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COMMITTEE REPORT ON

# WESTERN MILITARY FORTS

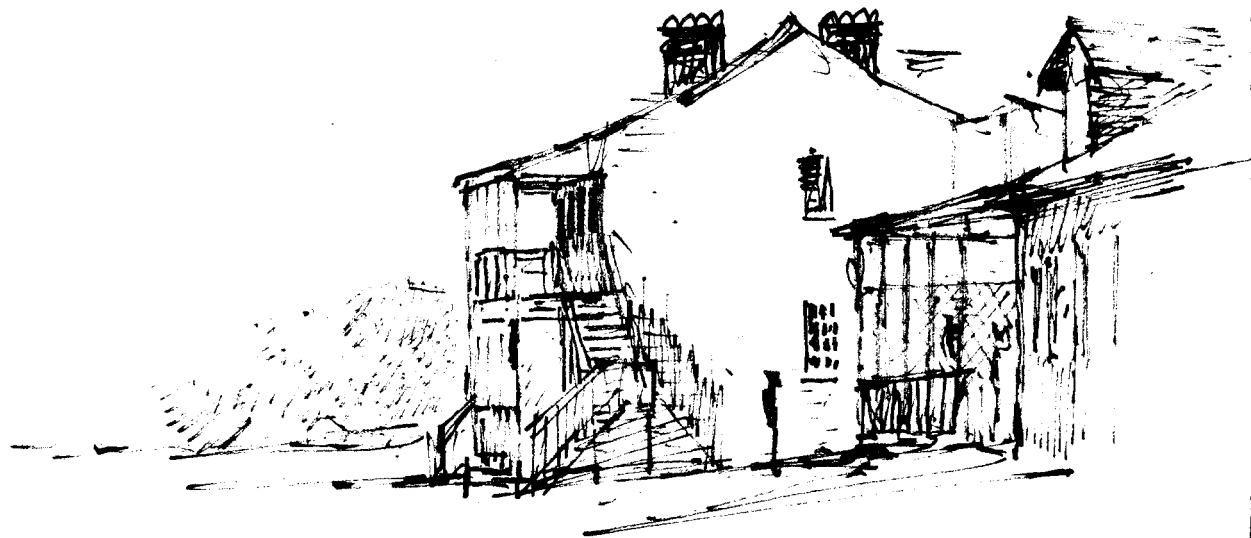


November 1965



*Steven H. Lewis*

# WESTERN MILITARY FORTS





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REPORT OF COMMITTEE TO REVIEW WESTERN FORTS'  
INTERPRETIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Assistant Director for Operations Howard W. Baker, by memorandum to the Regional Directors, Southeast, Midwest, and Southwest Regions, July 15, 1965, announced the establishment of a committee to undertake a survey of 7 western military forts in the National Park System. This survey was to include a review of the following major aspects of the interpretive plans:

Restoration plans

Reconstruction plans

Furnishing plans

Visitor Center locations and interpretive plans

State of current master planning and interpretive prospectuses

The 7 western forts studied:

Fort Laramie NHS, Wyoming

Fort Larned NHS (proposed and authorized), Kansas

Bent's Old Fort NHS, Colorado

Fort Union NM, New Mexico

Fort Bowie NHS (proposed and authorized), Arizona

Fort Davis NHS, Texas

Fort Smith NHS, Arkansas

Committee Members:

Roy E. Appleman, WASO, Chairman

Jerry Wagers, Mather Training Center

Ed Bierly, Museum Development Branch

H. Raymond Gregg, Consultant, Midwest Region

Mrs. Nan V. Carson, furnishing specialist from the Midwest Regional Office, participated in the review at Fort Laramie NHS.

William E. Brown of the Southwest Regional Office accompanied the Committee and participated in the review of the programs at Forts Bowie and Davis NHS.

Before the Committee began its work, it met with Mr. Everhart and Mr. Bryant in Washington, and Mr. Everhart discussed the assignment with the Committee.

The committee visited the several fort areas and studied the programs with the Superintendents and their staffs during the period August 3-19.

Arrangement of Report and Recommendations

Part I. A summary statement of guidelines and observations concerning the 7 forts as a group and as related to each other.

Part II. Summary statement of findings and recommendations for each fort area.

Part III. More detailed discussion of each fort area on which summary data<sup>d</sup> is based.

Part IV. Appendices of material relating to II and III above, such as statements of Superintendents participating in study.

Parts I and II are considered desirable for the quick information of busy administrative and policy forming officials who will have to make decisions on the basis, or partial basis, of this report. Parts III and IV are in the nature of detailed analysis for those who wish to be informed in some detail. They explain the views of the several committee members and the Superintendents on the reasons for positions taken and the recommendations.

The Committee findings and recommendations are not always unanimous. On several important problems the Committee of four split, sometimes two and two, sometimes three and one, and sometimes, two, one and one. There was no special effort made to reach unanimous opinions. The members discussed their various views freely so that each knew the views of the others. The Superintendents or acting Superintendents, and some members of their staffs, participated in discussions in the areas. Their views were desired and they were readily given. By encouraging freedom of thought and analysis,



it has been the belief of the committee that the policy deciding officials will have in this report the best possible information on the principal alternate courses of action, and the reasoning supporting each. This should make for sounder final determinations on the issues.

Where there have been majority and minority views, or split views, among the Committee members, the minority view has been written by the person holding that view. In the case of a split opinion each of the two groups selected one of its members to prepare its statement.

## P A R T I

### GUIDELINES ON WESTERN FORTS

1. There is little inter-related story content among the several forts; each must stand on its own. Each is different in its history of events and building construction. Each is different architecturally, and in surviving structures or ruins. There should be no attempt to link them together as in a chain, or to omit one type of development in any area because it may be present also in some degree in another. Repetition is likely to occur only in reference to the broad field to which they relate, and this should not receive major emphasis in the individual park interpretive story.

2. If there is any element of repetition in building design, techniques of display and interpretation, it is only National Park Service personnel who are closely identified with the work who are conscious of it; the general public usually is not aware of it. A large percentage of visitors do not visit several of the western military forts on a single trip. They seldom have the opportunity to compare one fort with another, even if they should like to do so. The Service should do its best to develop each so that the full story and potential of the area emerges for the visitors' benefit without regard to what may be done elsewhere.

3. Restored and reconstructed buildings in a fort area cannot carry the main story of the area's significance in United States history. All that such structures and their furnishings, if they are furnished, can tell and show is how the buildings looked and how they were used. The larger story is seldom, if ever, touched on in the physical remains of the structures and their furnishings.

In the very nature of the thing, an historic structure does not speak of decisive or influential events that may have happened within a radius of hundreds of miles in a wilderness area, controlled by the fort and the military might it represented. These in turn affected frontier, military, Indian, white migration and settlement policies sponsored by the United States Government. These aspects of the fort story will have to be told elsewhere and by other media.

It is, therefore, not valid to say that a given fort military area does not need an interpretive program in a visitor center because the historic structures exist and the story is told there on the ground.

4. Maintenance equipment and service vehicles should not be left near historic structures or in the compass of views frequently photographed. Their presence in an historic area should be held

to a minimum during public visiting hours. They are intrusive and therefore distracting, unsightly, and undesirable from the visitor standpoint. Fort Union, New Mexico, was an example of good management in this respect at the time of the Committee's visit.

5. All forts having adobe construction in whole or in part should have study and recommendations for stabilization from the same group of specialists. At the present time these are concentrated at the Globe Archeological and Stabilization Center in Arizona. Fort Union is perhaps the outstanding example of the application of their skill and knowledge.

6. Furnishing of historic structures must be carefully considered and limited. Furnishing is initially expensive, and an historic structure once furnished usually means an increase of between one and two persons to the staff to keep it open to the public. Only the most important structures can justify such initial and subsequent recurring costs.

In general, in military fort areas, not more than one structure representing any given activity should be furnished. Duplication of two or more of the same is not justified. An example would be only one Officers Quarters, rather than two or more. While the number of furnished buildings may vary in different areas,

depending upon area size and complexity of operations in its historic period, they should be few rather than many. Each should be fully justified on its own merits, as well as by its contribution to the overall interpretive program of the area. In very few cases would more than three to four furnished structures be justified.

7. An area that is predominantly in ruins, rather than characterized by intact surviving structures, should be governed by a policy of stabilizing the ruins with no reconstruction or restoration. An exception might be a structure that would serve a special operational use and would not be incongruous amid the ruins. An example of this policy is that applied at Fort Union, New Mexico, and proposed for Fort Bowie, Arizona, where there is no restoration or reconstruction. The exception to the rule is illustrated at Fort Davis where a barracks building is being reconstructed for use as a visitor center and administrative offices, and there is to be additional limited reconstruction and restoration for exhibit purposes.

8. The Master Plan Package Study should not detail methods of interpretation. This should be left for the Interpretive Prospectus. Master Plan consideration of interpretation should be general and not restrictive in detail on the preparation of

a subsequent Interpretive Prospectus. It is a question whether the Interpretive Prospectus should not be prepared before the Master Plan Package is completed, since so many features of development in an area, particularly for a military fort area, depend on the interpretive plan. If the Interpretive Prospectus cannot be prepared before the Master Plan, the two plans should be prepared simultaneously.

9. Employee personnel should not be quartered in historic buildings in the western military forts.

10. The term "visitor" represents in effect an illusion. There is no typical visitor. He is everything from casual passerby to an avid buff, a scholarly historian, a professional military man, or a devoted antiquarian. He is all ages, from cradle-borne to escorted senility. His range of "experience" during a visit may be anything from indifference or boredom to mild curiosity, and on to a craving for even obscure detail of the story associated with the area. Any program may exceed the desires of the least interested; no program can satisfy the insatiable want of a small minority. But interpretive development need not pander to the former, nor seem impoverished to the latter. It is necessary to shape a program that strikes a middle course between the extremes. The questions of judgment and decision

come into play and have to be resolved in a way that will result in an overall development which will appeal to, and be comprehensible by, the indifferent and poorly informed, as well as instructive and stimulating to the eager and more learned. The more capable will be introduced to avenues of further information and learning which they can pursue on their own. This is as much as Service responsibility need attempt.

P A R T II

SUMMARY

Fort Laramie NHS

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Master Plan             | Approved |
| Interpretive Prospectus | Approved |
| Furnishing Plan         | Approved |

Problem:

Director in review of 1966 fiscal year program eliminated the visitor center proposal and asked for restudy. The restudy submitted by area, but held in abeyance, WASO. Not in 1967 fiscal year program. Area has included it in 1968 F.Y. program, not yet reviewed by Director. At present, visitor center is not in an approved program, and restudy submitted by park and region is held in abeyance, WASO.

Land Acquisition

Land Acquisition should be expedited. This is essential before development can proceed. Sophia M. Foote property, 136 acres, key tract. Condemnation proceedings should be undertaken this year if negotiated price can not be fixed. Available for land purchase--\$67,100. Needed probably--about \$75,000. See Appendix B, Part IV, for analysis.



### Location of Visitor Center

Committee unanimous that visitor center, parking, residences, and utility area locations should not be where indicated on previously approved general development plan--opposite the site of Fort John on south side of Laramie River in vicinity of Ward and Guerier Trading Post Site. Reason--would result in development of huge modern complex in open ground close to old fort area and constitute objectionable and extensive intrusion on historic scene.

### Relocation--Majority View

Committee split on alternate location of above facilities. Majority view (Wagers, Bierly) locate visitor center about 800 feet northeast of plan location, near site of laundress quarters, opposite southeast corner of fort parade ground: Reason--would be screened from fort area in summer time, except for overlook. Place utility area on north side of Laramie River northeast of Cavalry Barracks. Administrative quarters in Commissary Building in fort area. Gregg, although not opposing above group recommendation, prefers the Ward-Guerier site for the visitor center. He proposes that the utility area be near the county road northeast of the fort.

### Minority View

Appleman holds minority view for locating all facilities north of Laramie River. Visitor center northeast of

Cavalry Barracks; parking east and northeast of it on bench on Foote property, out of sight from fort area; utility area south of county road near old military iron bridge over North Platte and a little more than a mile from the fort (this land recently acquired); administration offices in Commissary Building in fort area. This recommendation uses present county road as approach, eliminates 4 bridges over Laramie River and Deer Creek and 3 miles of new road construction, at a saving of close to \$500,000. It also brings visitors close to fort. No feature of this development would be visible from fort area, except visitor center which would be at extreme northeast end of fort, and if architectural style of building simulated that of existing historic structures it would merge into general picture unobtrusively.

#### Housing

Committee unanimous in recommending removal of two residence units from Cavalry Barracks. It is the worst fire hazard in the area. The Cavalry Barracks, of wood construction, is one of the most important surviving historic structures. Superintendent Sharp agreed with this view, and said he could remove to rental housing in a nearby town within 6 months, and felt that the other

unit could likewise be removed on short notice. The Committee also is unanimous in its view that Fort Laramie does not need resident housing, except possibly for one unit along the county road northeast of the fort. This location ties in with other recommended developments.

