrounding buildings were condemned by the city building inspectors for either reconstruction or demolition.
[1422] Victor Whitman, "Watch Out for Falling Rocks: FEMA Study Says Downtown Should Expect More Rock Slides," *Sentinel Record*, 18 October 1997.

to license through special use permits the lobbies of the Hale and Superior Bathhouses from May 1 until October 31, despite not having air-conditioning, water, or sewer systems in the buildings. Licensees would have to possess liability insurance, pay rent, and the upfront permit fee. In the meantime, NPS would proceed for seven months to remove lead-based paint from the remainder of the buildings. The lobbies had already been restored to the 1930s, complete with brass fixtures and historic lights and mirrors. All the rehabilitation work came to a total of $1.9 million. Temporary portable heating and air conditioning could be provided as well as space for limited bathroom facilities, all paid for by the licensees. In mid-April, NPS selected two licensees from a total of nine evaluated in part for the amount of money to be paid for the space. Outdoor Adventure Tours, Inc., staged ecology tours, an activity center, and a gift shop in the Superior, while SunBay Resort staged a tourist information center in the Hale. By season's end, NPS scheduled to have the bathhouses available for protracted lease by hiring a marketing firm to find investors and duty-station an employee from the Denver Service Center (DSC) in Hot Springs to oversee historic leasing and rehabilitation programs.[1423]

Having a DSC employee based at Hot Springs National Park resulted from a *Bathhouse Row Strategic Plan* approved by the regional director in late March 1995. Prepared by NPS in cooperation with the city and citizens of Hot Springs, the strategic plan and vision statement focused on the future of the Row, the desire to pursue new partnerships in its preservation, complementing and expanding Central Avenue businesses, and creating greater public access to the park's thermal water. NPS pledged to recruit an interdisciplinary program manager to implement the plan and oversee leasing and historic preservation efforts along Bathhouse Row. That program manager would contract with a real estate management firm to work with lessees on construction, maintenance, rental payments, and other property-related agreements. The plan recognized impending NPS reorganization strategy whereby the ten regional office organizational structure would shrink to seven by October 1, 1995. The Santa Fe-based Southwest Region would largely be absorbed by the Denver-based Intermountain Field Area, but more importantly for Hot Springs National Park and other Arkansas parks, oversight for them would shift to the Midwest Field Office based in Omaha, Nebraska.[1424] The 1995 move represented the fourth time Hot Springs National Park shifted to a different NPS regional alignment. In the newly designated thirteen-state "Midwest Field Area," Arkansas parks joined those park units in Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, South Dakota, and North Dakota to form the Great Plains Cluster, serviced by the Great Plains System Support Office, co-located with the Great Lakes System Support Office, also in Omaha.[1425]

[1423] Mark Gregory, "Park Service Hopes to Woo Businesses Into Bath Houses," 12 March 1995, and "Bath House Lobbies To Be New Base for Tour Company, Resort," 19 April 1995, both in *Sentinel Record*; and Michelle Hillier, "Lead-Base Paint Clogs Bathhouse Plans," *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, 9 January 1995.

[1424] *Hot Springs National Park, Bathhouse Row Strategic Plan, April 1995* (Santa Fe, N.Mex.: National Park Service, Southwest Regional Office, 1995). The plan was approved by Acting Southwest Regional Director Ernest W. Ortega on March 29, 1995. The Omaha-based Midwest Region, or Region II, was originally established in 1937, one of four NPS regional offices.

[1425] Author's observation. The experiment in Omaha survived four years after which the "field area" designation was dropped in favor of the traditional "Midwest Region" and the two ill-conceived support offices merged back to the more familiar name, "Midwest Regional Office," in late 1999.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN AT HOT SPRINGS, 1995-1996

A budget battle in Washington, D.C., had immediate impacts nationwide in late fall 1995 when Democratic President Bill Clinton clashed with the Republican-controlled Congress over funding for public health, the environment, education, and Medicare. The first federal government limited shutdown occurred November 14 through November 19 when non-essential government workers were placed on furlough and non-essential services were suspended. At Hot Springs National Park, Superintendent Giddings ordered the Fordyce Bathhouse Visitor Center and all park comfort stations closed. On November 17, he ordered all public spigots dispensing thermal water shut off and Gulpha Gorge campground and picnic areas closed until further notice. In addition, Giddings ordered West Mountain Drive closed completely and Hot Springs Mountain Drive to close at night following normal closing hours for Hot Springs Mountain Tower. Under contract with NPS and deemed essential for public health, the thermal water system remained operational, supplying thermal water to Buckstaff Bathhouse, Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center, Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital, and downtown hotels. Of the park's sixty-one authorized positions, only three essential employees remained on duty during the shutdown: the superintendent, a maintenance worker, and a protection ranger. Before the thermal spigots were turned off, fountains in Hill Wheatley Plaza and in front of the NPS Administration Building on Reserve Avenue dispensed four times the normal amount of thermal water as citizens lined up to fill containers.[1426]

The six-day standoff ended when an agreement was reached with a continuing resolution permitting the government to reopen as normal on November 20. Forty percent of the federal work force, or approximately 800,000 people, came off furlough. At Hot Springs National Park, the thermal water was turned back on at all public spigots and all facilities reopened to public use. The interlude proved to be brief. When the continuing resolution expired on December 16, the federal government shutdown once again and remained so through January 6, 1996. While the same closures occurred at Hot Springs National Park, this time Superintendent Giddings did not order the thermal spigots turned off, reasoning that they were necessary for public health.[1427]

A week later, on January 12, 1996, NPS announced that the Hale and Superior bathhouses would again be available for lease, with proposals accepted until May 1. DSC project manager Raphael A. "Ray" Yunk was now on duty at the park to oversee the leasing program. Eight proposals were received; none were local and only one was from Arkansas. They were as follows: Max Karge, Desert Hot Springs, California, proposed using the Hale as a traditional spa; Dean Graves, Memphis, Tennessee, proposed

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[1426] Mark Gregory, "Spa City to Shut Thermal Spigots Because of Government Shutdown," 17 November 1995, and "Rehab Students Pack Bags; Park Service Caps Spigots," 18 November 1995, both in *Sentinel Record*. Normal distribution was 3,000 gallons a day, but more than 11,000 gallons had dispensed with several hours left before spigots were turned off.

[1427] "U.S. Government Back in Business" and "Thermal Water Turned Back On," *Sentinel Record*, 20 November 1995; and John Howard, "Park Superintendent: Fountains Will Flow Despite Shutdown," *Sentinel Record*, 21 December 1995. Principal players in the government shutdown budget battle were President Clinton and Speaker of the House of Representatives Newt Gingrich.

specialty retail shops in both bathhouses; William Thompson, Greenville, North Carolina, proposed using both bathhouses as health centers; Mark Crossley, Little Rock, Arkansas, proposed a brew pub and restaurant in the Superior; and Walter Henley, Memphis, Tennessee, proposed putting a combination restaurant and retail space in each bathhouse.[1428] Again, none of the proposers could ultimately secure the requisite financial backing.

Funding to remove lead-based paint from Quapaw Bathhouse and repair the Hot Springs Creek Arch was inserted into the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee omnibus budget bill signed by President Clinton. The Quapaw allotment, $500,000, would assist NPS efforts to get that bathhouse ready for lease. One million dollars for the historic Creek Arch was a reprogramming of funding originally intended for flood control at Hot Springs by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Once the Corps' study was cancelled and the money returned to the U.S. Treasury, the city began lobbying its congressional delegation to get it returned in order to repair the underground feature. Seriously undermined in several places, the repairs would improve its ability to channel rainwater off city streets and aid in flood control.[1429]

SHOWDOWN ON ARLINGTON LAWN

A citizens' organization formed in opposition to the park superintendent's decision to drain the display pools on Arlington Lawn after receiving multiple nuisance complaints. P.A.L.S.—Protectors of Arlington Lawn and Springs—formed to force Roger Giddings to refill the pools which were originally intended for display and touching by visitors. Instead, they had become magnets to those unwilling to pay for bathing privileges at commercial establishments. NPS officials grew weary of public complaints concerning public nudity and immersing dogs and other pets in them. P.A.L.S. encouraged citizens to send complaints to Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt and President Bill Clinton. In an editorial entitled "Right on, Roger," the Hot Springs *Sentinel Record* urged its readership to do likewise, but in support of Superintendent Giddings' decision. The editorial writer declared, "It's astounding that the individuals who always talk the loudest about preserving and conserving resources most precious to us all are the very ones who abuse or misuse them so as to threaten their access for everybody else." The newspaper urged NPS to increase patrols of Arlington Lawn and purge it of the undesirable P.A.L.S. element. In conclusion, the writer added, "We concur with Giddings' decisive ruling in this matter and we are pleased that he and NPS representatives are not taking this offensive conduct lying down. Right on, Roger."[1430]

Heartened by the local show of support, Superintendent Giddings ordered the display pools refilled with thermal water and chunks of jagged tufa a foot to eighteen inches across arranged inside the pools so as to discourage public bathing. P.A.L.S.