#### Administration Offices

Committee unanimous in recommending that Commissary Building, presently being used temporarily as a visitor center and exhibit area, be used for administrative offices. It is not proposed for furnishing as an historic structure. It will provide ample space. It is located near the northeast end of the fort area, and its use as suggested will be unobtrusive in the main fort area. It will be treated as an historic structure on exterior only. Interior can be converted to office space. Its location will give Superintendent and staff close observation of fort operations and visitor practices.

#### Protection

If housing is removed from area, as Committee recommends, it may be necessary to employ one night-time watchman or guard. The need relates largely to fire protection. The Superintendent believes a night watchman would be desirable.

### Utility Area

Majority View--Bierly, Wagers, and Gregg recommend utility area be located north of Laramie River, and northeast of the fort, on the Foote property. Access would be from the present county road, north of the fort.

Minority View--Appleman believes this area should be used for visitor parking in relation to the visitor center location he proposes. He recommends that the utility area be near the old military bridge over the North Platte River and adjacent to the county road, on recently acquired land, and about a mile east of the fort area. There is ample room there for any utility facilities desired. They would be far enough away from the fort area so that they could not be considered intrusive in any degree. This is part of his proposal to put all facilities north of the Laramie River, thus avoiding the need to build any of the four presently proposed bridges and approximately three miles of new road construction.

### Archeological Work

The Committee unanimously recommends the complete and thorough excavation of the site of Fort John, which it feels has been badly neglected up to the present. In this work, attention

should be given to any evidence indicating the location of the earlier Fort William on the same site. On the basis of the result of the archeological work, and further historical research, consideration should be given to appropriate interpretive development of the site. At least two members of the Committee (Appleman and Gregg) feel that reconstruction of Fort John may be justified. In addition to the archeology needed at Fort John, further archeological work is needed at Fort Laramie, but it will not be detailed here.

#### Furnishing Historic Structures

There are presently four furnished historic structures at Fort Laramie. Of these the Committee felt that Old Bedlam was the most successful, followed by Officers Quarters F. The Sutler Store would be a better exhibit if its furnishings reflected an earlier period, as proposed by Mrs. Carson. Officers Quarters A is repetitious largely of Officers Quarters F, and not as successful. The Committee recommends that furnishing not be undertaken where it would be mainly repetitious of another building, similar in function and type of furnishing. It recommends that for the foreseeable future, the Cavalry Barracks be the only additional building furnished. Current plans propose to furnish Officers Quarters E, the Old Guard House, and the Magazine. Contributions from Mrs. Hill's furnishing fund will be exhausted this year.

### Restoration

The Committee recommends that the Cavalry Barracks be the only additional structure scheduled for restoration and exhibit for the foreseeable future, in addition to work currently in progress for the Guard House and Magazine.

### Interpretive Prospectus

Two of the Committee (Wagers and Bierly) believe a new interpretive prospectus is required. The other members (Appleman and Gregg) have some suggestions for modification of certain features proposed by the present prospectus, but do not join in recommendation for disposal of present prospectus and preparation of a new one.

Superintendent Sharp's views are stated on most of the above subjects in Appendix A.

Fort Larned NHS

|                         |              |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Master Plan             | Approved     |
| Interpretive Prospectus | Not Prepared |
| Furnishing Plan         | Not Prepared |

Problem:

The area has been authorized, but not established. The first requirement is to acquire the land. \$329,000 is available for that purpose in the 1966 FY program. The Committee, however, reviewed the prospective development of the area in terms of the Master Plan Package Study. It recommends a few major changes from that Study. They are as follows:

Approach Road

Keep and use the present one which is direct and already built. Parking would be on north side of Pawnee Fork River and bridge.

Bridge Across Pawnee Fork River

No need to build a new bridge at a different location, as suggested in plan. Use present one, which is relatively new and good. It also provides the most direct approach and a better entrance to fort area. This will save cost of a new bridge, and avoid public relations problem that would arise if recently constructed State bridge were abandoned.

#### Water in Ox-bow Lagoon

The plan calls for draining and filling with earth. Committee believes water should be retained as it was there in historic period and was factor in giving protection to the fort.

#### Housing

Resident housing is not necessary. Staff should find housing in nearby town of Larned, or elsewhere. May need to employ night guard. Except as noted above, the Master Plan Study is generally excellent.

#### General Comments

The Master Plan goes too far in interpretive planning and encroaches on many aspects of this work that should be stated in the Interpretive Prospectus. Such a prospectus should be prepared. Committee agrees with Master Plan that Building A should be used for visitor center. Exterior should be restored; the interior used as desired for operational purposes.



Bent's Old Fort NHS

|                             |              |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Master Plan                 | Approved     |
| Interpretive Prospectus     | Not Prepared |
| Furnishing Plan             | Not Prepared |
| Historic Structures Reports | Completed    |

Problem:

The central problem, on which everything else turns, is whether to reconstruct Bent's Old Fort. Construction funds for it have been withdrawn from the approved program.

Reconstruction of Fort

The Committee split two and two on reconstruction of the fort. Bierly and Wagers against reconstruction; Appleman and Gregg for reconstruction. The Superintendent and staff are for reconstruction.

Housing

The Committee sees no need for resident housing on the area. This should be obtainable in La Junta or Las Animas.

Visitor Center

Gregg and Appleman favor locating a visitor center north of the fort site, adjacent to State Route 194, about the place where the present entrance road turns off the paved road at

the farmhouse group. This location would be good for general orientation, and from it a road would follow the general alignment of the old Santa Fe Trail to the fort site, about 600 yards to the south. Car parking would be in the reconstructed corral at the fort, and out of sight. Gregg suggests the existing farmhouse occupied by the Superintendent could be retained indefinitely to provide surveillance of the fort site entrance.

Fort Union NM

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Master Plan             | Approved |
| Interpretive Prospectus | Approved |
| Furnishing Plan         | None     |

Problem:

None. While there are no current problems relating to the approved development plan, and maintenance of the park is of a high order, the Committee desires to suggest certain additional facilities for the park's interpretive program.

Audiovisual Multi-purpose Room Needed

Restudy of area interpretive needs for more complete interpretive story and better balance in visitor center exhibits. The museum, while small, is pleasing, informative, and tastefully done, with the exception of certain art work (paintings). Visitors showed strong interest in the interpretive trail and most took the full trail, 1.4 miles in length. The visitor center is excellently located and designed to start persons on the trail, which starts at the back lobby door.

Maintenance

The Committee found an excellent state of maintenance in the Fort Union area, the ruins well preserved, a good trail system

with self-help interpretive signs and exhibits in place, and expansion of signs and exhibits in progress and planned for the future. Many of the best of these are of the metal-photo type.

#### Land Acquisition

At site of the first fort should be extended to cover all of site, and entrance or access road right-of-way to it obtained.

#### Display of Original Objects in Storage

Two of the Committee members (Appleman and Gregg) favor a special display of original objects relating to Fort Union, of which the fort area has a large and interesting collection in storage. No use is being made of these now. This situation prevails in nearly all the established western fort areas.

Fort Bowie NHS

|                         |                                    |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Master Plan             | Brief completed and review pending |
| Interpretive Prospectus | None                               |
| Furnishing Plan         | None                               |

Problem:

Most pressing is land acquisition. Area is authorized but not established. Initial cost given in Hearings for land acquisition was \$13,500. Only \$20,250 is programmed (1965 FY) and available. One appraisal, however, goes to \$196,500. Overall congressional limitation in legislation authorizing area is \$550,000. Obviously, development cannot be carried out if land acquisition is to be in neighborhood of figure cited above. May have to go to Congressional Committees to obtain approval. Necessary to get second appraisal. Then determine policy on land purchase at Bowie.

Ruins Stabilization

Ruins are mostly adobe, far advanced in crumbling to rubble. Any delay in land acquisition so that stabilization may begin will be costly. Soon there will be nothing left. If Bowie is to be saved, there is need for utmost speed in land acquisition and stabilization program.

### Entrance Road

Committee believes entrance road location should be shifted to follow southward up east side of Siphon Canyon at base of hill and partly on hillside alignment to the saddle near the proposed visitor center site on Overlook Ridge. This would require extending boundaries to mouth of Siphon Canyon, and purchase or an exchange acquisition of slightly more land. The Committee believes immediate attention should be given to securing the cooperation of BLM in effecting possible land exchanges needed at Fort Bowie.

### Location of Visitor Center

Should be shifted eastward down ridge line several hundred feet (500-700) to lower elevation and closer to fort ruins.

### Housing

Location intrusive on historic scene where indicated on Master Plan Brief. Suggests they be placed at mouth of Siphon Canyon and related to take-off point of park entrance road from county road, if entrance road recommendation made above is adopted. If entrance road recommendation not accepted, then locate residences near present county road and park road junction.

Everything depends on land acquisition; this should be solved at once--the rest can be made to fall in line once this is accomplished.

Fort Davis NHS

|                         |                |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Master Plan             | Approved       |
| Interpretive Prospectus | Approved       |
| Furnishing Plan         | In preparation |

Problem:

No particular problem. Progress is excellent and on schedule in stabilization program and in construction of visitor center.

The Committee has the following observations about current work and proposed further stabilization and interpretive development:

Stabilization vs. Restoration and Reconstruction

The plan being followed at Fort Davis in saving the structures differs from any followed elsewhere thus far in the west for military forts. The stabilization program calls for covering the buildings and shells of buildings with roofs. Porches are added where they were originally present to give facade of reality. The roofs are not justified as a restoration or reconstruction feature but as a stabilization feature to protect the adobe walls beneath. The Committee feels this should not be used to justify expensive materials for roofs which constitute a restoration, when suitable roofing at much less cost would provide protection and be harmonious with rest of roofing.

There has been some tendency at Fort Davis to confuse stabilization with restoration or reconstruction. There should be a better understanding here and Service-wide of what these terms and practices mean, and work should not proceed on what is essentially restoration when only stabilization is intended and authorized.

#### Reconstruct and Furnish Quartermaster Group

The Committee recommends this be included in an approved development plan. It is not now in the approved plan for reconstructed structures. The Committee also recommends furnishing of several units of this structure, such as the blacksmith shop, the wheelright shop, and certain other specialized activities.

#### Not Reconstruct Barracks at Northeast Corner of Parade Ground

Proposed by Superintendent, Regional Director, and Chief of WODC. Committee opposed to this as unnecessary and expensive and would serve no important function.

#### Audiovisual Room--Program Prospectus

A wing is being built at the reconstructed barracks building (visitor center) which will serve as an audiovisual room. There is presently no planned audiovisual program. A prospectus for this should be prepared at the earliest possible time and the program added to the interpretive features of the park.

#### Bugle Calls

The Committee endorses this program, which it heard during its visit.



Fort Smith NHS

|                         |                |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Master Plan             | Approved       |
| Interpretive Prospectus | Review Pending |
| Furnishing Plan         | Not Prepared   |

Problem:

Program review in Washington has raised questions about building a visitor center. Can one of existing buildings be used for that purpose, or for administrative office use? Regional Management Study has posed question whether Belle Point should be made accessible and developed now and suggested that it be held in abeyance.

Question of bridge across railroad tracks to join Belle Point and Second Fort sites.

Land acquisition difficulty at Coca Cola Bottling Plant.

Price asked is greater than funds authorized.

Visitor Center

There is need for a new visitor center. None of the present buildings should be considered for such use, except temporarily. The Committee was unanimous on this point.

There was a minority view as to its location. The majority supports the location shown in the approved Master Plan.

Use Building No. 1 (the Barracks Building), temporarily for visitor center and administrative uses until pending land acquisition is completed.

Minority View--Appleman believes visitor center should be located on Belle Point, south of the first fort site. There is an area 500 feet long by 300 feet wide on bluff overlooking Arkansas and Poteau Rivers and Oklahoma side of Arkansas, in a natural and attractive area here--the most scenic part of the park.

Barracks Building, Parker Courthouse and Jail

Complete Historic Structures Reports, Parts I and II, on the Barracks, Courthouse, and Jail before decisions are made as to their retention for historic exhibits. This would be normal procedure, as it is necessary to have these reports finished, reviewed, and analysis completed as to structures authenticity, and degree of restoration and reconstruction required to accomplish historic exhibit status, before final decisions made.

Belle Point--site of First Fort

The Committee unanimously is of opinion this site should be developed for public use as soon as possible. In fact, it is now receiving much informal and unsupervised use. Local public opinion will not tolerate delay, and Park Service administration would most certainly face public ill-will and Congressional pressure if it became known that the Service

even contemplated any extended period of delayed development here. Also, the area intrinsically deserves development fully as much as Second Fort site.

#### Bridge Over Railroad Tracks

At least two members of Committee (Gregg and Appleman) believe grade crossing adequate--bridge not needed. Their view and reasons for it are discussed in Part III.