[1428] Mark Gregory, "Park Service Revives Plan to Lease Bath Houses, 13 January 1996, and "NPS Project Nets Eight Proposals to Lease Bath Houses," 2 May 1996, both in *Sentinel Record*.
[1429] Mark Gregory, "Funds to Fix Creek Arch OK'd in Budget Package," *Sentinel Record*, 2 October 1996.
[1430] "Editorial: Right On, Roger," *Sentinel Record*, 21 May 1996.

supporters clad in bathing suits, determined to continue their full body soaks, resumed their activity simply by moving the tufa. Giddings explained that "people had been observed washing clothes and dogs in the water and allowing their children to run naked through the water." Reports were also received of adult public nudity there at night. As the activity continued, Giddings announced that stronger actions might be taken if the undesirable activity continued and visitors reported being intimidated by it and leaving the area. Reports were also received of people sleeping in Arlington Lawn for several days and drying their wet clothes on shrubs and bushes there. In addition to public nudity, drunkenness was also a problem. Giddings reported he was considering establishing specific regulations against tampering with and reducing the water level in or draining the pools. In addition, there could be signs posted prohibiting certain activities. In response, P.A.L.S. began emphasizing the spiritual nature of their activities, proposing to gather on Arlington Lawn for a "short commemoration of the important role these God-given waters provide." Because it was now being framed as a religious event, organizers stated they did not intend to obtain a special use permit from NPS, a requirement Giddings refused to waive.[1431]

When vandals removed the tufa completely, NPS launched a criminal investigation into the incident. When the tufa was later placed back in a haphazard pattern by unknown persons, the investigation continued. Those found responsible for the vandalism could be charged with tampering with government property, a violation carrying a fine of up to $500 and imprisonment of up to six months. In response, Giddings ordered the pools only partially filled, just enough to allow visitors to see and touch it. His goal was to remove the tufa completely because it was collecting mud and other sediment. Until a permanent solution was found, the partial filling of the display pools would stand. Giddings added that public opinion in the form of telephone calls, letters, and public comment was running "400 to 1" against public bathing and soaking.[1432]

In November 1996, in addition to re-electing President Bill Clinton, Arkansas voters voted down an amendment to the state constitution allowing Garland County voters to approve up to three casinos in Hot Springs. The defeated amendment also sought to legalize charitable bingo and establish a state lottery. Arkansans clearly did not want to revive the discredited gambling industry in their state.[1433]

NPS declared an end to ten months of bathhouse lease negotiations with proposers Walter Henley and Mark Crossley, both of whom were unable to secure the required financing or sublease tenants. Cancelling that effort, NPS announced plans to issue a new open-ended request for proposals beginning February 17, 1997. This new tactic would effectively remain "open until filled," permitting NPS to accept new lease

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[1431] Mark Gregory, "Hot Springs National Park Display Pools: Rock-like Lining Steams Soakers," 23 May 1996, and "'Soakers' Continue to Draw Complaints on Arlington Lawn," 7 June 1996, both in *Sentinel Record*. P.A.L.S. reportedly had about 300 names on petitions calling on the thermal display pools to be re-opened for full body soaking.

[1432] Mark Gregory, "NPS to Partially Refill Pools on Arlington Lawn," *Sentinel Record*, 19 June 1996.

[1433] Superintendent Giddings to Deputy Midwest Regional Field Director Dave Given, email, 6 November 1996, A3815 Arkansas News.

proposals until an acceptable lessee could be found. This also permitted increased flexibility for proposals to be corrected and resubmitted. Both Henley and Crossley were encouraged to resubmit under the new process which included the Superior, Hale, Quapaw, and Ozark bathhouses in addition to a new offering: 529 Reserve Avenue, the historic medical director's residence. Originally slated for demolition, the medical director's residence, empty since 1978 and used by NPS for curatorial storage, was attractive to local and state interests as a bookstore, bed and breakfast inn, or something affiliated with the nearby Hot Springs Civic Center, two blocks to the south.[1434]

A private, non-profit local group with a direct tie to the White House calling itself the Hot Springs Tourism Development Council formed in early 1997 to promote the area's economic development. Richard Kelley, President Clinton's stepfather, and other council members focused on the deteriorated state of Bathhouse Row and took a tour through the shuttered buildings on March 12, 1997. Not seeking publicity, but rather solutions to correcting the deteriorated bathhouses, the group was escorted through them by Superintendent Giddings. Kelley stated he personally would relay to the White House the concerns of local officials, including hand-delivering letters and requests for federal funds to rehabilitate Bathhouse Row. The group also learned that Congressman Jay Dickey had invited Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt to visit Hot Springs National Park for a similar bathhouse tour. Giddings discussed preliminary cost estimates with the council members. The federal cost for full rehabilitation and lead paint abatement, new electrical, plumbing, heating and air-conditioning systems, and handicapped accessibility for the five bathhouses stood at $17 million over a three year period. For the private sector to accomplish the same without federal procurement regulations and design, the cost would be at least $14.5 million. Upon learning of the estimate, Congressman Dickey wrote to President Clinton that "It is my hope that you would consider including these funds in future budget submissions."[1435]

The president's step-father delivered to Clinton letters from the Hot Springs Tourism Development Council, Hot Springs Advertising and Promotion Commission, Mayor Helen Selig, Greater Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce, Garland County Industrial Development Corporation, and Fifty for the Future. Each implored the president to help get the bathhouses rehabilitated. Tom Wilkins, one of the founders of the Hot Springs Tourism Development Council, received a telephone call from an unnamed White House top advisor saying the White House intended to seek funding through the Department of the Interior's budget. The council stressed that in addition to rehabilitating each bathhouse to the same level as the Fordyce Bathhouse, it sought help

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[1434] Mark Gregory, "Park Service to Use New Tactic in Seeking Bath House Lease Offers," 5 February 1997, and "NPS Wades In With New Appeal for Bath House Lease Proposals," 23 February 1997, both in *Sentinel Record*. The medical director's residence was found to be National Register-eligible by the state historic preservation officer.

[1435] Quote from Rep. Jay Dickey to President William J. Clinton, letter 19 March 1997, A3815 Federal/Congressional; and Mark Gregory, "State of Bath Houses Concerns Panel," 13 March 1997, *Sentinel Record*.

in finding qualified lessees and operational funds for Hot Springs National Park to provide upkeep once the bathhouses were rehabilitated.[1436]

While help from the nation's capital was not immediately forthcoming, assistance from the state capitol appeared imminent. The Arkansas Legislature passed a bill designed to increase the number of tourist destination points in the state by providing up to ten years of sales tax breaks to any venue spending a minimum of $500,000 in Arkansas. Facilities built at a cost of $500,000 to $1 million could receive a sales tax credit of ten percent of the approved cost of the project over a five-year period. Those in excess of $1 million could receive a similar tax credit of twenty-five percent the cost of construction over a ten-year period. Eligible tourist attractions included cultural or historic sites, recreational or entertainment facilities, a natural phenomenon or area of scenic beauty, a theme park, an amusement or entertainment park, indoor or outdoor plays or musicals, botanical garden, and cultural and educational centers. Superintendent Giddings, thrilled by the state's action, said that the new state sales tax credit, combined with the existing federal tax credit, would "sweeten the deal" for potential investors in Bathhouse Row. "These incentives," he said, "when combined with the stabilization and abatement work being performed by the National Park Service, can only make the bathhouses more attractive to potential investors."[1437]

In mid-1997, after issuing more than 200 request for proposal booklets and conducting more than fifty tours of the bathhouses, four proposals were received, and two were selected for further consideration: Lucy Starr of Tampa, Florida, proposed to operate a restaurant and brewpub in the Superior, and Wanda Moore of Duncan, Oklahoma, operator of a massage business, proposed to use the Superior as a traditional bathhouse along with two other Oklahoma investors. Moore proposed to utilize the entire space to offer quality massages and baths. A proposal by George Petraski of Hot Springs, Arkansas, was accepted to utilize the medical director's residence as a bed and breakfast.[1438] Negotiations continued with all three proposers as they attempted in vain to secure adequate financing.

As NPS negotiated toward an acceptable lease for the Superior, Superintendent Giddings was mulling an idea to utilize the thermal water to augment the national park's limited funding. In an email to Midwest Field Director Bill Schenk, Giddings noted the millions of gallons of thermal water pumped into Hot Springs Creek wasted each month. He wrote, "I am going to start checking as to the legality and appropriateness of our bottling the hot springs water and selling it—in the park and other places—outside the state if possible. Partnershipping [sic] with someone such as our Friends [of the Fordyce]

[1436] Mark Gregory, "Clinton Responds to Calls For Help With Bath Houses," 19 April 1997, *Sentinel Record*. The council was raising funds to hire a professional real estate firm in order to market the bathhouses.

[1437] Quote from Mark Gregory, "NPS Hopes Tax Credits Will Draw Investors to Bathhouse Row," 1 April 1997, and "State Considers Up To 10 Years of Tax Breaks to Boost Tourism," 11 March 1997, both in *Sentinel Record*. Act 29 was passed by the legislature on February 27, 1997.