\* \* \* \* \*

Part III of this report will discuss in some detail the major issues outlined in Part II, Summary, and will note many related and some minor problems not mentioned in Part II. For anyone who desires to be fully informed on the substance of the Committee's report, and particularly the full views and reasoning of the Committee, including majority, split, and minority views, the following section, Part III is necessary reading.

### P A R T III

#### ANALYSIS OF FORTS' INTERPRETATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS

This section will attempt a more detailed analysis of the important problems in the 7 western forts being considered in this study. Reference was made to most of these in the summary. They require decisions in the near future. This analysis will attempt to expose the overall situation and the relationship therein of the several issues that must be resolved. The reasoning behind opinions will be stated sufficiently, it is hoped, to explain why they are held.

The Committee is fully aware that several of the issues are vital to the development of the forts in question, that other persons have studied them long and hard, and that in the case of Fort Laramie, at least, firm decisions are overdue. With this knowledge as a background, the Committee offers its own suggestions with modesty and humility, cherishing only the hope that the following discussions will help the policy-making officials to an understanding of the several alternatives that can be undertaken and contribute to sound decisions affecting the development of these parks.

## FORT LARAMIE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

In the 1966 FY program and budget review, Director Hartzog instructed that the visitor center item be deleted from the program, and that the subject be restudied. The 1967 FY program for Fort Laramie, therefore, does not have a visitor center item in it. But in submitting its 1968 FY proposals, the park and Midwest Region reinstated a visitor center for Fort Laramie at an estimated cost of \$330,000. This program has not been reviewed by the Director as of the date of this report, and it therefore has no official status except as a submission for consideration.

In June 1965, a revised Master Plan for Fort Laramie was received in WASO, submitted by Chief of WODC Hill under date of June 18. This was the response to the Director's request for a restudy of the Fort Laramie development plan, particularly with reference to a visitor center. It was recommended for approval by the Park Superintendent, Regional Director, and Chief, WODC. It does not vary in any major way from the earlier Master Plan proposal. The general plan of development remained what it has been for several years, and the visitor center item remained nearly the same. In effect, it was restatement, with minor modifications in the interpretive program, of the 1966

program that the Director had called into question. The Director's concern, as the Committee understands it, rested chiefly on the proposed size and scope of the visitor center and its exhibits.

The visitor center proposal and other interpretation aspects of the Master Plan submission was supported by an approved Interpretive Prospectus of June 1963. In effect, the action on the Master Plan in the 1966 FY program also called for a reconsideration of the Interpretive Prospectus. The two planning documents, therefore, are involved in the Master Plan submission of June 1965.

The 1965 Master Plan resubmittal was reviewed in the Washington Office in July. On July 13, in a review panel that included Assistant Directors Baker and Jensen, and Everhart, Chief, Division of Interpretation and Visitor Services, Assistant Directors Baker and Jensen decided there would be no formal action of the review group with recommendation to the Director until the Committee completed its study. Review action on the 1965 Master Plan submittal, therefore, is in abeyance until this report is considered in connection with the latest Master Plan proposals.

The committee is, therefore, aware of the importance of its recommendations as a factor in influencing decisions of the utmost importance to the present and future developments at Fort Laramie. It is also reasonably well informed on the past legislative and planning history of Fort Laramie for nearly 30 years. This has been characterized by conflicting planning concepts, slow development, and many frustrations for the local park staff in particular.

It is now necessary that final decisions be made and implemented. The debate period must be closed because action will have to be taken very soon on major issues if the fort development is to go ahead.

Whether for good or not, the Committee was not able to reach unanimous opinions on all major issues of development, and in this sense the report may be less than what was hoped for. The report, however, will attempt to make clear the differences in concept and the operational factors involved in these differences.

A word must be said about the recent legislative history of the park and the current land acquisition program that stems from it. These in turn were directly affected by the park planning concept that had been approved at the time. The planning concept, in

brief, called for an approach road following the south side of Laramie River to a point opposite the fort where a good overlook and view of the main part of the fort area could be had. There a visitor center was to be located and a foot bridge would enable visitors to cross the Laramie River to the fort itself.

This plan called for land acquisition. This could not be done without further legislative authority of the Congress. The Act of April 29, 1960 (74 Stat. 83) resulted in revising the boundaries of the area that had been established by Presidential proclamation of July 16, 1938 to permit the development according to the planning concept mentioned above.

In the intervening years, more than five as this is written, the land acquisition contemplated by this Act has lagged and is not yet completed. This, of course, has prevented development of the approach road, visitor center, visitor parking, utility area, residential area, and certain interpretive features planned for the south side of the Laramie River. The crucial tract of land that must be acquired before anything can be done there is the Sophia M. Foote property of 136.18 acres, extending on both sides of the Laramie River, and standing in the middle of property already acquired.



Appendix B is a statement prepared by Superintendent Sharp for the Committee which summarizes the land acquisition situation as of August 3. Superintendent Sharp has previously recommended condemnation proceedings, if necessary, to finish the land acquisition program. He repeats this recommendation now. The Committee supports his view. Action should be taken this year to obtain the Foote property, by condemnation proceedings if necessary.

If the Service can accept the owner's asking price for the Foote property (\$47,500), the main issue on land acquisition can be settled quickly. There is no assurance that this price will not go up if it is not met soon. As Superintendent Sharp's summary (Appendix B) shows, funds currently available may be about \$15,000 short of needs.

The following discussion will center on specific items or fields of interest and activity in the park development plan in order to isolate the issues, as far as possible. Yet in considering certain important issues other items are related, such as location of visitor center, approach road, visitor parking, utility area, distance of these from fort area, that will affect the operational whole. This must be kept in mind in reading and evaluating the discussions on any one topic.

### Location of Visitor Center

Committee members are unanimous in agreeing that to locate the visitor center, parking, maintenance, and residential areas where located on the present plan would be disastrously intrusive on the historic scene. Gregg, however, thinks skillful screening and architectural blending might reduce the intrusive character sufficiently to permit using this site. This location is the same in the 1965 resubmittal as in the earlier Master Plan. Drawing NHS-LAR 3124, Page 4, as well as other sheets of the plan, show it.

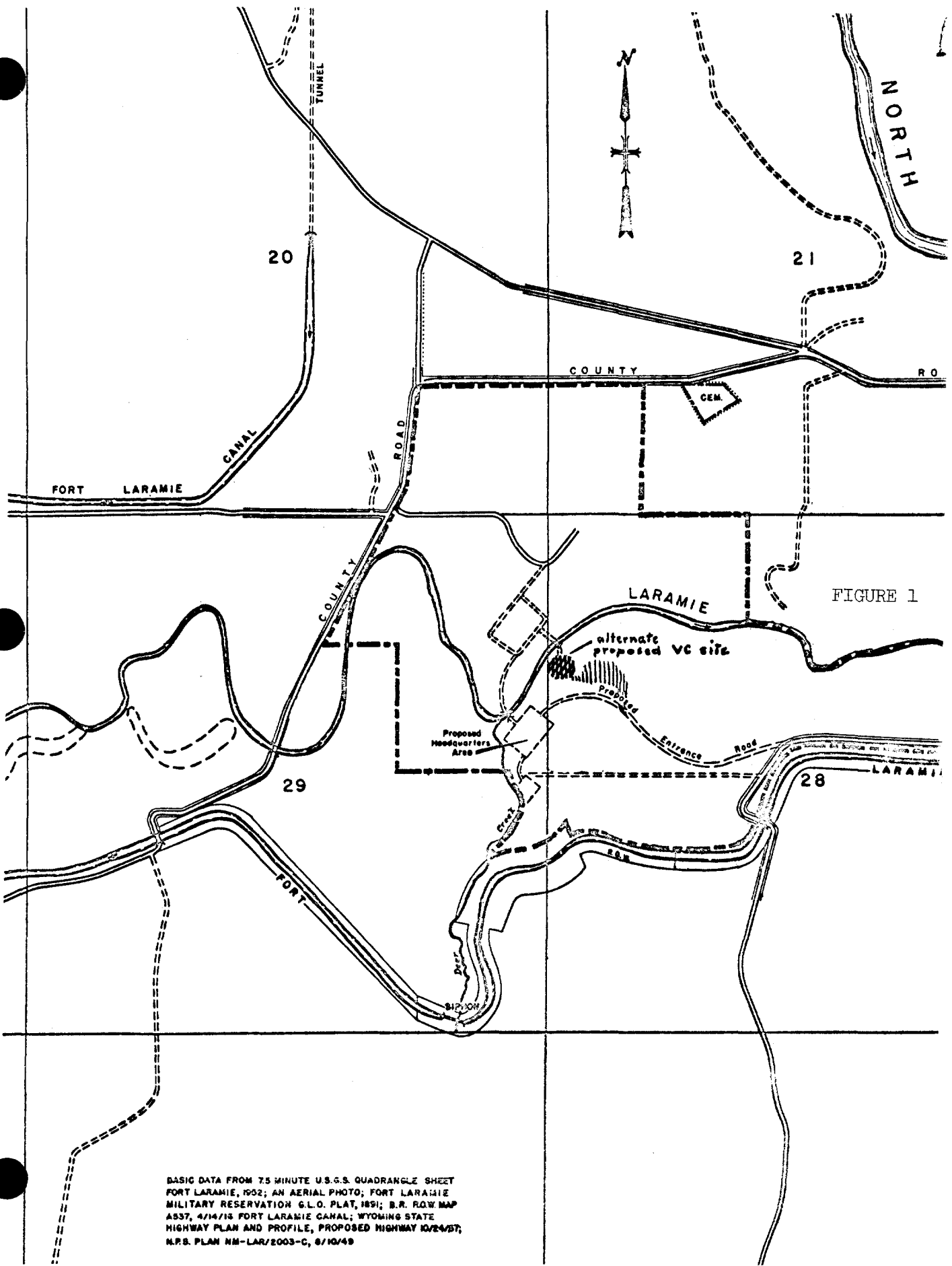
In this case, the Committee feels that the Service itself would be responsible for the greatest intrusions in the historic scene that could be devised, outside of the main fort area, and be guilty of a desecration that it generally so strongly denounces. All, or nearly all, of the above proposed developments would be in the open and plainly seen from the fort and visitor use area across the Laramie River. Where there is now a natural unspoiled western landscape, in a full 360-degree circle as seen from the main fort area, there would be unsightly intrusions tantamount to a small modern village in the most prominent segment of that circle (Gregg thinks intrusive features might be minimized). The parking area alone is planned for 250 cars. A location for these features that would not be visible from the fort area should be sought.

After agreeing that the present locations for the visitor center and the above mentioned facilities seem inappropriate, the Committee members were unable to agree upon suitable locations for them. Wagers and Bierly agreed on one proposal, Gregg favored another solution, and Appleman still another. The essential features of these will be set forth below.

Wagers-Bierly Proposal: Mr. Bierly stated the views on the visitor center for himself and Wagers as follows:

The presently proposed site, while offering a good view of the fort, in turn offers from some of the most critical viewing angles within the fort an imposing view of itself. Without debating the philosophy of a modern building as a backdrop to a restored fort scene, we suggest that by shifting the site about 250 yards to the east, one gains: (1) closer access to the fort; (2) a natural screen of cottonwoods along the river and a lower (but not on a flood plain) site; (3) a more accessible water table; (4) the element of surprise in presenting the fort (plan accompanies discussion in main section).