[1438] *Annual Report for 1997*; and Rodney Bowers, "Oklahoman's Plan for Superior Bathhouse Top-Notch," *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, 7 June 1997.

and Mountain Valley Water, or other group dedicated to returning all profits to the park may be a salvation to the limited funding."[1439]

The park's friends group, Friends of the Fordyce, sponsored the first annual Food, Wine, and Arts Extravaganza on September 20, 1997, along Bathhouse Row. The fund raising event to assist NPS operations cost $50 per person and included a walking visit to the lobbies of the five vacant bathhouses where participants could sample different foods, wines, and art associated with five countries. About 200 people participated.[1440]

President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton appeared in Hot Springs on September 27, 1997, to attend the president's high school reunion. Part of their agenda included an appearance on the front steps of closed Hot Springs High School. In a formal ceremony, the President Bill Clinton Cultural Center Committee launched its campaign to have the abandoned school transformed into a center for instructors and trainees in the arts (painting, sculpting, dancing, etc.). Suggestions began being made that ownership and management of the deteriorated building with asbestos and lead-based paint throughout should rest with the federal government via NPS at nearby Hot Springs National Park. In fact, $50,000 was attached to the Interior appropriations bill for fiscal year 1998 for NPS to conduct a suitability/feasibility study to add the vacant school-turned-cultural center to the national park's boundaries. During congressional hearings, Interior and NPS voiced a unified opposition to "stretching our mission" and not operating "all obsolete high schools of former presidents." With construction of the William J. Clinton Presidential Center and Park planned for nearby Little Rock, the Hot Springs High School initiative eventually fizzled.[1441]

NPS issued the first special use permit to the Hot Springs Art Cooperative Team to place ten large pieces of sculpture on the lawns fronting park headquarters and Bathhouse Row during the summer of 1997. The permit was extended to cover the First Family's visit. New wayside exhibits were also installed along Bathhouse Row.[1442]

Rejuvenating the community thermal pool complex first proposed in 1992, the City of Hot Springs appointed a committee to explore its feasibility in mid-1997. Promoted by the Hot Springs National Park and Spa Development Foundation, a group made up of members from Friends of the Fordyce and Fifty for the Future, the city wished to explore financing options and refine the five-year-old feasibility study to reflect current conditions. Proposed for either Doctors Park on Whittington Avenue or

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[1439] Superintendent Giddings to Field Director Schenk, email, 5 August 1997, L70 Lands and Recreational Planning, Arkansas Items.

[1440] *Annual Report for 1997*.

[1441] "Central High School, Hot Springs, Arkansas," Briefing Statement for the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee Hearing, 10 February 1999, A2623 Briefing Statements/Reports; and *Annual Report for 1998*. Hot Springs National Park provided its President Clinton exhibit, on loan from the Fordyce Visitor Center, for the event. See *Annual Report for 1997*.

[1442] *Annual Report for 1997*. The report details that Little Rock businessman Jennings Osborne had a special use permit for the fourth year placing thirty-one "beautifully lighted trees, some reaching 30 feet high, on the Arlington Lawn during December and the first week of January. They added a shining touch to the park for thousands of visitors, some of whom came from surrounding states."

alternately, at Linden Park, two blocks to the west, the pools and gardens would be designed for public swimming and wading. Filled with NPS thermal water provided when available, the complex would consist of a series of interconnected pools with cascading waterfalls at various temperatures. When hot springs water was not available, it would be supplemented by city water. Open year-round, it would accommodate more than 250 people at a time and the $3.5 to $4 million cost would be financed by bonds and the city's three percent hotel, motel, and restaurant tax. The scheme and its financing would first have to be approved by voters. Superintendent Giddings stated the city would have to pay for running a waterline from park headquarters and build a thermal reservoir at the complex.[1443]

The first ozone treatment system designed to meet safe drinking water standards for park-generated water anywhere throughout the national park system was installed at Hot Springs National Park in 1997. It went into operation at Happy Hollow Spring first, but the other cold water spring, Whittington Spring, was delayed because parts for that system did not arrive in time to meet the deadline imposed by Arkansas Department of Health. In order for the system to work, the ozone treatment system had to be redesigned by park maintenance workers to operate properly. Superintendent Giddings reported his dismay at the level of expertise and man hours the systems required. This concern intensified when the state health department requested NPS start providing daily usage figures for the thermal water. Giddings also began to speak openly about the need to increase the price of thermal water to users in order to help defray operational costs. Set by law in 1948 at $.25 per 1,000 gallons, the rate was far too low by century's end.[1444]

NPS hired the first park day labor crew in early fiscal year 1997. Four employees were hired and received training from a private industrial hygienist before commencing lead-based paint abatement in the Quapaw Bathhouse. The park crew also assisted the Intermountain Cultural Resource Center (IMCRC) preservation crew with the replacement of the Maurice and Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center roofs.

The park's administrative division became a servicing personnel office beyond Hot Springs National Park and began providing personnel services to Arkansas Post National Memorial on May 12, 1997.[1445]

ARKANSAS ENTERS "THE WATER BUSINESS"

Amendments to the Safe Water Drinking Act as promulgated by the Environmental Protection Agency and administered by the states required that public

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[1443] Mark Gregory, "Thermal Pool Complex: City Names Committee to Research Feasibility," *Sentinel Record*, 2 July 1997; and Rodney Bowers, "City Plans Hot Spring For Public: Heated Pools to Tap National Park Water," *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, 1 November 1997.

[1444] *Annual Report for 1997*. Giddings wrote: "Should treatment of the hot springs water become necessary in the years ahead, it will be a large dollar project. If not given adequate time to develop the funding for the design and construction, it would be disastrous to have to shut down the system. Many businesses depend on the water. So do the individuals who collect the water at the fountains."

[1445] *Annual Report for 1997*.

water systems be protected from contamination. In a letter to all concessioners, Superintendent Giddings stated that the Arkansas State Plumbing Code required installation of backflow prevention devices on all water systems. In compliance, NPS now required both hot and cooled thermal spring water systems to join state and municipal actions to safeguard all water lines. The deadline for this was September 1, 1998.[1446] Giddings informed Omaha regional managers that the state health department "is getting into the water business more all the time with us, and it will probably only be a short time when they will put on us the requirement to treat the thermal water." He continued with the warning,

> *"This is serious business for this park—and will require a substantial review, redesign and construction of a water-delivery system far removed from what we have now. I stress this matter as highly, highly significant, as the essence of this park is all about water. We are also a water utility for numerous businesses and all the folks who collect it. It creates businesses and jobs for hundreds outside the park. Hot Springs is THE hot springs."*[1447]

In concept form only, the thermal pool complex heralded by the Hot Springs Advertising and Promotion Commission and backed by the mayor and the Hot Springs City Board of Directors was set for a special election on June 30, 1998. Paid for by private donations, the election was scheduled to approve a $4.7 million bond for design and construction. Placement of the proposed facility was to be in city-owned Linden Park, about a half-mile outside Hot Springs National Park. In negotiations with NPS, the city would purchase thermal water at the higher municipal water rate and NPS would permit the water to be treated, but not reheated, and to mix it with city water when necessary. The city would also pay for the water line, three quarters of a mile from its source. City officials hoped their facility would be as popular as other thermal spring water pools around the country. Giddings reported,

> *"Actually, I am surprised the proposal has gotten as far as it has, but building something with other peoples' money is easy. No member of the Advertising and Promotion Commission, or the City Board of Directors, would take the project upon himself or herself. The Commission will make payments on the project if it does not support itself."*

Predictably, voters turned down the concept nearly two to one with a small voter turnout of 3,400 ballots cast.[1448]

[1446] Superintendent Giddings to park concessioners, letter, 11 March 1998, C3823 Concessions, Contracts and Permits.
[1447] Superintendent Giddings to Field Director Schenk, email, 10 July 1998, L70 Lands and Recreational Planning, Arkansas Items.
[1448] Quote from Superintendent Giddings to Field Director Schenk, 21 May 1998, A3815 Hot Springs Pool Concept; and Giddings to Schenk, email, 10 July 1998, L70 Lands and Recreational Planning, Arkansas Items.

In the summer of 1998, Hot Springs National Park opened a new permanent exhibit in the Fordyce Bathhouse Visitor Center called "African Americans and the Hot Springs Baths." Utilizing a new technology, visitors could use a touch screen computer monitor to view historic photographs and text, complete with oral history interview tape recordings, of local African American bathhouse employees. Funded by a grant from the National Park Foundation and Eastern National, the exhibit benefitted from an assortment of recorded oral history interviews conducted by park ranger interpreters.[1449]

Roger Giddings' prediction that the state health department was getting into the water business proved true when it asked NPS in 1998 to provide daily temperature and flow volume of thermal water collected for bathing and drinking. With both the Happy Hollow and Whittington springs connected to ozone treatment systems, the monitoring requirement necessitated establishing a park laboratory operated by licensed NPS personnel to validate the water's potability. This required the full-time attention of one park employee. In another water-related matter, samples of the thermal water were collected at the request of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and sent to the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas, to look for nanobacteria, tiny bacteria which can only be seen with an electron microscope. NASA scientists reported finding the nanobacteria in the park's thermal water and equated them with similar nanobacteria discovered in a meteorite originating from Mars found on Earth.[1450]

In his role as NPS state coordinator, Superintendent Giddings worked closely with Little Rock Central High School Museum, Inc., interested individuals, and high school and local officials as NPS conducted a suitability/feasibility study on the matter of including the historic building, a national historic landmark, in the national park system. Found worthy of national historic site status, Congress drafted and considered legislation to authorize the new park unit during 1998. Another similar effort underway in Arkansas was not as successful. A $200,000 special resource study evaluated the Charleston, Arkansas, School District for national historic site status and its significance was found lacking.[1451]

In 1998, park maintenance crews rehabilitated the front porch of the Ozark Bathhouse, rescuing it from imminent collapse, and replaced its tile roof. The park day labor crew continued its lead paint abatement work in the Quapaw. It also assisted the Midwest Preservation Crew (MWPC) and park maintenance paint the Ozark and rebuild the porch area. These crews then proceeded to undertake exterior repair and repainting of the Maurice Bathhouse. Similarly, they completed rehabilitation of Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center with new windows, tile roof, copper guttering, and waterproofing membrane. The Fordyce Visitor Center's marquee over the front porch

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[1449] "National Park Exhibit Tells Old Story with new Technology," National Park Service press release, 8 July 1998, K3415 Press Releases.
[1450] *Annual Report for 1998*.
[1451] Ibid and Harlan Unrau, *Special Resource Study: Charleston School District, Arkansas* (Denver, Colo.: Denver Service Center, National Park Service, 1998). All of these initiatives came as result of Senator Dale Bumpers' (D.-Ark.) efforts. Bumpers retired from the Senate at the end of 1998. The Charleston High School was declared a National Commemorative Site complete with NPS arrowhead. See: http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?entryID=730

was rehabilitated along with rerouting of copper guttering. The largest project of the year involved the roads and trails crew deactivating and removing two earthen dams in the former Sleepy Valley subdivision. The former lake beds were filled in and the area restored to natural conditions.