Housing or maintenance complex should not be built on the southern bank either in conjunction with visitor center or separately. If the function of either is protection, quick access to the fort is required, which means a vehicular bridge. The Committee could see



BASIC DATA FROM 7.5 MINUTE U.S.G.S. QUADRANGLE SHEET FORT LARAMIE, 1952; AN AERIAL PHOTO; FORT LARAMIE MILITARY RESERVATION G.L.O. PLAT, 1891; B.R. RDW MAP AS37, 4/14/18 FORT LARAMIE CANAL; WYOMING STATE HIGHWAY PLAN AND PROFILE, PROPOSED HIGHWAY 10/24/57; N.P.S. PLAN NM-LAR/2003-C, 6/10/49

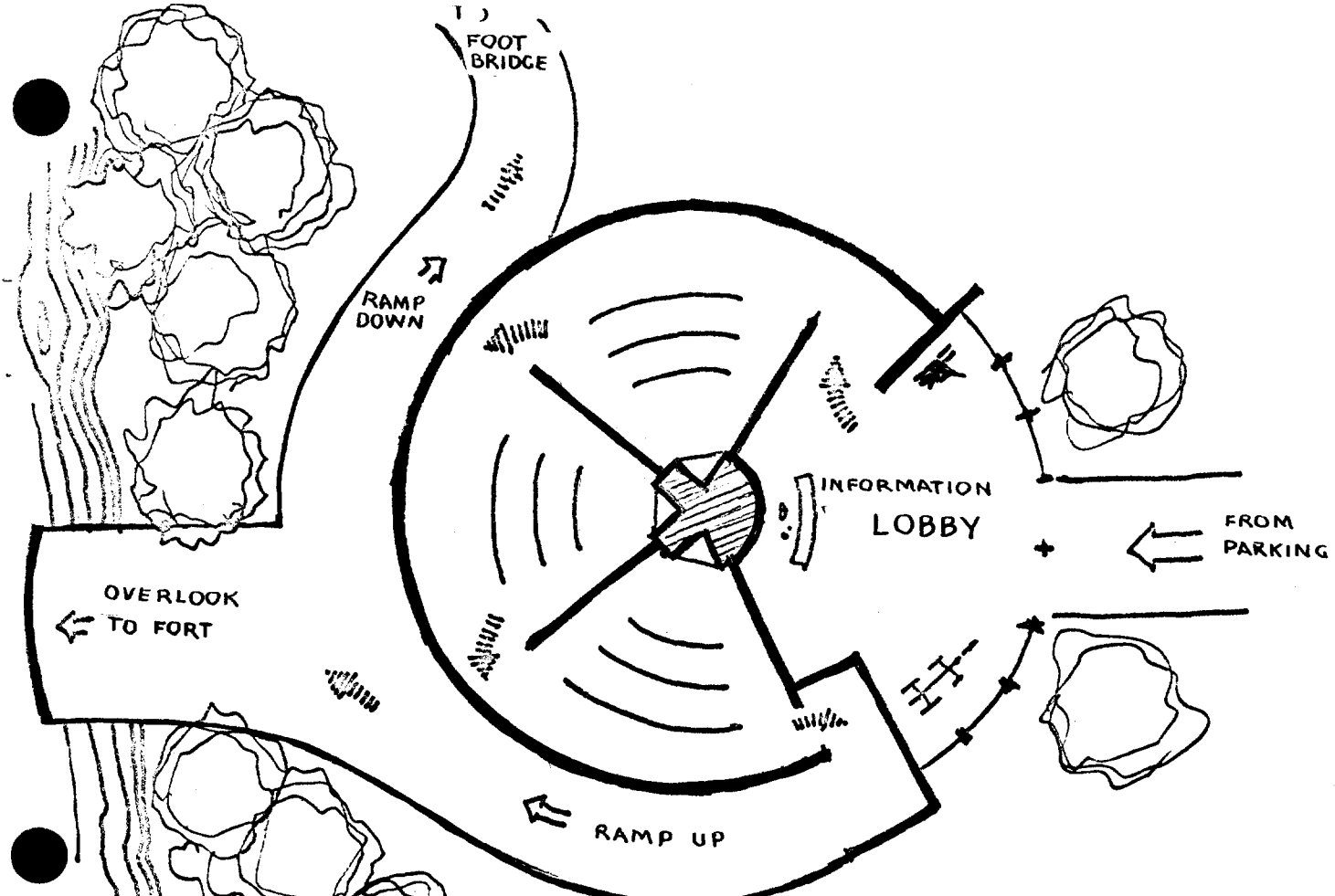
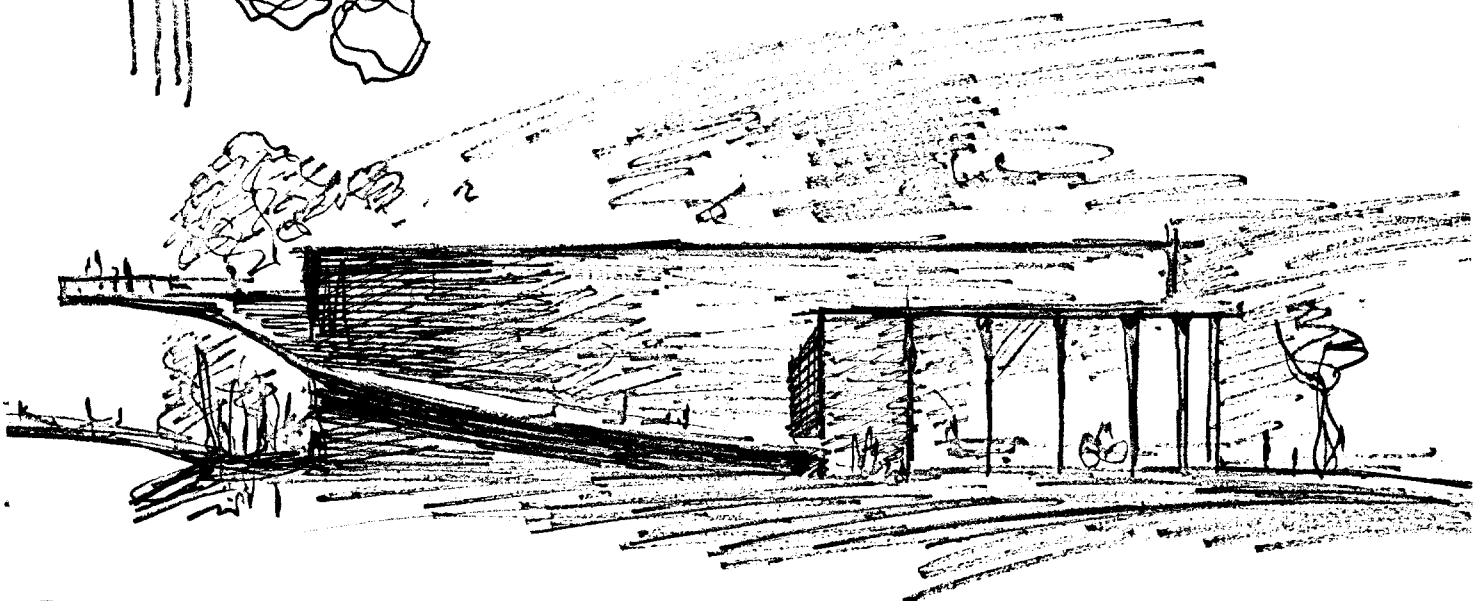


FIGURE 2



PROPOSED VISITOR CENTER FOR FORT LARAMIE

BIERLY - WAGERS PLAN

no justification in locating housing there. The maintenance facility could be put in the area northeast of the cavalry barracks. The justification for and location of housing at Fort Laramie needs reexamination.

Gregg Proposal: Gregg states his view on the location of the visitor center as follows:

The visitor center location and use of the westbound Oregon Trail approach to the fort were prime considerations in the area Master Plan which has been the basis of the land acquisition and boundary programs for the area. I consider the planning and the concepts of the past twenty years to be sound, and in my judgment, the Service will look pretty bad to abandon this plan after obtaining legislation for boundary extension, and appropriation of funds for land acquisition pursuant to it. I see no reason to construct more than one vehicular bridge, and one pedestrian bridge.

The development south of the Laramie River should be confined to the approach road, the visitor center, and the required parking and pullout areas together with necessary interpretive devices.

Location of the visitor center is the problem. Wagers, Bierly, and I all concur it should be south of the river, and the Master Plan road approach retained. I would prefer to see the location

# GREGG PLAN - FORT LARAMIE

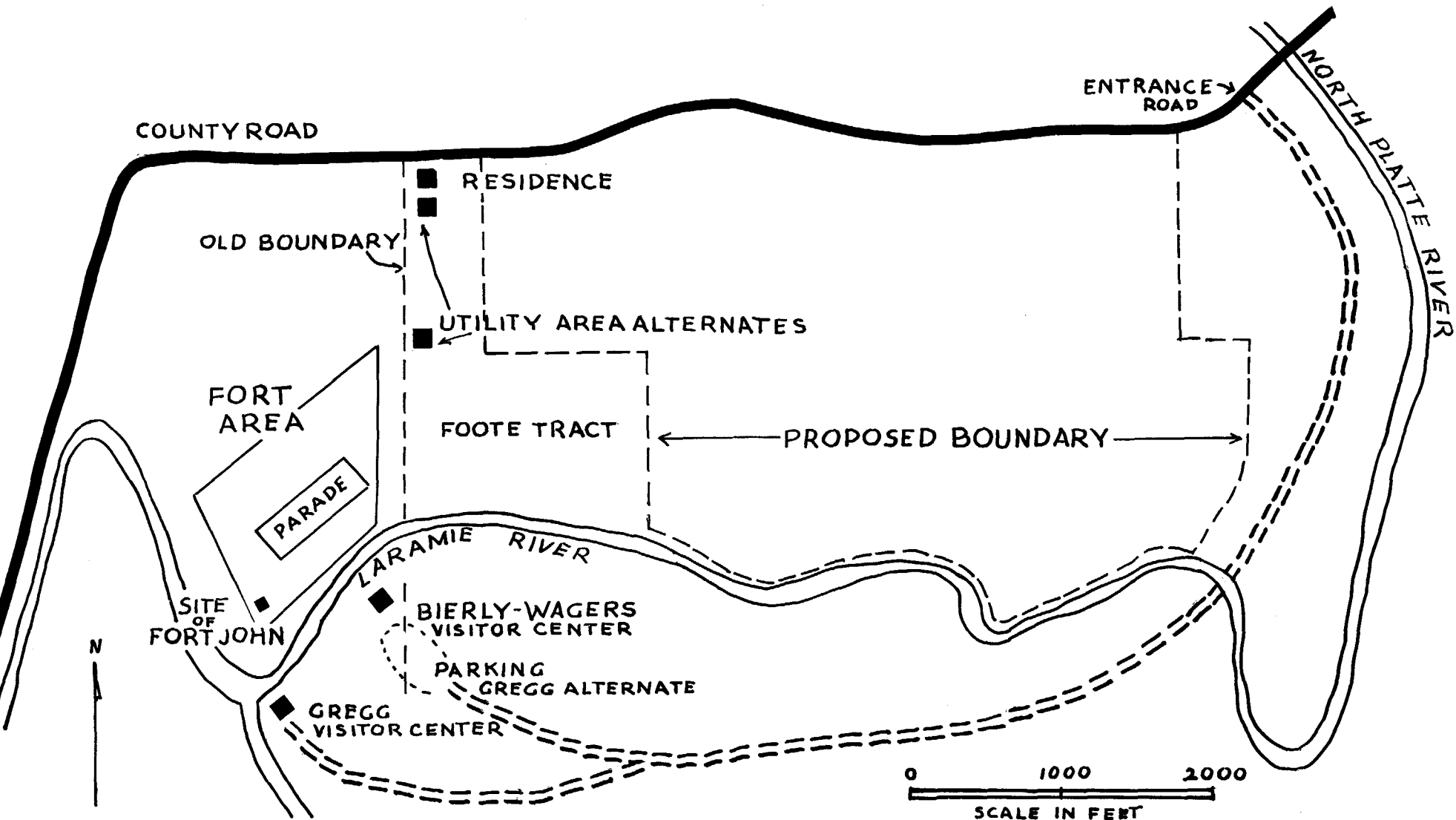


FIGURE 3

ON MICROFILM

FROM MASTERPLAN 3124, 4

375/20000

remain essentially as planned, on the Ward-Guerrier Trading Post site, across from the southeast corner of the parade ground, but I would go along peaceably with a location opposite the Common Sink site as proposed by Wagers and Bearly, if it can be developed without encroaching upon or effacing the preserved foundations of "Suds Row", although I would hardly recommend an entrance into the fort via the common sink. In either case, access from the visitor center to the fort grounds would require a pedestrian bridge across the river.

The Ward-Guerrier site for a visitor center commands the finest possible perspective view of the fort. It is my contention that on the Ward-Guerrier site, a visitor center of low relief design, harmonious with the prevailing grout-wall or stucco character of the historic fort buildings could be placed, with the long dimension parallel with the river, possibly lengthened by a wing wall, which could help screen parked cars on the lot behind the visitor center.

Appleman Proposal: His view is that the visitor center should be on the north side of the Laramie River, just back (northeast) of the Cavalry Barracks, at the east end of the fort area, parking to be behind or northeast of it on the Foote property that is still pending acquisition and abutting the present park boundary on the east. His views on this will be explained further in



connection with discussion of other facilities such as administrative offices, maintenance area, and residences. All of these he thinks should be located north of Laramie River and avoid the need to construct nearly 3 miles of road and the 4 bridges contemplated in the plan.

#### Maintenance Area

Wagers, Bierly, and Gregg believe the maintenance or utility area should be on the north side of the Laramie River, access to it from the county road north of the fort site, and on the Foote property northeast of the fort. Their opinion is based on easy and quick vehicular access to the fort area, especially in case of fire or other emergency. Appleman disagrees with this recommendation because he thinks this site is needed for other purposes. It will be noted that Wagers, Bierly, and Gregg in this view have placed development features both north and south of the river--they split them from all south of the river as contemplated by the Master Plan.

#### Administrative Offices

Committee members agree in recommending that the Commissary Building, presently being used as a temporary visitor center, be converted to office use for the Superintendent and park staff,

other than that needed in the visitor center. The Commissary Building will not be furnished as an historic structure, and aside from exterior historic appearance it will serve no interpretive function in the fort. It has sufficient floor space to accommodate the park staff. Interior modification for office use is justified, it is felt, and will make good use of the building. With offices located in this building, the Superintendent and his staff will be strategically located to observe operations in the fort area, and yet be on the edge of the main area and not constitute an intrusive activity.

#### Area Housing

The present master plan calls for 5 residences and two 4-unit apartment houses, for a total of 5 houses and 8 seasonal quarters-- 13 employee housing units altogether. All members of the Committee agreed that there is no real justification for this much area housing. As now proposed in the Master Plan it is placed on the south side of the Laramie River, some distance from the fort area. It would serve poorly for protection purpose in this removed location. Individuals could enter and leave the fort at night from the county road north of the fort without any probability of detection. If protection is a main reason for area housing, it would have to be placed on the north side of the Laramie River. The Committee is of the opinion that one house unit might be

located north of the river, adjacent to or near the county road, if any other facility is located in that vicinity on the Foote property. An occupant there, possibly the maintenance foreman or a member of the maintenance staff, could provide some surveillance of the fort area and the most favorable approach to it at night or after hours. The Laramie River on the south of the fort area provides good protection from that side. If there are no bridges built across the Laramie River, there is little likelihood of approach from that side.

Superintendent Sharp stated that he felt this is a tenable position, but that if residences are not to be built at Fort Laramie, then night watchmen or guards would be necessary. He felt a protection problem would exist, particularly a need to discover and report a fire quickly should it break out. The Committee agrees that a nightwatchman might be needed.

Superintendent Sharp stated that he would be willing to vacate his quarters in the Cavalry Barracks, and that he believed the other unit could be vacated also, within 6 months, if desired. Housing would be available in the vicinity, either in the towns of Fort Laramie, Lingle, and Torrington, or in the surrounding countryside. He agreed with the Committee that quarters in the Cavalry Barracks should be vacated as soon as possible for two reasons--fire hazard and need to vacate the structure for restoration and furnishing.

Minority View of General Development--Appleman: A brief comment representing Appleman's views on location of the visitor center appeared above. Because his concept encompasses the location of all administrative, visitor use, and maintenance features north of the Laramie River, he withheld full comment until these features had been discussed above. His views follow: My views on the most desirable, practical, and economical development of Fort Laramie, and at the same time the most convenient for visitor use, have changed little over the years. These views were held and expressed prior to the 1960 legislation which authorized changing the boundaries of the fort area.

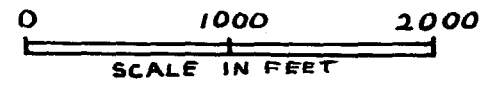
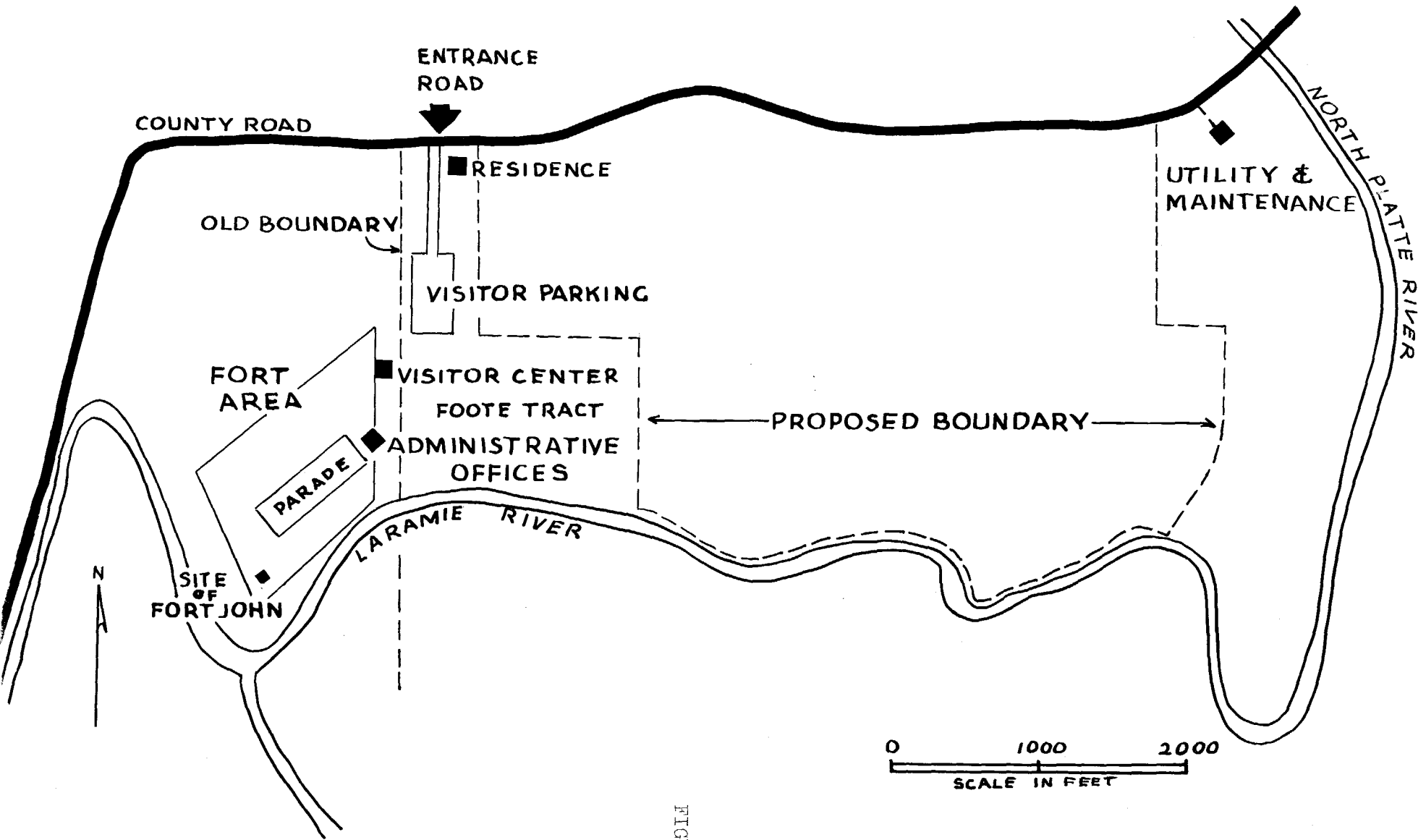
I am aware that the basic reason for the Service seeking, and eventually obtaining, the 1960 legislation was to acquire the land necessary to allow a visitor center and related facilities development south of the Laramie River where it is presently shown on plan. The legislation itself, Act of April 29, 1960 (74 Stat. 83), does not make any reference to this but confines itself to a description of the new boundary to be authorized and gives the reason as "in order to preserve the sites of historic buildings and roads associated with Fort Laramie,..". The House Hearings, Report No. 1432, 86th Congress, 2nd Session, identical Senate Bill 2434, however, does mention as a reason, "to provide space for an improved entrance road and headquarters development."

The question arises, with this background of Service planning in the late 1950's which resulted in the Service seeking and obtaining legislation looking toward placing the main visitor services facilities on the south side of the Laramie River, is there freedom of action now to consider changing this planning. I will not presume to answer this question, but can only give my opinion.

The land being acquired has several historic foundations and trail alignments on it, and its acquisition will preserve these, and make them available for future development and interpretation. It also secures scenic control of the landscape to some degree on the south side of the Laramie River and opposite the fort site. These are positive gains. If for the long view, and in serving the best interest of the visitor and in economy and efficiency of operation, it can be shown that the best location for park facilities is on the north side of the Laramie River, then I think the Service is justified in placing them there despite previous planning. The best and most appropriate development for Fort Laramie of the long future is really the only compelling factor in arriving at a decision in this matter. It is this reasoning that causes me to set forth the following comments and analysis of the situation:

The PCP for the presently proposed approach road, three bridges and a large culvert, and parking for the development south of

# APPLEMAN PLAN-FORT LARAMIE



ON MICROFILM

FIGURE 4

FROM MASTERPLAN 3124, 4

375/20001

the Laramie River is nearly \$400,000 in estimated cost. The approach road construction is three miles long, and there are three bridges over the Laramie River and one over Deer Creek. All are vehicular bridges except a pedestrian foot bridge from the proposed visitor center to the fort area north of the river. The PCP's cover the road, bridges, parking areas, and walks for the proposed development south of the Laramie River.

PCP R-2-4, approved by Midwest Regional Office, December 11, 1964, and cleared by WODC on January 15, 1965, cover walks and pedestrian bridge over Laramie River from visitor parking area. \$ 42,100

PCP R-7-1 covers three miles of entrance road, two bridges, and one large box culvert, utility and service roads, and parking areas. \$426,600

Main items involved are these:

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| The three miles of entrance road               | \$171,800 |
| Two bridges over Laramie River (each \$40,000) | \$ 80,000 |
| Large culvert at Deer Creek                    | \$ 20,000 |
| Pedestrian bridge over Laramie River           | \$ 20,000 |

This breaks down to \$120,000 for bridges and one large culvert, and \$171,800 for three miles of entrance road--a total of \$291,800. Add to this the 26 percent needed to cover PS&S and

Contingency funds gives \$75,816 more. This adds to \$367,616 for bridges and entrance road south of the river. This does not include parking and walks which would be needed north of the river if facilities were located there, as well as if south of the river, and therefore would be a cost wherever located. The above PCP's are based on an 80 car, 20 bus visitor parking area; the June submittal of the Master Plan calls for 250 car parking area. (If only the visitor center and visitor parking are located south of the river, those Committee members favoring it think that only 1 vehicular bridge and another pedestrian bridge over the Laramie River are needed.)

If the facilities are located north of the river, there is no need for any of these bridges and the approach road. Except for a very short stretch of entrance road, a matter of a few hundred feet, the approach would be along the present county road north of the fort area, which now serves as the approach to the area.

The visitor center would be located just inside the present park boundary and northeast of the Cavalry Barracks, at the extreme eastern end of the fort area. It would be within 150-200 feet of the east end of the Cavalry Barracks, and close to the fort area developed for public visitation. Its architecture could simulate that of characteristic fort buildings, and its exterior



could blend in well with the historic structures and not appear intrusive. From most parts of the fort area it would not be visible at all, being screened from view by other buildings. It would not have administrative offices, and its size would accordingly be reduced by that amount.

The parking area for this visitor center would be just behind and to the east and northeast of it and the fort area. It would be on a benchland, above the Laramie River flood plain and below the higher bluff that runs a finger down behind Fort Laramie to the northeast. In this position, the parking area benchland is entirely out of view from any part of the fort, and the parked cars would not be seen from it. The topography here is made to order for this development, and permits large scale parking very close to the fort and visitor center without being intrusive.

This proposed parking area is just east of the present park boundary on the Foote property, which is included in the land acquisition program. It is shown as No. 1 priority in the land acquisition program. The Foote tract extends north to the county road in the panhandle about 550 feet wide from a point northeast of the Cavalry Barracks, then steps out to 1,600 feet wide in a broad band north of the Laramie River. South of the river the Foote tract is about 2,200 feet wide. The parking

area would be in the 550 and 1,600 feet wide parts, with ample space, in my opinion, for any amount of parking that can reasonably be envisioned.

The approach road to this parking area would be from the present county road to the north, and would be in the 550-600 foot wide neck of the Foote tract mentioned in the preceding paragraph. It would be about 800 feet long. That is all the new road construction that would be necessary in this scheme of things. No bridges. And it brings the visitors close to the fort. I cannot imagine a more favorable terrain situation than that which by chance exists here to bring the visitor parking and visitor center literally adjacent to the historic site to be exhibited, and with the approach road and parking area out of sight from the exhibit area.

This scheme would place the administrative offices in the Commissary Building, which has already been mentioned. The Commissary Building is at the east end of the fort opposite the Cavalry Barracks and easily reached from the above proposed visitor parking area. The latter would serve the Commissary Building administrative office parking needs as well as those of the visitor center.

The utilities are centered at the east end of the fort area, just east of the Cavalry Barracks, and this fact also favors locating the visitor center and administrative offices in this vicinity.

New lines would not have to be laid, and those already in would probably need to be altered only slightly, except where load capacity might not be adequate for new uses.

This proposal separates the maintenance or utility area from the facilities described above, and places it eastward close to the county road, about 1-1/2 miles distant, near the old Military Iron Bridge over the North Platte River in land recently acquired. The site is ample and good for this purpose, and is far enough away from the fort to be out of sight and not intrusive. Also in this connection, there is already building developments on the opposite, or north side, of the county road at this point.