All of the proposers who were accepted as potential historic property lessees continued facing the obstacle of not obtaining a loan sufficient to rehabilitate and commence initial business operations. Lending institutions would not issue a loan on a property for which there was no recourse to obtain any equity should the borrower's business ultimately fail. By the end of 1998, only one written proposal was being negotiated by NPS—that of Jerry Van Dyke, comedian and actor, who proposed a soda shop and museum for the Hale Bathhouse. Van Dyke sought investors to back his plan.

Development continued to encircle Hot Springs National Park. Some of it was welcomed, some not. A welcome project which would stimulate future visitation and use of the national park was completion of the $35 million Hot Springs Civic and Conference Center two blocks south of park headquarters. An unfolding, unwelcome development carefully watched by NPS managers was occurring on the lower slope of privately owned Music Mountain as roads were constructed and trees removed for residential properties. When developed, some structures at the higher elevations immediately adjacent to the park boundary would be readily visible from Highway 70 and 270 to the southwest.[1452]

FEDERAL FUNDS FOR A DOWNTOWN PARKING GARAGE

The effort to increase downtown parking gained speed in 1998 when Fifty for the Future funded a transportation study by the University of Arkansas Community Design Center of the university's School of Architecture. The college students proposed options for a parking garage facility to help both the national park and downtown businesses. When NPS Director Robert G. Stanton came to Hot Springs on February 16, 1999, Hot Springs officials proposed such a multi-use parking facility across from Bathhouse Row, describing it as a "win-win" proposition. Not only would it provide much needed parking for downtown visitors, but it would also reinforce the North Mountain hillside. A group of Fifty for the Future took David Glasser, professor of architecture, and head of the transportation study to Washington, D.C., in March 1999, to meet with NPS officials and congressional delegation members seeking federal funding to help pay for the proposed facility. The lobbying effort produced favorable results for partial federal help. Interior's budget for fiscal year 2000 included $5 million for the parking deck.[1453]

The hot summer of 1999 caused a mobilization of visitor protection rangers to confront growing numbers of juveniles and young adults gathering nightly throughout the downtown historic district and Arlington Lawn. Illicit drug and alcohol use increased in

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[1452] *Annual Report for 1998*.

[1453] Mark Gregory, "Park Service Chief Makes First Visit to Hot Springs," *Sentinel Record*, 17 February 1999; Superintendent's Report for 1999; and Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Schenk, email, 8 March and 14 October 1999, L7019 State Coordinator Reports to Regional Director.

frequency, contributing to vandalism, public intoxication, disorderly conduct, and a number of violent confrontations. Visitors voiced reluctance to walk through these areas and employees of local businesses feared for their own safety when leaving work. Roger Giddings ordered an increased patrol presence and subsequently decided to implement a closure in July for both Arlington Lawn and the Grand Promenade at night from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. He did so to ensure public safety and protect park resources. He noted,

> *"The relatively small staff of commissioned rangers was required to work extended shifts and maintain a presence well into the early morning hours. The entire division unselfishly gave up personal time and even days off for a period of several weeks in order to ensure the success of the operation. The result was a dramatic reduction in the previously referenced incidents and the virtual elimination of acts of vandalism within the area of closure. Since the closure was put into effect, no additional incidents have occurred. The night closure greatly reduced acts of vandalism in the historic district. The scenic mountain drives continue to incur problems, primarily late at night, and future practice may require closure to remedy the situation."*

After establishing the posted closure, Giddings reported no similar incidents while receiving hundreds of public comments applauding his action.[1454]

These incidents and the desire to suppress or eliminate them caused park staff to research potential changes in the superintendent's compendium as well as specific regulations in *Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations*. Protection rangers intensified patrols over several hundred acres of backcountry outside the park's trail system looking for drug related activities. During the fiscal year, incidents included fifty-three arrests, eight minor motor vehicle accidents, and the issuance of more than 190 citations. For motorized vehicles within park boundaries, the RADAR program "significantly reduced instances of speeding and resulted in a reduction of cited offenses." This compared to twenty violation notices issued the previous year for exceeding the posted speed limit.

An August 1999 visitor satisfaction survey identified ninety-six percent of Hot Springs National Park visitors were satisfied with park facilities. An equally impressive seventy-one percent of visitors reported they understood the park's significance. In anticipation of the survey, park staff increased efforts to provide a variety of information to visitors. As Giddings noted,

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[1454] *Annual Report for 1999*. Giddings deemed the closure necessary to "reduce or eliminate the undesirable activities, which include the use of illegal drugs, the distribution of illegal drugs, public intoxication, graffiti, broken windows in the bathhouses, harassment of persons, defacement or removal of signs, comfort station destruction or defacement, removal of bricks from the promenade, bricks from the promenade being thrown to break tiles on the roofs and skylight windows of some bathhouses," etcetera. These nefarious activities occurred during the posted hours and he wanted to "protect the health and safety of everyone, including the 12-16 year old girls and boys who come to the park, sometimes alone, at the almost unimaginable hours of midnight to 4:00 a.m." See Superintendent Giddings to Sallie Culbreth, letter, 9 August 1999, A3615, but filed in A3415 Commendations about Service and Personnel.

> *"Our park is located in a downtown setting and many people who stop in our visitor center are not familiar with what our park offers. Hot Springs National Park has a complex history and geology and we are seeking to provide visitors with more insight into our story. Once visitors are oriented, we find they have many positive comments about the park resources and park programs."*[1455]

The park's friends group, broadening its name to Friends of the Fordyce and Hot Springs National Park, continued to host the popular annual fund raiser "Wine, Food and Arts Extravaganza." In 1999, its goal was to fund an irrigation project around the Grand Promenade. In addition to funding an assortment of activities and programs, the group assisted with funding special receptions for visiting officials, politicians, and the annual picnic honoring Volunteers In Parks (VIPs). Park partners, particularly the Hot Springs Advertising and Promotion Commission and the Arkansas Parks and Tourism Department continued efforts to promote Hot Springs National Park in tourism promotion programs, including television commercials, radio announcements, publications, magazine advertisement, internet postings, and other means. It ensured the national park's place as the number one tourist destination in Arkansas.

Increasing the campsite fee at Gulpha Gorge Campground in fiscal year 1999 from $8 to $10 resulted in an overall reduction of visitor use. A hot, dry summer contributed to lower campground usage as did lack of full utility hookups for recreational vehicles. Full service campgrounds close to the nearby lakes received higher levels of usage where visitors could fish, boat, swim, and participate in water sports.[1456]

Kudzu, an invasive Asian noxious weed that climbs over shrubs and trees and grows so rapidly it eventually kills them by enshrouding them, had infested the thirty-foot cliff face behind the park's thermal water cooling station. Eradication efforts there found that the plant had contributed to damaging the cliff's stability and threatening Arlington Lawn areas below it. Through the Denver Service Center, NPS received geological and hydrological research assistance for the unstable area, including a USGS geohazard expert who recommended mitigation measures to adopt.[1457] Rehabilitation of the Grand Promenade also continued with removal of undesirable kudzu, privet, cherry laurel, and hackberry.

Creation of Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site by Congress in 1999 did not end Hot Springs National Park staff's ongoing involvement in the new park

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[1455] *Annual Report for 1999*. Visitor survey cards returned in May 2001 reported a ninety-eight percent visitor satisfaction rate and a ninety-one percent visitor understanding rate. See *Annual Report for 2001*.
[1456] *Annual Report for 1999*. Giddings noted: "The campground, generator of our recreation fees has nearly become a deserted island during the hot and humid summer months. Having no utility hookups to accommodate the increasing number of recreational vehicles 'going camping,' and especially having no showers, gives us the message, 'We're not staying here.' We believe the setting of our campground is clean and aesthetically pleasing, but without these services, potential campers to our campground do not hesitate a minute to turn around for one of the scores of fully-equipped campgrounds operated by other government or private agencies within a 20-minute drive."
[1457] Ibid..

unit. As the general management plan got underway and David Forney, first NPS superintendent, arrived, Hot Springs staff continued to serve and accomplish many park operational and maintenance needs. This included becoming a servicing personnel office for the Little Rock park unit.[1458]

Reducing operational costs and personnel time, NPS in 2000 changed its treatment procedures on the two cold water springs at Happy Hollow and Whittington springs. Previously, ozone was removed prior to the cold water reaching the spigot which required laboratory analysis for bacteria. Allowing a trace of ozone as a residual permitted the delivery of water without the extra burden incurred by NPS.

The Historic Property Leasing Program continued unsuccessfully into fiscal year 2000. The soda shop and museum concept by Jerry Van Dyke was dropped after the actor was not able to secure financing. However, local architects, Bob Kempes and Anthony Taylor, continued negotiating a proposal for a spa in the Superior Bathhouse. The fundamental issue remained: "Cost of rehabilitating a bathhouse, with no equity gained for the rehabilitation, was the reason for not finalizing a lease." New hope arose, however, upon passage of the Concessions Management Improvement Act of 1998. Giddings expressed hope that, once implementing regulations were in place, it might provide a more conducive format for contracting vacant bathhouses out to the private sector for rehabilitation and visitor use, and possibly remain as bathhouses.[1459]

Funding passed through the NPS budget by Congress to the City of Hot Springs for flood control measures was completed in 2000. A total of $796,000 went for Hot Springs Creek Arch repairs and other flood prevention measures. Giddings noted that flood control "alternative are relatively few without impacting park resources, and the protection of them will remain of paramount importance in offerings or considerations from the park."[1460]

The City of Hot Springs, thanks to the efforts of Fifty for the Future and other business leaders, secured a $5 million appropriation to help construct a parking garage to accommodate visitors to downtown and Bathhouse Row. Ultimately, the amount received was $4,881,000 with the requirement that the city had to produce $245,000 in order to receive the federal funds. The lesser amount necessitated scaling the project back to a 255-car parking deck at the northwest corner of Exchange and Bath streets, about 100 yards from the Ozark Bathhouse.[1461] Placement of the parking deck would also assist in stabilizing an area where a portion of West Mountain had previously collapsed. Plans were underway to link the deck with the nearby Oak Trail. Similar

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[1458] *Annual Report for 2000*. Superintendent Giddings, on behalf of NPS Director Robert Stanton, presented retired U.S. Senator Dale Bumpers with an "Honorary Park Ranger" award at a Central High School NHS reception. It recognized Bumpers' "contributions to the conservation and preservation programs of the country and for his dedication and help to the National Park Service during his time as senator."

[1459] *Annual Report for 2000*.

[1460] Ibid.

[1461] Ibid., and Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Schenk, email, 24 March 2000, L7019 State Coordinator Reports to Regional Director.

repair work to a collapsed rock wall that closed the North Mountain Loop Scenic Drive the previous year also began. Supervised by the Federal Highways Administration, the roadway was slated to reopen in March 2001. Another large concrete retaining wall at the foot of West Mountain close to the First Presbyterian Church was also undertaken, scheduled for completion in February 2001.

Under a stipulation of the 1959 deed passing control of the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center to the state, NPS oversaw a request to demolish two deteriorated buildings at the complex. The section 106 review was coordinated through the Arkansas State Historic Preservation Office. The buildings, former nurses quarters, were slated for demolition in order to provide much needed space for vehicle parking.

In fiscal year 2000, the end of the millennium, a total of 80,118,760 gallons of thermal water were consumed for traditional baths in the following five bathhouses:

Location	Baths	Whirlpools	Massages
Arlington	34,856	36,781	34,970
Buckstaff	27,400	25,558	28,507
Downtowner	4,250	4,208	4,422
Austin	4,375	4,616	4,375
Majestic	16,203	15,221	16,421

Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center provided hydrotherapy and physical therapy treatments to 7,663 visitors, and accommodated 34,887 visits to the Hot Springs Health Spa. Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital provided hydrotherapy treatments to 2,669 patients, and nine patients in Hubbard Tubs. Overall, the thermal system produced 250,000 gallons of hot and cooled thermal water per day for a total of 91,250,000 gallons for the year. Fee rates charged to customers were as follows:

Location	Bath	Whirlpool	Massage
Arlington	$16.50	$2.00	$25.00
Buckstaff	$15.00	$1.50	$18.00
Downtowner	$12.50	$1.50	$14.00
Austin	$15.00	$15.00	$30.00
Majestic	$16.50	$2.00	$25.00
Hot Springs Health	$13.00	$1.50	$19.00

The year 2000 marked the discontinuation of NPS giving massage therapist exams. Henceforth, NPS required each practicing massage therapist to possess a state-issued license.[1462]

The park received a donation of seventeen antique Zander therapy machines or exercise equipment in December 2000 from Homestead, Inc., in Hot Springs, Virginia. The Smithsonian referred the company to the Arkansas national park and ultimately NPS accepted twenty-one Zander pieces at an estimated value of $1.7 million. Items in

[1462] Ibid. The former Hilton changed its name to the Austin Hotel in 1999.

curatorial storage in a Bally building had to be reorganized to make space for them while preparations were underway to have a rotating Zander exhibit in the Fordyce Visitor Center. Museum Tech Sharon Shugart designed a plan for the physical layout, researched and wrote the exhibit text, and planned for the new exhibit in fiscal year 2002. The donation to the park's collection represented one of the largest collections of Zander machines in North America.[1463]

ICE STORM CRIPPLES THE NATIONAL PARK, 2000

The worst ice storm in Arkansas' history of weather record keeping occurred during the holiday season at the end of 2000. At Hot Springs National Park, it necessitated considerable emergency planning and reprogramming, impacting the entire park staff. More than one thousand ice-laden trees collapsed on West Mountain Drive and 900 trees fell on Hot Springs Mountain Drive. Thousands more were down in developed areas, causing damage in the historic district to buildings, utilities, roads, trails, signs, lamp posts, ornamental trees, shrubs, fences, and other park amenities. Ultimately, the natural disaster required $1.1 million in emergency funding. The December 25 storm caused a massive power outage, forcing Fordyce Visitor Center to close for several days. Efforts to remove downed trees, hazard trees, and debris throughout the park began on December 26 and commenced on Central Avenue and Bathhouse Row where the sidewalk and one lane of traffic were covered in downed trees and limbs. Two local tree service companies and an additional twelve temporary emergency employees were hired to take on the monumental ice storm cleanup task.

On December 29, 2000, the Bathhouse Row sidewalk and one lane of traffic were cleared and reopened, all while NPS facilities were without electricity and water. Emergency generators kept the thermal water system in operation and supplying customers. Clearing efforts shifted to Hot Springs Mountain Drive on December 27. NPS grounds crew began clearing Whittington Park and another crew began at Gulpha Gorge Campground. The work proved dangerous because ice-laden trees continued falling. The combined effort continued for six days—or 600 days of effort—opening roads and park areas to visitors. Assistance was also provided to the city to reopen Park Avenue or Highway 7. Approximately 70,000 cubic yards of trees were removed. A muleskinner with a team of mules also assisted. Much of the debris was disposed of in the former Grave's gravel pit and buried, contributing to the initial reclamation of that scarred landscape.[1464]

Park improvements were numerous and varied in fiscal year 2001. The biggest thermal cooling system upgrade since 1948 resulted in building a new enclosed room at the Thermal Water Cooling Station on Arlington Lawn to accommodate a new computerized control system. Tremendous progress was made in rehabilitating the exterior of the three-story historic medical director's residence; Giddings announced NPS

[1463] Ibid., and *Annual Report for 2002*. Six Zander pieces were put on display in 2002, with plans to rotate in other Zander pieces over time.
[1464] *Annual Report for 2001*.

had entered an agreement with the U.S. Forest Service Experiment Station, presently occupying one of the former duplex residences as office space, to provide $200,000 to restore the interior of 529 Reserve Avenue and then occupy it for a number of years. The Forest Service group would also be available to assist with NPS natural resource issues under the inter-agency partnership.[1465] Another big project, replacing all the broken bricks and eliminating safety hazards along the Grand Promenade, also commenced. To accommodate the new downtown parking garage, curb cuts were made to allow visitor access to the Bathhouse Row sidewalk from Central Avenue. Giddings reported Hot Springs National Park was probably the first in the national park system to have an electronic chirping crosswalk light in front of its visitor center to aid vision impaired visitors to cross the street. NPS partnered with the city to pay for the new light. NPS programmed to begin lead-based paint removal at the Lamar, Ozark, and Maurice bathhouses. Friends of the Fordyce and Hot Springs National Park donated $15,000 to install water lines under the Grand Promenade in preparation for a new irrigation system.

The park and city played host to all NPS regional directors and deputy regional directors April 2-4, 2001. It was one of four annual meetings the group held in order to address servicewide issues and programs. The year also saw Superintendent Giddings' term on the Midwest Leadership Council expire where he served on a regionwide advisory capacity at the behest of Midwest Regional Director Bill Schenk.

Lack of success in leasing the historic bathhouses continued in 2001 with one proposal being accepted for the Quapaw, but it soon evaporated when financing could not be secured. The Hot Springs Mountain Tower and Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center/Hot Springs Health Spa operated on one-year permits extending their previous contracts. This continued as uncertainty enveloped the 1998 Concessions Management Improvement Act regulations under moratorium by court legal challenges at other national parks. Five special use permits continued for bathing operations at Arlington Resort Hotel and Spa, Downtowner Hotel, Majestic Hotel, Austin Hotel, and the Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital.[1466]

The close city-federal partnership continued in the new century with the Hot Springs Advertising and Promotion Commission expending tens of thousands of dollars every year advertising Hot Springs National Park. Television ads harkened back to the area's early visitors who came to take the baths and promoted the park as "the nation's first resort." The commission's $85,000 tourism research study revealed that most Hot Springs visitors did indeed come to see the national park and to take the baths.[1467]

[1465] Ibid.; and Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Schenk, email, 22 January 2002, L7019 State Coordinator Reports to Regional Director. The initial memorandum of understanding was for ten years for the U.S. Forest Service to contribute $200,000 for interior rehabilitation and NPS rehabilitating the historic structure's exterior. Giddings reported the finished project evoked "scores of positive comments from citizens."

[1466] Ibid.

[1467] Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Schenk, email, 22 January 2002, L7019 State Coordinator Reports to Regional Director.