Summary: This scheme of development north of the Laramie River presents the following advantages:

1. It is economical, eliminating all four bridges proposed and the three miles of new road construction (2 bridges if other Committee members' suggestions are followed).
2. It brings the visitor parking close to the fort area and greatly reduces the extent of walking necessary for persons to reach the fort.
3. It makes almost certain that all who reach the visitor center will go to the fort proper which will be immediately at hand (this is by no means certain to occur in the present Master Plan proposed

location where the fort is across the river from the visitor center and a walk of 1/4 of a mile is required to reach the southwest edge of the fort area).

4. It places all administrative and interpretive personnel close to or in the fort area instead of being some distance away. (Those stationed in furnished historic structures not included).
5. It offers the best park operation plan and best serves visitor convenience.
6. It eliminates future maintenance costs for three miles of park road and four bridges, or any number of bridges that would be built if development is south of the Laramie River. These could not be reduced in any plan below two bridges across the Laramie River.
7. The money saved based on present PCP estimates would be about \$360,000 for bridges and road.
8. Another factor that strongly favors developments on the north side of the Laramie River is that the water table north of the river is about 14-18 feet below the surface; on the south side it drops sharply to about 200 feet below the surface, according to Superintendent Sharp and Park Historian Bob Murray. There could be a real water problem on the south side of the river.

A sketch map diagrams the location of major facilities according to the above scheme.

## Furnishing Plan for Historic Structures

The 1963 approved park Interpretive Prospectus called for 9 of 11 restored historic structures to be furnished. The 1965 resubmitted Master Plan holds to this program. At the present time (August 1965) there are four furnished historic structures at Fort Laramie as follows:

1. Sutler's Store complex, which includes Sutler Store, Post Office, Barroom.
2. Officer's Quarters A (a duplex, one-half furnished).
3. Officer's Quarters F (Burt quarters).
4. Old Bedlam (1855 bachelor officer quarters, 1864 Post Headquarters, 1864 Post Commander's apartment).

Items 1 and 2 above were the first to be furnished and opened to visitation in the summer of 1962. The last to be furnished and opened to visitation is Old Bedlam, this year. All these structures were furnished under the financial support provided by Mrs. Hill of Denver.

Planning and purchase of furnishings currently is progressing under the guidance of Mrs. Nan Carson for Officer's Quarters E (to be furnished as the Post Surgeon's Quarters), the 1866 Old Guard House, and the 1849 Magazine. There is also the plan to furnish the second half of Officer's Quarters A as the Post Surgeon's place. There is a conflict between this plan and

that to furnish Quarters E. Mrs. Carson favors furnishing E and dropping the second half of A as the Post Surgeon's Quarters. Superintendent Sharp thinks it best to proceed with furnishing the second half of A. Mrs. Carson speculated that it might be best to abandon A altogether as a furnished structure, since it is the least effective and is visited by relatively few persons as compared to the other furnished structures.

The Committee believes Mrs. Carson's suggestion in this respect is worthy of careful consideration. Independently, it had reached the conclusion that Officer's Quarters A is the least effective of the furnished buildings, is visited by relatively few persons, and is repetitious of Officer's Quarters F, which is effective. The Committee believes there is no need for two furnished Officer's Quarters at Fort Laramie.

Mrs. Carson made another observation which the Committee wishes to support. This is that the furnishing plan for the Sutler's Store be reconsidered. At present the Sutler's Store is furnished to the period 1876, with some of the furnishings dating into the 1880's. Mrs. Carson's view is that the Fort Laramie Sutler's Store's place in western history is unique and should be exploited for an earlier period--that of the early 1850's. It was begun in 1849 and is one of the earliest physical remains at the fort. Its furnishings should reflect the period of overland migration, the

presence of the semi-wild plains Indians, trappers and mountain men also visited the fort in large numbers at that time, and related subjects and influences. This cannot be done elsewhere in any Service area and historic structure. The Committee agrees with this view and recommends that Mrs. Carson's suggestion be adopted as a matter of planning policy and carried out as soon as possible. There is a related question to be considered and resolved here--Is Sutler's Store now suitable for such furnishing because of its post - 1850 enlargement?

The last installment of \$15,000 from the \$100,000 pledged by Mrs. Hill for the furnishing program was drawn in January of this year. There is no prospect that more will be forthcoming from her or anyone else to continue the furnishing program. This remaining money may be enough to complete purchase of furnishings for E, the Guardhouse, and the Magazine. The Committee formed a good opinion of Mrs. Carson's abilities.

#### Furnishing the Cavalry Barracks

The 1874 Cavalry Barracks is the only major building remaining in the presently approved furnishing plan that has not already been mentioned. Two sets of residence quarters and storage space in the building, as well as its use as park headquarters,

prevent undertaking restoration work that must precede furnishing. Mrs. Carson hopes to proceed with some purchases for furnishings, as opportunity arises, from the limited funds still available to her. But this may not be the best use of these funds if the other structures (E, Guardhouse, Magazine) are to have their furnishings completed as outlined above.

The Superintendent and staff, Mrs. Carson, and the Committee are strongly unanimous in thinking that the Cavalry Barracks is physically the most impressive, and one of the most important structures surviving at Fort Laramie, and that it should be restored and furnished at least in part. It is the only residence structure that relates directly to the enlisted men that is scheduled for furnishing. All the other quarters are concerned with life of the officers. Also, there is a constant public demand from visitors to see this structure furnished and opened for exhibit.

There have been some recent official comments that the Cavalry Barracks should not be furnished. The Committee does not agree with this view. On the contrary, it holds that it should be vacated from its present uses, restored, and furnished. Appleman and Gregg would give this project greater urgency than do Bierly and Wagers.



Other than the Cavalry Barracks, the Committee does not favor any further furnishing of historic structures at Fort Laramie. It doubts there is justification for furnishing Quarters E as the Post Surgeon's office and residence. Certainly both E and the second half of A should not be furnished. The Committee thinks the abandonment of A as a furnished exhibit should receive careful consideration, as it is repetitious in large part of F, which is a better furnishing display, and is seen by more persons. There is an undue emphasis now on officers' life at the post, and nothing on the enlisted men.

The question of staffing and continuing maintenance costs is present at every furnished historic structure. Under the conditions at Fort Laramie, each has to be treated as an attended station, with seasonal personnel on duty. There are now nine attended stations during the travel season. Old Bedlam and the Sutler's Store have priority in use of personnel if for any reason there should be a shortage for a period. During the Committee's visit, buildings A,F, Old Bedlam, and the Sutler's Store were all attended stations with seasonal personnel on duty. Three of these were young, attractive women--off-season college students or teachers.

Man power costs cannot be taken lightly; it is very expensive, and must be fully justified. For this reason, the Committee adopted as one of its guidelines the principle that not more than

one structure should be furnished relating to any single type of activity--as an example, there is no need or justification for more than one furnished officer's quarters.

Use of Glass or Plexiglass as Door Barrier to Furnished Rooms

Half or Dutch doors with plexiglass tops are used at the rooms in the furnished historic structures at Fort Laramie. One has to look through the plexiglass, which in most cases sets up a distracting and annoying reflection glare. In some instances it is so bad that one has great difficulty in seeing into the room.

Their protection value would seem not to be needed since there is a person on duty in the building, and the half door would discourage most persons from trying to enter a room for the purpose of theft. There are relatively few items that would be sufficiently attractive as souvenirs or collector's items to prompt theft, and if there is occasional loss it could in most instances be replaced.

In any event, the use of plexiglass at the top of the doors is considered unsatisfactory. The Committee unanimously recommends that plexiglass be removed.

### Evaluation of Furnished Historic Structures

The Committee was favorably impressed by the furnishings at Fort Laramie. Visitors seemed interested in the furnished structures. The furnishings program, in general, must be accounted a success at Fort Laramie. Superintendent Sharp and staff are unanimous that it has great visitor appeal and is successful. The Committee thought Old Bedlam outstanding in this respect, with Officer's Quarters F good. The Sutler's Store is interesting to most persons, but could be much better, and unique in character, if furnished to the period 1850.

### Visitor Center Facilities and Exhibits

One of the reasons for removing the visitor center from the 1967 construction program was the sentiment in some quarters that it was too large and that too many conventional exhibit units were proposed for it. A counterpart of this was the thought that relatively few exhibits were needed if a good audiovisual program were provided to tell the general background story of the fort.

This situation led to considerable discussion on this subject among the Committee together with the Superintendent and members of his staff. There was no unanimity among the Committee and group on this subject. The various views expressed may be summarized as follows:

All members of the Committee agreed that one feature, and an important one, of the visitor center interpretive program should be a good audiovisual program on the over-all story and significance of Fort Laramie. A film was mentioned as the preferred type of vehicle. After agreeing on an audiovisual program, the Committee disagreed to a considerable extent on other needed features in the visitor center. The main differences are reflected below:

Bierly: Any exhibits in the visitor center should be confined to the display of a few outstanding and attractive specimens in such a way as to be evocative of the period but with no narrative burden to carry. Those chosen should be such as cannot be displayed in the restored buildings (for reasons of size, value, etc.). Certainly the decision to display any large items must be known to the architect before he begins planning the building. A film and the park literature should carry the interpretive burden, at any rate.

Wagers: Emphasizes the role of a film and suggests that visitors might physically move from one viewing area to another as they did at the Richmond Civil War Centennial building. This would allow small groups to move through the program and out to the fort site at regular intervals. The sketch that Bierly has

prepared illustrates how this might work. Wagers thought the artifact collection at the park interesting, but that it was not capable of supporting a significant number of museum exhibits. He comments that the visitor center function should revolve around a film, that lobby exhibits could be used to generate interest, but that they should not attempt to carry the narrative.

Gregg: Agrees with use of film, but believes original objects relating to an area and its story have a useful place in an exhibit and interpretive plan for an area. Believes some exhibits are desirable. Thinks orientation vista with some audio or audio-visual complement is a desirable feature. Custer Battlefield orientation room is an example.

Appleman: Is in favor of a balanced interpretive program, and less emphasis on any one medium, such as a film. Believes it would be a great mistake to have too much emphasis on an audio-visual program, even an unusually good film, so that other forms of interpretation are ignored or minimized.

Past experience shows that not everyone sees an audiovisual program, or wants to--50 percent would be a good percentage. There should be other things if their tastes are in that direction. A film can give only a momentary image or impression of any fact or bit of information. A visitor normally will not go back to

see a film a second and third time. A film cannot serve a reference purpose, something to go back to and check information again. One cannot stand in front of it and ponder a subject. Exhibits do serve these purposes. They are there to use as often and as long as the visitor wants.

Paintings, a few dioramas possibly, graphic maps, original object displays, and exhibit units exploring, explaining, interpreting certain subjects are needed in any area having such complex a story and covering such a long period of time as that of Fort Laramie. One needs to use all the proven media to reach as many differently orientated persons as possible. What one medium fails to do for certain persons, another may do.

There is no harm in some repetition, even if that should result. We all know that repetition is the backbone of human learning, whether it is at school, from reading, or from experience. That is how we learn to walk, talk, and to do just about everything else. Instead of being something to avoid, repetition of key informational and interpretive facts and thoughts should be sought so long as they are presented in an interesting manner and vary in form. Literature, film or audiovisual, maps, exhibit units, signs and markers, personnel services on station, furnished

structures, the landscape itself, all have contributions to make, and none should be neglected unduly. A balanced whole, should be the aim. This cannot possibly be the result if the visitor center has only a film.

Appleman voices disagreement, a strong disagreement, with the present tendency to downgrade original objects relating to an area and its story. Most of the western military forts have acquired through gift, archeological work, or purchase large collections of this kind of material. Nearly all of it is in storage and never seen by visitors. If the present trend in interpretation philosophy holds, they never will see this material. There is ample evidence to show that large numbers of people are interested in this material. It does not have to be displayed in a way to tell an integrated narrative story. Most of it tells its own story--about all that is needed is identification and often that is not needed because it is obvious. The display at Homestead National Monument is one place where the Service has done well in the display of original material. Provision should be made for the display of selections of this kind of material, both large and small items, in the military fort. An outstanding example of the use of original objects and materials, and that in a most unlikely place, is the exhibit Alexander Girard

prepared for the new headquarters building of the John Deere Company in Moline, Illinois. The building was designed by the late Eero Saarinen, a steel and glass pavilion with metal louvers. Girard arranged more than 2,000 original objects and items of 19th Century material in this ultra-modern building in two 90-foot long display cases, each 8 feet high, in 3-dimensional mural effect. No text was necessary. The objects told the story of 19th Century America in which the John Deere Company got its start and grew to industrial greatness. Most original objects of a by-gone era have their own novelty and charm by reason of contrast with things known and used in everyday life today--their very strangeness draws attention to them. And they are genuine--nothing ersatz or contrived about them.



Site of Fort John--Need for Archeological Work and Possible  
Interpretive Development

There was agreement among the Committee members that a thorough archeological excavation of the site of Fort John should be scheduled and undertaken as soon as possible. On the outcome of that work, and depending on the amount of information obtained, consideration should be given to the form of on-site interpretation this part of the area should receive. Historical research would collaborate with the archeological work in developing an historic structures report on Fort John, bringing together in one document all that is known about the structure.

It is possible that when this has been done, it may be in order to consider the reconstruction of Fort John. Appleman and Gregg think the possibility and desirability should be considered.

Many may ask, "Why reconstruction?"

Gregg and Appleman give their reasons as being that Fort John represents the important historic period of 1841-1850, and even beyond to 1861, when parts of it were still standing. During this period the overland migration of Americans to Oregon and California streamed through and past Fort Laramie. It was then the most important way-station on the great overland trail between the frontier "settlements" and the west coast. It was

the late period of the fur trade and mountain man. The Plains Indians in their nomadic life came to the fort frequently in this early period, usually at peace with the traders and lending their colorful presence to this white man's oasis in a barbarian land. This was the period of Francis Parkman and his "Oregon Trail." None of the present structures at Fort Laramie dates from this period.

And yet the question arises whether this period of the 1840's is not more important really in the overall history and significance of Fort Laramie than the military period that followed. There was not in the past and is not now any structure in the western historical areas presently in the System, or likely to get in the System in the future, that was remotely like Fort John except Bent's Old Fort. A prototype of this kind of structure and the institution it represented would be a fine contribution of the Service and the Federal Government to the preservation of our Nation's historical traditions. Perhaps we can let the future take care of this, but we now should lay the groundwork for that future action in study and some vision of our own.

Gregg and Appleman feel strongly about the possible future reconstruction of Fort John. On this point Gregg has commented as follows:

Both the site of a fur trade fort that preceded the military period and became its first foothold, and the demonstrable evidences of the Oregon Trail within the area are tangible reminders of two story elements of great weight. I consider it essential to give emphasis to them in the interpretation. Without understanding them and relating the existence of Fort John initially and Fort Laramie later as indispensably necessary to the achievement of the mainstream course of Manifest Destiny, the visitor may go away largely impressed with the excellence of our preservation and restoration and our furnishing activities.

Would it be an anachronism to reconstruct Fort John in the context of the presently surviving military period buildings? I contend that it would not in its facade value. The place is full of anachronisms of time and geography; and the impelling importance and value of the pre-existence of the fur post and the strategic location it occupied, as well as the overland migration traffic that spawned it, together with the companion influence of the overland migration story, give the answer to the questions, "Why Fort Laramie?" and "Why here?"

How could the senses be better affected by the Fort John story than by the physical presence of a replica on its original site? I feel the anti-reconstruction philosophy has lost some of its force of late years. We sleep honorably in the same bed with Williamsburg at Colonial NHP, and we have engaged successfully in certain instances in restoration and reconstruction. My point is, I readily accept the view that there is no inherent sin or weakness in reconstruction as such. I embrace the potentials for it at Fort John.

#### Superintendent Sharp's Views on General Development Plan

Superintendent Sharp and his staff engaged actively in the discussions of the Committee at Fort Laramie. It is important that their views be known and considered. Appendix A reproduces Superintendent Sharp's letter of August 26 to the Committee on this subject, and it can speak for itself. It should be read and studied. He is not wedded to a development south of the Laramie River, but has some reservations about one north of the river.

#### Miscellaneous Comments

1. The Fort Laramie staff has found that the 1849 Guardhouse is one of the best points for interpretation by on-station personnel. The porches at Old Bedlam are almost as good.

2. During the three days the Committee was at Fort Laramie, all week days, there was a constant heavy visitation, 20 or more visitor cars being in the parking area from early to late. The place is popular, the visitation is bona-fide, and the visitor traffic is growing every year. The area needs and deserves the best possible development.

3. The book sales outlet in the temporary visitor center in the Commissary Building is the best known to the Committee in any area in the System. It is a splendid interpretive activity in depth. It carries a very large selection of pamphlets and books that relate to the history of the West and the Fort Laramie geographic range of influence. All items are on display so that they can be picked up, looked at in leisure, even read on a nearby bench, without any suggestion of obligation to buy or to act quickly. It pays off. The average sale is more than \$50 daily. Other areas should copy the Fort Laramie system. The display facilities are all home made.

4. Visitors do not necessarily follow the tour suggested in the tour folder. They pick and choose according to their likes and whims.

5. It is an error of planning to proceed on the assumption that there was only one historic approach and door to Fort Laramie,

such as that from the east along the south bank of the Laramie River which the present Master Plan emphasizes. The fact is that over the many years of Fort Laramie history, approaches were from many directions--east, west, north, south and variants. The matter of one historic approach should not be over-emphasized as an important factor in planning the location of the visitor center.

6. The military iron bridge over the North Platte River,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles east of the fort, has been repaired except for painting and work on ice breakers and the pier foundations. Stabilization and preservation work on this unique structure is nearing completion.

7. The Parade Ground should be considered as an item for restoration, just as fully as any structure--perhaps more so because there is only one Parade Ground and it was the center of the fort activity. Mrs. Carson has suggested its restoration to the 1866 period, with the large flagpole of that period. Period ordnance should be placed on the Parade Ground. The Committee supports this proposal.

8. Park Historian Murray favored development north of the Laramie River. He thought park operational factors would be greatly improved.

9. Reconstruction of the 1855 enlisted men's barracks, as proposed in the latest Master Plan submittal, should not be scheduled now, but might very well be left in the plan for future consideration.

Status of Planning Documents

Depending upon decisions reached by the Director on the issues discussed in this report, there may be need for a new Master Plan, a new Interpretive Prospectus, or modifications, great or minor, of the present ones.

FORT LARNED NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Fort Larned was authorized by Public Law 88-541, approved August 31, 1964. It establishes a limitation of 750 acres, and a total of \$1,273,000 for land acquisition and development. It was estimated that cost of land acquisition would be \$454,000. This money is available in the 1966 land acquisition program. To date no action has been taken, however, and the area has not been established. It would seem possible to acquire the land and establish Fort Larned National Historic Site during this fiscal year. Until the area is established, no work can be done in development.

The Midwest Region Office in May 1964 submitted a Master Plan Package for Fort Larned. It proposed restoration of historic structures, furnishing of three buildings, use of one as a visitor center and for administrative offices, a trail system, a new approach road and bridge over the Pawnee Fork River, and reconstruction of a stone blockhouse. There are nine existing historic structures. The Parade Ground is intact. No housing was proposed.

The Committee spent a day at Fort Larned studying the site in terms of the proposals set forth in the 1964 Master Plan Package. It concluded that the Master Plan Package team had done an



excellent study and analysis of the area. The Committee is in general agreement with the recommendations of that study. It suggests some departures from the plan, however, in a few instances. These will be included in the comments that follow.

#### Building A (Barracks) as Visitor Center and Administrative Offices

The Committee unanimously agrees that this building can be converted to visitor center and administrative offices use. The exterior would be an historic restoration, the interior arranged as needed for above stated uses. The western half of the building would be best for the visitor center as it is immediately adjacent to the place where traffic crossing the present bridge over the Pawnee Fork River enters the fort quadrangle area.

#### Approach Road and Bridge over Pawnee Fork

The Committee does not concur with the Master Plan Package study to build a new approach road from the west with a new bridge which would bring visitors into the fort area back of Officers Quarters Building 9 at the west side of the fort. At the west end of the proposed new bridge would be parking for buses and 50 cars, and a luncheon area with 25 sites.

Instead, the Committee feels that the present approach road from U.S. 156 on the north of the fort should be continued in use, that the relatively new State bridge over the Pawnee Fork River on this approach should continue in use, that parking should be built on the north side of the river immediately adjacent to the bridge, and that the present picnicking and luncheon area on the east side of this entrance road, adjacent to U.S. 156, should be continued in use. The reasons for these recommendations are as follows:

1. The present entrance road is a good entrance road, well located in relation to U.S. 156 and the fort. Why build another and abandon this one which the State has already built?
2. The present bridge over the Pawnee Fork offers the most logical and direct site for crossing the river from U.S. 156 and entering the fort. It is a front door approach and entrance; that proposed in the plan is a back and rear approach and entrance to the fort. The bridge is only a few years old, and its abandonment would represent a waste of money, an investment of probably as much as \$100,000 and possibly more (the Committee does not know the actual cost). The distance across the bridge, as one member paced it, is 106 steps. It is about the same distance from the fort side

of the bridge to the front door, or entrance, of Barracks Building A, which will be the visitor center. It would therefore be only about two short city blocks distance from the parking area to the door of the projected visitor center. And this entrance to the fort area is perhaps the most pleasant of any that could be chosen. It comes directly into the fort at the northwest corner, with the handsome row of Officers Quarters in alignment in the path of approach and the Parade Ground to the front of them and on the left of the line of sight. Barracks Building A is immediately at the left once the bridge has been crossed.

3. There is almost certain to be criticism and complaint in Kansas if the existing costly and good bridge is abandoned and the Service builds a new one 600 feet away, to enter the fort at the same corner, but in the rear of one of the Officers Quarters. A political-public relations issue of major proportions could result, and with little or no justification for the change and added expense, as the Committee sees it. The existing bridge is a highly functional one, a large vehicular bridge. Its capacity probably would never be taxed by pedestrian traffic. It may be larger than would be needed. But it is there; it serves a useful purpose at the right spot. It is not common sense to plan on tearing this bridge down and building a smaller one elsewhere.

4. Using the present entrance road and bridge would result in a very large saving of money. The existing entrance is a more convenient one to visitors than would be that proposed from the county road to the west.

5. Using the present State park picnicking area adjacent to the entrance road and U.S. 156 would be another saving. Utilities and tables and shelters are already there, in a good location, separated from the historic fort area. It might have to be expanded for future use, but there is plenty of space adjacent to the present development for this.

6. There is no need to bring vehicles, other than Service work trucks and cars, into the fort area. They could enter the fort when needed for this work (as seldom as possible during visiting hours) from the utility road from the west without requiring a bridge over the Pawnee Fork. This road, in effect, is already there.

Wagers suggested that possibly the present bridge could be used for a number of years and then the approach and bridge switched as recommended in the Master Plan Package. The other members dissented from this, believing the present entrance road and bridge offer the best approach and entrance to the fort, in any event. Wagers also proposed visitor parking on the south side

of the Pawnee Fork River and between it and Barracks Building A, the proposed visitor center. Appleman and Gregg did not agree with this, thinking there was inadequate room for parking there, and that it would be a serious encroachment on the fort area. Bierly expressed no opinion. Parking on the north side of the Pawnee Fork, as indicated above, can be within 600 feet of the visitor center, held completely outside the historic fort area, and screened from view within the fort, as well.

Preserve Ox-bow of Old Bed of Pawnee Fork on East of Fort

The Master Plan Package recommends that this ox-bow lake be drained and filled. Historic maps show that it had water in it, and that it had been a channel of the Pawnee Fork River, and probably filling with water during the active period of the fort whenever there was a flooding of the stream. It seemed to have served as an auxiliary channel at the time the fort was built. It provided an excellent defense factor, as with it the Pawnee Fork encompassed the fort on three sides, the west, north, and east. This fact undoubtedly was important in building the fort at that precise site. The tunnel from Building F, the Mess Hall, to the ox-bow, where water was available immediately at the outside edge of the fort, shows that it figured in the fort's defense plan and as a source of water. The Committee believes this feature should be retained, and that the ox-bow should have water in it as an historic feature.

### Refurnishing

The plan generally seems sound, but in the case of officers quarters it is recommended that this be held to one-half of one of the buildings, probably Building J.

### Cutting Names and Dates in Stone Walls

Some names and dates cut into the soft stone walls of the fort buildings are old and may be considered historic, and should be left as they are. Others might be obliterated as having no historic value--determination of this matter might very well be left to the restoration teams. But in any event, no inscriptions in the future should be allowed or retained.

### Santa Fe Trail Ruts Site

Two Committee members, Gregg and Appleman, suggest that consideration be given to an information and interpretation program that will encourage and assist visitors to reach this site, 5 miles southwest of the fort. Visitors should know that westbound they could visit it and continue on south to intersect U.S. 56. This would route them through Dodge City, and hence on to Garden City if they wished to continue their travel via U.S. 156. For others who may be headed for Santa Fe and other southwestern destinations it would be a mileage saving to route them to go this way, since

they would want to travel on U.S. 56. It is only about 2 miles south of the Santa Fe Trail Ruts Site.

Master Plan vs. Interpretive Prospectus

The Fort Larned Master Plan Package goes rather far in interpretive planning. The Committee realizes that a Master Plan Package must deal with an interpretive plan. This should be done in a general way, however, and not engage in detail, which should be left to an interpretive prospectus. An interpretive prospectus for Fort Larned should be prepared that will present an interpretive plan in detail.

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The Committee feels that Fort Larned is a splendid addition to the National Park System and can be made an outstanding area. It urges that land acquisition be undertaken at once so that development can get underway.