In 2001, Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center and its Hot Springs Health Spa was mandated to treat its pools with chemicals after *Escherichia coli* and other coliform were found in tubs and pools. By order of the Arkansas Department of Health, water in tubs or pools which serve two or more individuals the same water must be treated. The state health department worked with NPS to institute the new requirement and a new chlorine treatment system was installed. Levi Memorial Hospital also began treating its large therapy pool. Other bathhouses were not required to meet the new requirement because their tubs were for individual bathing and sanitized between baths. Some long-time bathers voiced opposition to the new regulation, but most tacitly accepted it.[1468]

In May 2001, Hot Springs National Park formalized its agreement to provide personnel services to Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site. The arrangement created a "South Arkansas Mini Cluster" personnel office at Hot Springs National Park which also had a similar agreement with Arkansas Post National Memorial dating back to October 1996. In addition, the park was also providing purchasing services up to the $100,000 level for five other Midwest Region parks.

With tighter budgets and fewer personnel, such administrative cooperation became crucial service-wide, and this was certainly true within the Midwest Region. Re-inventing government, a trademark accomplishment during the Clinton Administration, meant assuming more work with fewer people. In a response to the Midwest Regional Office, Executive Assistant Diane East declared, "The Service has been re-engineered to the point that it takes more time to do almost everything." By 2001, Hot Springs National Park had lost four key positions: a management position to administer lands, permits, public information officer, and concession/leasing programs; a supervisory protection specialist; a supervisory maintenance lead; and a supervisory interpretive lead. Indeed, from a previous high of sixty-one full-time equivalencies (FTE), funding shortfalls brought the FTE total to forty-seven. Equally devastated was the seasonal workforce. No longer did the park have seasonal maintenance workers, seasonal protection rangers, or seasonal resource management specialists. In the critical Interpretation Division, seasonal interpreters had plummeted from nine to three.[1469]

In 2001, park resource management specialists determined that two old growth timber stands of oak, hickory, and pine forest could be the oldest in the state. Dendrochronology samples indicated the virgin forest to be in excess of four centuries

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[1468] *Annual Report for 2001*. Implementation of the new regulation proved problematic at the Libbey Physical Medical Center because many bathers said they did not want to bathe in treated water. Difficulty in meeting the requirement included having to install treatment systems for each of its tubs. See *Annual Report for 2002*.

[1469] Superintendent Giddings to Superintendent Dave Forney, 17 May 2001, A44 Memorandum of Agreement; and Executive Assistant East to Acting Associate Regional Director, 20 July 2001, A64 Re-Organization. Superintendent Giddings believed that to be fully operational according to "new rules, guidelines, and operation procedures, not only does the national park need to return to 61 FTE, it needs the operations and maintenance funding (ONPS funding) for an additional 10 FTE for a total of 71." See Giddings to U.S. Senator Tim Hutchinson, letter, 15 March 2002, F30 Budget Formulation—Capability Statements.

old. Giddings reported, "All vascular plants within these units are being evaluated and mapped. These unique biotic communities may well prove to be the best overall indicators of ecosystem health." Inventorying and mapping of invasive exotics was also well underway in order to identify any new invaders and to track the corridors through which they entered the national park. Kudzu eradication efforts continued within the historic district as well as in reclaimed former homesites. Combining efforts with Wilson's Creek National Battlefield's integrated pest management "SWAT team" allowed NPS to combat the invasive climbing plant. While resource managers continued to report the absence of gypsy moths and borer insects, they noted the arrival of fire ants and pledged to monitor them in order to lessen their threat to park resources and visitors.[1470]

In the chaotic aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in New York City, Shanksville, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C., followed up by anonymous anthrax events, "homeland security" became a daily vigilant practice throughout the United States, particularly in federally owned facilities and areas. In response, Superintendent Giddings reassured park concessioners that "we do not anticipate any reduction to park visitor services or in our concession programs." He added,

> *"We do remind you to be attentive to your visitors and facility during your daily operations. Be alert to shipments, letters, packages, bundles, sacks, boxes, etc., that are brought into your facility. As you open each morning and close each evening, be alert to unusual items or changes around your facility. If anything is suspicious to you, do not hesitate to call a ranger."*[1471]

THE DAB ENDORSES BATHHOUSE STABILIZATION, 2002

In fiscal year 2002, the business community leaders of Hot Springs began agitating for the ongoing bathhouse stabilization program to refocus on rehabilitating at least one bathhouse to completion. The Historic Property Leasing Program route lacked positive results as Superintendent Giddings wrote in his annual report stating "Numerous persons visited or called the park regarding their interest in leasing a vacant bathhouse only to find the cost of rehabilitation was too large an investment for the adventure. Many had worthwhile proposals for use, but none submitted written proposals." While this new community emphasis grew louder, the NPS initiative, backed by the Department of the Interior, now received sanction and concurrence by a new entity, the Director's Advisory Board (DAB). Initiated under previous Director Robert Stanton and his National Leadership Council (NLC), the DAB began as an NLC committee that evaluated all NPS construction projects totaling $1 million and greater. Made up of executive level NPS employees and external advisors, the DAB reviewed design and construction projects for cost-effectiveness and responsible use of NPS construction

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[1470] *Annual Report for 2001*.

[1471] Superintendent Giddings to Michael Branch, Manager, The Buckstaff Bathhouse Company, letter, 19 October 2001, A38 Public Relations General File.

funds. For Hot Springs National Park, the DAB continued to follow a stabilization program for the six vacant bathhouses into fiscal year 2003.[1472]

In the spring of 2002, park managers were evaluating whether or not to move away from the Historic Property Leasing Program to the rejuvenated new concessions program. Because of the Concessions Management Improvement Act of 1998, new implementing regulations permitted those with a concession contract to consider all funds approved by NPS for rehabilitating a facility as "leasehold surrender interest" funds which in large part would be returned to the concessioner when it left the business for whatever reason. Also of benefit to the national park unit was that franchise fees from a concession would largely be returned to that park for accomplishing work on concession facilities. Superintendent Giddings discussed the issue in a March 30, 2002, meeting with city leaders and an aide to U.S. Senator Blanche Lincoln (D.-Ark.). The attendees concurred that no recoverable rehabilitation costs to the Historic Property Leasing Program lessee or even the twenty percent tax credit had been a good incentive at Hot Springs National Park. As a result of the meeting, Giddings immediately decided to place the five vacant bathhouses in the concessions program—with the enthusiastic endorsement of the congressional aide. The failed five-year experiment with the Historic Property Leasing Program seemed to have come to an abrupt end; however, regional professionals determined that the park should pursue *both* historic leasing and concessions programs until further notice.

Much to Superintendent Giddings' delight, Senator Lincoln had made the "placement of visitor services into the vacant bathhouses a high priority in her program for Arkansas." The senator now pressed NPS to prepare new concession's prospectuses for the Superior, Hale, Maurice, Quapaw, and Ozark bathhouses, and agreed that Lamar Bathhouse would be retained by NPS and rehabilitated for park purposes, including offices, archival and administrative storage, meeting space, and possible visitor use space. Senator Lincoln sought to meet with NPS Director Fran Mainella as soon as possible to advocate for Hot Springs National Park projects being placed at a higher national priority level.[1473]

Directly across Central Avenue from Bathhouse Row the federally-funded $5 million parking garage was under construction in 2002. Directly west of the Ozark Bathhouse and one short block west on Exchange Street adjacent to the park boundary on West Mountain, the concrete structure took shape. Built by the City of Hot Springs, construction necessitated removal of Bath Street and converting it to a pedestrian way for visitors headed to Bathhouse Row. Planners envisioned a traffic light at the former Bath Street and Central Avenue intersection. The design accommodated 255 automobiles, but none with trailers or for recreational vehicles.

[1472] *Annual Report for 2002*. The NLC was made up of the NPS director, seven regional directors, and Washington Office deputy, associate, and assistant directors. New individualized wayside exhibits developed by park staff were installed in the lobby areas of seven bathhouses in 2002.

[1473] Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Schenk, 30 March 2002, H3021 Bathhouse General File. Giddings informed the aide that NPS Director Mainella would be at the Midwest Region's Managers' Conference in Fort Smith, Arkansas, beginning April 23, upon which the aide requested thirty minutes of the director's time.

In 2002, the friends group, Friends of the Fordyce and Hot Springs National Park, expanded its fund raising efforts to assist NPS in restoring the historic landscaping to the park's formal entrance and Stevens Balustrade area. Ten overgrown Bradford pears which blocked the view of the formal entrance's architecture were removed in favor of more appropriate historic plantings. This augmented the conservation work being performed by stone mason specialists from the Historic Preservation Training Center in Frederick, Maryland. The balustrade's cut stone was partially disassembled and damaged areas were replaced with new stone obtained from the original Alabama quarry. New stone steps were installed at the north staircase and on the lower flight of the south staircase. Workers also installed a new trench drain on the landing along with other drainage improvements. They repaired and patched stones where needed. Adjacent rehabilitation work on the Grand Promenade was also completed in 2002. The promenade received a new subsurface drainage system, installation of ten lateral utility sleeves for future utility needs in the area, followed by removal of all sand bedding and replacement with mortar for more than 2,000 feet. Thermal water was restored to the drinking fountain in the wall above the overlook as well as the fountain at the north end terminus. The latter fountain had to be completely rebuilt to accommodate necessary drainage improvements. Electrical conduits and four-inch waterlines were also installed and attached to a new water main along the edge of the Grand Promenade bringing city water to the area.

Other 2002 historic preservation and maintenance projects were in Whittington Park where four historic footbridges were rehabilitated. Cracks were patched and irregularities in masonry surfaces were addressed, and a new waterproof coating was applied to prevent deterioration. Park crews conducted stone and masonry repairs to select areas of the Whittington Creek retaining walls. Outside Whittington Park, crews replaced the old parking lot adjacent to the NPS Administration Building where it was feared that damage could be occurring to the main collecting reservoir below. Workers carefully removed it in blocks and new concrete "was placed in three large monolithic pours to impart unit strength and to control water infiltration to the soil below."[1474]

A new emphasis to acquire the remainder of the Fordyce-Ricks estate began in May 2002. NPS wished to acquire the remaining seventeen acres which included the 4,300 square foot log home, livery stable and corral, several other buildings, and two smaller residences. The remaining 1200 acre estate had already been acquired, including the Ricks Dam, lake, and water wheel. The spectacular log house, constructed between 1904 and 1909, was built by Samuel W. Fordyce and General Earl Thornton Ricks, both early Hot Springs entrepreneurs. It represented an outstanding example of rustic Adirondack architecture rarely found in Arkansas. Both families had expressed interest in selling the property and supported its preservation and public use. A number of Fordyce-Ricks estate properties already owned by NPS were enrolled in the List of Classified Structures, and a movement was underway to prepare a National Register of Historic Places nomination. Acquisition of the remainder would permit re-integration of the entire property and afford the necessary protection from commercial development.

[1474] *Annual Report for 2002*.

Park managers envisioned the log home could be used for educational programs ranging from training for employees, cooperative organizations, school groups, public tours, special events, and other compatible uses. It could also be utilized as an environmental education center. As a concession, it could become a youth hostel, bed and breakfast, or a facility offering a horse-riding stable to take advantage of several nearby long distance backcountry trails.[1475]

On Bathhouse Row, lead abatement focused on the Maurice Bathhouse. Its seventy-five windows were stripped, primed, and repainted, followed by at least half of the interior being abated and encapsulated. Large areas of deteriorated plaster were removed and replaced, particularly ceiling areas. Parts of the roof were repaired as was the gutter and downspout system. Maintenance workers also continued to supply basic assistance at Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site which continued to lack funding for its own maintenance staff during the year.

In 2002, the maintenance utility group invented and installed a water mist spraying system on the air-cooled heat exchangers. The new system immediately provided a substantial increase in cooling capacity of the heat exchangers by the simple method of spraying a continuous fine mist onto the cooling coils while in operation. It resulted in a marked cost savings in terms of electrical needs and reduced the amount of water for cooling in later stages of the overall cooling system. Innovation also came with the replacement of the oversized, unreliable ozone generators at Whittington Spring and Happy Hollow Spring. Installation of smaller new units at these springs similarly lowered operating and maintenance costs while permitting a more precise level of oxidation control to create potable water at the springs.

Other 2002 utility issues involved delivering a reliable supply of thermal water. End users like the Arlington Resort Hotel and Spa, Majestic Resort Hotel and Spa, Downtowner Motor Inn, and Libbey Memorial Physical Medicine Center/Hot Springs Health Spa all consistently commented that their thermal water lines lacked sufficient water pressure. Superintendent Giddings observed that placement of reduced pressure zone valves, a health regulation requirement, coupled with mineral deposit build-up in the lines contributed to lower water pressure. Solutions involved replacement of lines or installation of booster pumps, something that was likely to increase in future years.[1476]

The United States Postal Service (USPS) included the Ozark Bathhouse as the Arkansas postage stamp in its series of fifty state stamps. At Hot Springs National Park on the second day of its issue by USPS, a ceremony took place in the Ozark Bathhouse

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[1475] NPS Land Acquisition Ranking System, Priority 1, Hot Springs National Park Tract 04-142, 30 May 2002, L1425 Holdings Other Than Federal. The Fordyce-Ricks House Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on October 31, 2003.

[1476] *Annual Report for 2002*. Aging sewer lines were also becoming an issue, particularly at the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center (former Army-Navy Hospital). Its sewer lines went downhill underneath the Grand Promenade and between bathhouses. Line breaks resulted in raw sewage leaks in the area and occasionally flooding the Lamar Bathhouse basement. NPS management remained vigilant against contamination of the hot springs by this sewage.

including Sterling Hankins, the last manager when it closed in 1977. Also present were the local mayor, postmaster, park managers, and other local officials.

Under terms of the fiscal year 1999 Omnibus Appropriations Act, the NPS study for the inclusion of the city's old Hot Springs Central High School within Hot Springs National Park neared finalization in 2002. Performed under contract, the conclusion reached was that the school did not qualify for inclusion in the National Park System.

When it was suspected someone was stealing fee envelopes of registered campers at Gulpha Gorge Campground, a new collection safe was installed along with remote surveillance cameras which resulted in a culprit being apprehended in the act of stealing. Over a three to four month period, protection rangers estimated the suspect had removed more than $2,000 in paid fees. When the heavy visitor season yielded substantial gains, this prompted park management to authorize a new automated system for fiscal year 2003 in which visitors could use credit cards, change could be made for cash transactions, and a printout for the night ranger watch would certify all properly registered campers. The latter would effectively make compliance checks quick and easy as well as make access to the campground fee collection cash drop unnecessary.

The nationally mandated natural resources inventory and monitoring program in the Midwest Region including Hot Springs National Park was called the Heartland Cluster. It consisted of fifteen park units and, like Hot Springs, most had developed specific inventory and monitoring plans targeting invasive exotics. The plan for Hot Springs National Park identified encroachment corridors, species identification, frequency characteristics, and spatial distribution parameters. In addition to the pesky kudzu were lespedeza, honeysuckle, Japanese knotweed, black locust, and privet. Many of them required efforts beyond simple mechanical or traditional chemical intervention; the plan called for pesticide combinations with basal oils and surfactants.[1477]

To satisfy the impatient public, Superintendent Giddings announced in early September 2002 upcoming plans for Bathhouse Row. Utilizing congressional earmarks from 2000 and 2001, Giddings pledged NPS would begin rehabilitation work later in fiscal year 2003. With money already at hand, funding for fiscal years 2004 and 2005 looked promising. He stated, "The future looks bright. The money that we have now, and the money that we're hoping to have programmed in '04 and '05 will put us to the point that a lessee could come in with a very, very limited amount of funding" and make a go of it. NPS would pursue both the historic leasing and concessions programs to find acceptable lessees or concessioners. Rehabilitation work would focus on foundation repairs, particularly for those bathhouse front facades that were slowly sinking deeper into the ground. Built on backfill atop the historic Hot Springs Creek Arch, bathhouse facades required installation of subterranean micro pylons to hold up the buildings from incessant sinking. Maurice Bathhouse alone required attention to repair a crack that had incrementally grown five inches wide since 1917. In precarious condition, Giddings declared, "It's a shambles. [Because of] the heat and the steam getting into that building now from the hot springs in the basement… the wood inside except for the trim around

[1477] Ibid.

doors and windows is irreparable. The veneer has come off and it's just in shreds… on the doors, primarily."[1478]

In fiscal year 2003, Buckstaff Bathhouse briefly considered adding the Ozark Bathhouse to its physical plant operations and Ripley's "Believe It Or Not" evaluated Hale Bathhouse for one of its franchise museums. A local chiropractor investigated Quapaw Bathhouse for a spa. As before, none of the plans came to fruition. A group of local business leaders hired former U.S. Representative Beryl Anthony, Jr., as a lobbyist with the sole aim of changing NPS plans from stabilization of the six empty bathhouses to utilizing funds for a complete rehabilitation of one or two. Anthony was immediately successful in having the bathhouses included in the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 2013 list of 11 Most Endangered Historic Places. The move was announced by Trust regional director Daniel Carey at a May 29 news conference in the lobby of the Maurice Bathhouse. Meanwhile, NPS proceeded with a $3.8 million stabilization project for the six vacant structures awarded to Larich Inc., of Texarkana, Texas, to include repair or replacement of roofs and skylights, foundation stabilization, repair of interior structural damage, and installation of heating, venting, and air-conditioning systems.[1479]

In March 2003, the city manager and a group of business leaders involved in promoting development and economic projects known as Fifty for the Future traveled to Washington, D.C., to lobby for bathhouse funding. They were armed with updated estimates totaling $17 million for the six vacant bathhouses.[1480] Their plan was to have one bathhouse in good condition for lease as soon as possible and to redirect NPS line item construction funds from the stabilization of six bathhouses to the complete rehabilitation of one. In a briefing statement, Superintendent Giddings outlined the position of the Director's Advisory Board (DAB), the Midwest Region, and Hot Springs National Park that all line item funds remain as programmed for the following three reasons:

> *"NPS has an obligation to preserve all of the bathhouses on Bathhouse Row. The diversion of stabilization funds for rehabilitation of one would result in the continuing deterioration of the remaining five.*
>
> *"One advisor to the DAB has stated 'these buildings are in dire need of stabilization.' In addition, it was the DAB that directed the original project away from rehabilitation of one or two structures to the*

[1478] Mark Gregory, "Work on Historic Bath Houses Looms: Park Service Plans to Stabilize Structures," *Sentinel Record*, 8 September 2002.

[1479] *Annual Report for 2003*. Carey declared, "We certainly don't point the finger at the Park Service. With heritage tourism on the rise… we look at [adding Bathhouse Row to NTHP's 2003 list] as an opportunity to bring attention to a very significant set of historic buildings—the nation's attention, Congress' attention." See Jenell Talley, "Lack of Funding Plagues Hot Springs: Bathhouse Row Is Added to List of Most Endangered Historic Places," *National Parks: The Magazine of the National Parks Conservation Association*, Vol. 77, September/October 2003, p. 18.

[1480] Superintendent Giddings to Regional Director Schenk, 18 December 2002, and Giddings to Hot Springs City Manager Kent Myers, letter, 6 January 2003, both in H30 Bathhouse General File.

stabilization of all, and the DAB that has continued to approve funding through two phases of stabilization.

"The Director's approval for the current phase of stabilization is less than one month old, however, the plans and specifications have already been prepared at a cost of $467,000 and a contract is due to be let in May 2003. Any reprogramming of anticipated funds to rehabilitate only one bathhouse will result in major additional costs for planning and redesign, and further delay the project."

Giddings noted that from 1994 through 2002, almost $11 million had been expended on stabilization work including site drainage, lead paint abatement, window treatments, roof rehabilitation, and exterior renovations. In future years, funding looked secure. He recommended that NPS "continues on its course of action to stabilize all the structures before beginning rehabilitation of any bathhouse."[1481]

The park's interpretive program focused on the Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial in 2003 with guest speakers, living history re-enactors, and first person interpreters presenting talks throughout the year. A special park-designed exhibit on the Dunbar-Hunter expedition to the Hot Springs of Arkansas appeared in the Fordyce Visitor Center during the bicentennial year. In the area of museum management, a new twelve by fifteen foot wing was added to the Bally building complex and a new curatorial storage plan was written and new storage cabinets installed to accommodate fragile glass pieces from Maurice Bathhouse.

Planning for an automated fee collection pay station for Gulpha Gorge Campground ended in 2003 for implementation in 2004. The device allowed campers to use credit cards, make change for cash transactions, and provide evening rangers with a printout of all properly registered visitors, streamlining the compliance checks and obviating any need to access the cash dropbox.

Figure 202. Josie Fernandez, first female superintendent of Hot Springs National Park (HSNP 2646, National Park Service)

In the spring and summer of 2003, the Friends of the Fordyce and Hot Springs National Park, Inc., embarked on a landscape beautification project to the formal grand entrance and Stevens Balustrade. Although privately funded, the effort to install a sprinkling system and planting beds negatively impacted the historic resources comprising the Stevens Balustrade, listed as a component of Bathhouse Row National Historic Landmark (NHL). When news of the project reached the Midwest Regional Office, work was immediately halted and an archeological report was prepared outlining the damage done to the historic Stevens Balustrade site. NPS initiated section 106

[1481]Superintendent Roger Giddings, Briefing Statement: Redirecting Line Item Construction Funds from Stabilization to Rehabilitation, 24 January 2003, H3021 Bathhouse General File.

compliance review with the Arkansas State Historic Preservation Office and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. While the incident left a blemish on the twenty-two year superintendency of Rogers Giddings, the popular park manager was feted by local citizens and officials. Upon his retirement on September 2, 2003, after forty years of federal service and the longest-serving superintendent of Hot Springs National Park, Roger Giddings was lauded on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives by Congressman Mike Ross (D.-Ark.).[1482] Assistant Superintendent Dale Moss served as acting superintendent[1483] until Giddings' replacement, Josie Fernandez, former superintendent of Women's Rights National Historical Park, arrived in the spring of 2004. Fernandez became the first female superintendent of Hot Springs National Park on March 22, 2004.

[1482] Hon. Mike Ross, "In Appreciation for a Lifetime of Dedication," 108th Cong., 1st Session, *Congressional Record* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 23 September 2003), E1866.
[1483] *Annual Report for 2003*.

APPENDIX

CHRONOLOGY OF SUPERINTENDENTS

HOT SPRINGS RESERVATION, ARKANSAS [1484]
(Reserved 4/20/1832)
UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR (Established 3/3/1849)

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1. Benjamin Franklin Kelley, Supt. 9/08/1877-12/31/1882
2. Samuel Hamblen, Supt. 1/01/1883-7/13/1885
3. Charles W. Field, Supt. 7/14/1885-6/17/1889
4. Frank M. Thompson, Supt.6/18/1889-5/31/1893
5. William J. Little, Supt. 6/01/1893-3/31/1900
6. Martin A. Eisele, Supt. 4/01/1900-3/31/1907
7. W. Scott Smith, Supt. 4/01/1907-5/19/1909
8. Harry H. Myers, Supt. 7/01/1909-8/01/1913
9. Charles R. Trowbridge, Act'g. Supt. 8/04/1913-9/22/1913
   Charles R. Trowbridge, Supt. 9/23/1913-8/02/1914
10. William P. Parks, M.D., Supt. 8/03/1914-8/25/1916

HOT SPRINGS RESERVATION, ARKANSAS
UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR -- NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

William P. Parks, M.D., Supt. 8/25/1916-3/04/1921

HOT SPRINGS NATIONAL PARK, ARKANSAS
UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR -- NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

William P. Parks, M.D., Supt. 3/04/1921-2/28/1922
11. Clarence H. Waring, M.D., Supt. 3/01/1922-3/22/1924
12. Joseph Bolten, M.D., Supt. 3/23/1924-7/15/1929
13. Hugh de Valin, M.D., Supt. 7/16/1929-12/12/1930
14. George L. Collins, M.D., Supt. 12/13/1930-1/14/1932
15. Thomas J. Allen, Jr., Supt. 1/15/1932-5/23/1936
16. Donald S. Libbey, Supt. 5/24/1936-12/31/1938
17. Preston P. Patraw, Supt. 1/01/1939-3/15/1943
18. John W. Emmert, Supt. 4/15/1943-8/31/1944
19. Donald S. Libbey, Supt. 9/01/1944-6/08/1946
20. Thomas Boles, Supt. 6/09/1946-1/31/1951
21. George C. Bolton, Act'g. Supt. 2/01/1951-3/31/1951
22. Donald S. Libbey, Supt. 4/01/1951-9/25/1959

[1484] Hot Springs reserved by Federal Government 4/20/1832; established as permanent reservation 3/03/1877; established as national park 3/04/1921.

23. H. Raymond Gregg, Supt. 11/15/1959-8/21/1962
24. Robert H. Atkinson, Supt. 9/02/1962-6/06/1963
25. Bernard T. Campbell,[1485] Supt. 12/01/1963-6/30/1973
26. Bernard Goodman, Supt.7/22/1973-6/19/1977
27. Richard H. Maeder, Supt. 8/14/1977-4/18/1981
28. Roger E. Giddings, Supt. 6/28/1981-9/2/2003
29. Josie Fernandez, Supt. 3/22/2004-

CHRONOLOGY OF DIRECTORS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1.	Stephen T. Mather	5/16/1917-1/8/1929
2.	Horace M. Albright	1/12/1929-8/9/1933
3.	Arno B. Cammerer	8/10/1933-8/9/1940
4.	Newton B. Drury	8/20/1940-3/31/1951
5.	Arthur E. Demaray	4/1/1951-12/8/1951
6.	Conrad L. Wirth	12/9/1951-1/7/1964
7.	George B. Hartzog, Jr.	1/9/1964-12/31/1972
8.	Ronald H. Walker	1/7/1973-1/3/1975
9.	Gary Everhardt	1/13/1975-5/27/1977
10.	William J. Whalen	7/5/1977-5/13/1980
11.	Russell E. Dickenson	5/15/1980-3/3/1985
12.	William Penn Mott, Jr.	5/17/1985-4/16/1989
13.	James M. Ridenour	4/17/1989-1/20/1993
14.	Roger G. Kennedy	6/1/1993-3/29/1997
15.	Robert G. Stanton	8/4/1997-1/20/2001
16.	Frances P. Mainella	7/18/2001-10/16/2006
17.	Mary A. Bomar	10/17/2006-1/20/2009
18.	Jonathan Jarvis	10/2/2009-

History of NPS Regional Alignments and Hot Springs National Park

1. **August 1, 1937 – 1939:** *Region III, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

   Upon the nationwide regionalization of the National Park Service on August 1, 1937, Hot Springs National Park, the only NPS unit in the state of Arkansas, was serviced by the Region III Office, originally in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, until sometime in 1939.

2. **1939 - June 30, 1955**: *Region III/Three Office, Santa Fe, New Mexico*

   The Region III Office moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico, upon completion of the adobe regional headquarters building there in 1939.

[1485] Administered Arkansas Post National Memorial from 3/26/1965 to 5/20/1967. On 10/16/1970, Superintendent assigned responsibility for a management cluster including Arkansas Post NMem, Fort Smith NHS, and Pea Ridge NMP. The cluster was abolished 6/15/1972.

3. **July 1, 1955 - November 9, 1971***: Region I/One/Southeast Office, Richmond, Virginia*

   Creation of the Region 5 Office in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on July 1, 1955, saw all Arkansas park units shift from Region Three to Region One, headquartered in Richmond, Virginia.

4. **November 10, 1971 - September 30, 1995**: *Southwest Regional Office, Santa Fe, New Mexico*

   Another nationwide regional realignment on November 10, 1971, saw Hot Springs National Park and other NPS Arkansas parks shift back to Southwest Region (Santa Fe) from Southeast Region (Richmond).

5. **October 1, 1995 - present**: *Midwest Regional Office, Omaha, Nebraska*

   On October 1, 1995, NPS regional alignments shrank from ten to seven, and Hot Springs National Park (and other NPS Arkansas parks) were serviced by the re-designated Midwest Field Area, headquartered in Omaha, Nebraska, and its co-located Great Plains System Support Office. This experiment in Omaha survived only four years after which the "Midwest Field Area" designation was dropped in favor of the traditional "Midwest Region," and the two ill-conceived support offices (Great Plains and Great Lakes) merged back to the more familiar name, "Midwest Regional Office," in late calendar year 1999. Hot Springs National Park remains in the Midwest Region as of the date of this publication.

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