BENT'S OLD FORT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

The basic problem to be resolved here is whether the fort shall be reconstructed. Everything else revolves around that. The decision on this is of the utmost importance.

The Master Plan Package for Bent's Old Fort calls for the reconstruction of the fort. It was the result of a team study in the Midwest Region, and was reviewed at all levels and approved by Assistant Director Clark Stratton on May 22, 1963. Since then, planning, archeological work and historical research have been directed toward the reconstruction of the fort.

This objective was called into question by Director Hartzog's review of the 1967 budget and program this past spring. He instructed that the \$454,100 item for the reconstruction of the fort be withdrawn from the program pending further study of the development plan and the completion of the historic structures report. Notice of this decision was sent to the Regional Director and Chief of WODC as part of the overall review of the 1967 fiscal year proposed development plan in a memorandum from the Assistant Director, Administration, dated June 16, 1965.

In the meantime, the interpretive prospectus for Bent's Old Fort was completed and submitted for review in April 1965. It has been reviewed at different levels and in the Washington Office,



but approval has been withheld until this Committee report has been submitted. The interpretive prospectus assumes the reconstruction of the fort and its use as a visitor center, as well as for administrative office space.

The Historic Structures Report, Parts I and II, has also been completed and reviewed. More will be said about this document later.

The Committee discussed the proposed development plan with Acting Superintendent Dwight E. Stinson (the park historian); Jackson Moore, Archeologist supervising the excavations just completed; and seasonal historian Doyle E. Dumbaugh. Subsequently, the Committee received a statement of views from Superintendent William L. Featherstone. His statement and a digest of various administrative actions and decisions prepared by Stinson are enclosed as Appendices C and D.

Committee Recommendations:

Use of Reconstructed Fort as Visitor Center  
and Administrative Offices

After a careful discussion of the plan and an examination of the archeological excavation at the fort site, with particular attention given to the various room spaces in the fort, it was the unanimous opinion of the Committee that the space and

arrangements of rooms in a reconstructed fort would not permit a feasible Visitor Service function nor adequately provide administrative office space. Even to attempt to do this, which the Committee thought inadvisable, would be to impair seriously the structure's use as a reconstructed exhibit.

#### Reconstruction of Fort as Historic Exhibit

The Committee split 2 and 2 on this vital issue. Bierly and Wagers took the position the fort should not be reconstructed. Appleman and Gregg believed it should. The staff at the park without exception felt most strongly that the fort should be reconstructed. The Superintendent has stated the same view (see Appendix C).

#### Against Reconstruction

The unanimous opinion of the Committee that a reconstructed Bent's Fort could not serve as a visitor center and for administrative offices necessarily means that the Committee would have to assume that a structure for these purposes would have to be built elsewhere in the area. Bierly and Wagers include this in their views against reconstruction. Bierly's comment below states their joint view:

The big issue at Bent's Fort quickly resolves itself to one question. Is the decision to reconstruct the fort on the old site a sound one?

Questioning the decision leaves you these alternatives:

- (a) Proceed as planned to reconstruct on the site and house offices and visitor center therein.
- (b) Reconstruct fort but house offices and visitor center elsewhere.
- (c) Do not reconstruct fort but stabilize and mark remains, and build separate visitor center administration building.

Jerry Wagers and I, after much debating, reached the same conclusion, the third one. I shall outline our reasons.

With only two casual sketches by Lt. Abert, plus a verbal description to augment the archeological evidence, the "reconstruction" would have to be highly conjectural. The plan view can be well established by locating foundations, but the elevations could only be guesswork.

The physical remains of Bent's Fort, to us the real reason the site has been preserved and acquired by NPS, would be totally obliterated by reconstruction on the site! This means that people who want to get close to history by standing amid the ruins had better do it before the bulldozers arrive.

If present plans (alternative A) are followed, and the building is to house modern facilities, it means that you are almost immediately forced into a floor plan incapable of handling anywhere

near the estimated human traffic. Exterior doors must be added and/or widened to meet safety regulations. Offices must be windowless. But most of all such a hybrid approach means that the interior of the fort will not even be a reconstruction!

So what is left? An outer veneer, necessarily somewhat altered for safety, and of a modern material to simulate plastered adobe. Add to this the degree of conjecture involved in even this outer shell and alternative A becomes untenable. The cost of this reconstruction is now estimated at \$750,000.

Alternative B--complete reconstruction plus separate visitor center. This has the advantage of finishing off the inside of the fort as it was, and of having a visitor center and offices designed for people. But it means two buildings, and obviously the modern and reconstructed buildings must not be close together. This means placing the visitor center near the highway, so that people must enter it, get their background briefing, then reload into their cars for the drive to the fort. In such a situation the visitor center would probably be heavily by-passed by people drawn to the reconstruction. No cost estimates have been made for this alternative but it is reasonable to presume they would approximate or exceed the three quarters of a million estimate for alternative A. And you would still have destroyed all historic remains.

Alternative C--our choice has the disadvantage of dashing the expectations of the local populace, who have been led to believe the fort will be reconstructed, and it may be that political pressures would make this choice untenable. However, it has such strong arguments for it that we think it must be proposed. First you preserve the site and its remains, second you can build a visitor center not only adjacent to the site but by a little architectural maneuvering, actually protect a certain part of the wall that does remain. You have a place planned for human traffic and background briefing. You have the stabilized remains at hand immediately after having had the role of the fort interpreted. You have one building to erect--and that one will do its job.

There is another aspect to this situation which doesn't deal with money, or human traffic or interior space, and so it's a more slender reed to lean on perhaps, and it is certainly subject to individual reactions. But to me, standing amid the ruins (granted they were mostly below ground level before excavation), and seeing the very blocks of adobe that Bent's Mexican laborers laid one upon the other, established in me much more a feeling of immediacy with that period than any Design Office reconstruction could ever hope to. Isn't this the feeling we're trying to achieve?

Attached are three sketches of possible architectural arrangements which would help shelter the site as well as make it immediately available.

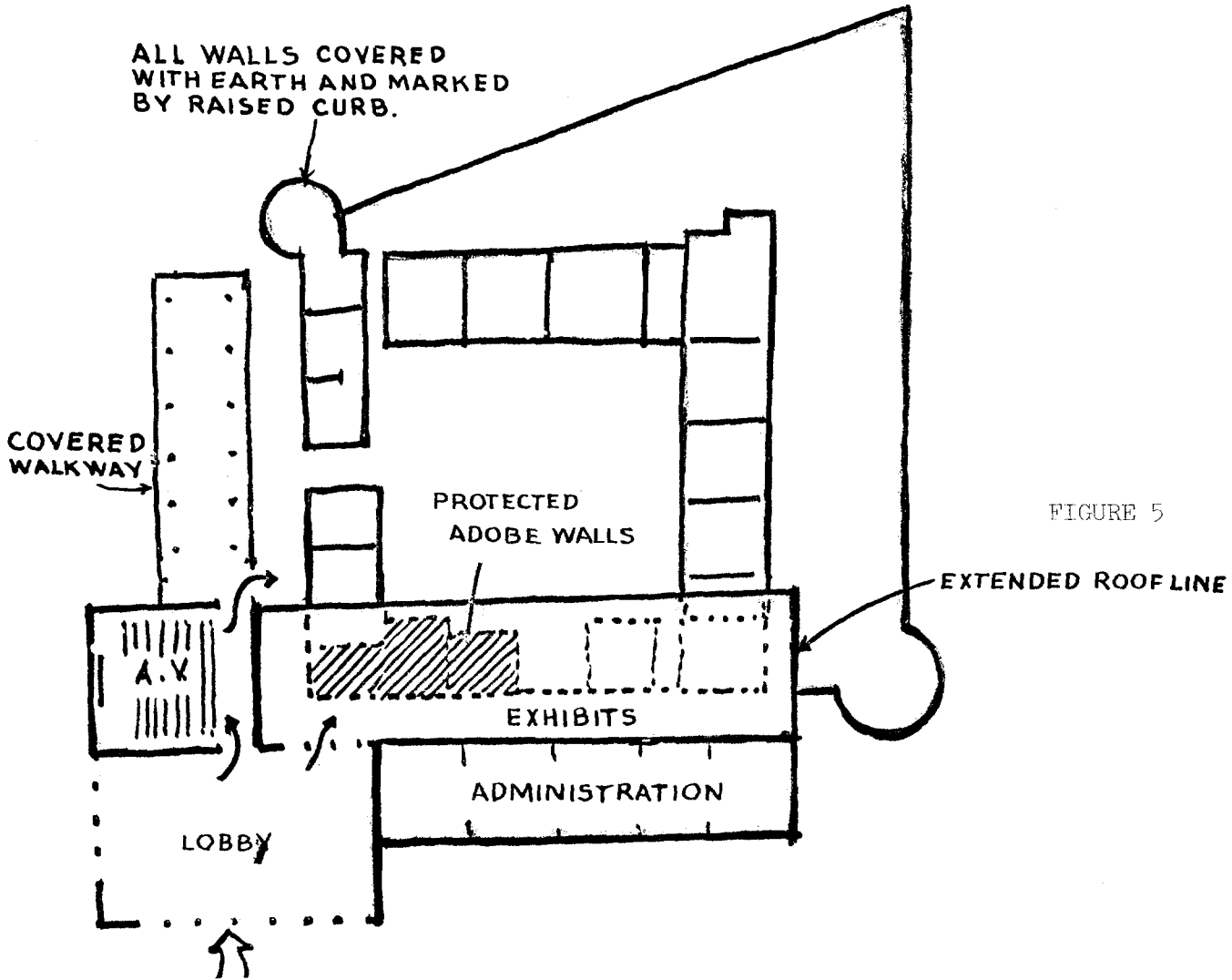
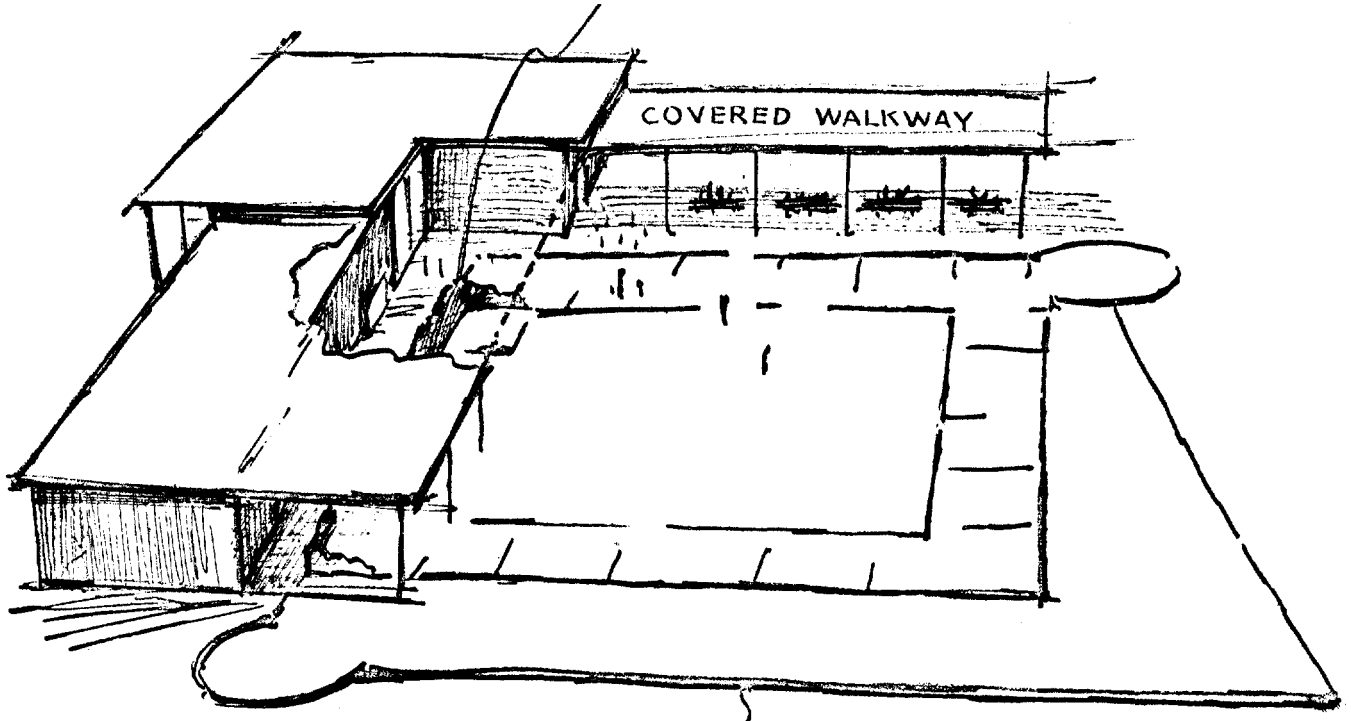


FIGURE 5

PROPOSED VISITOR CENTER  
FOR BENT'S FORT

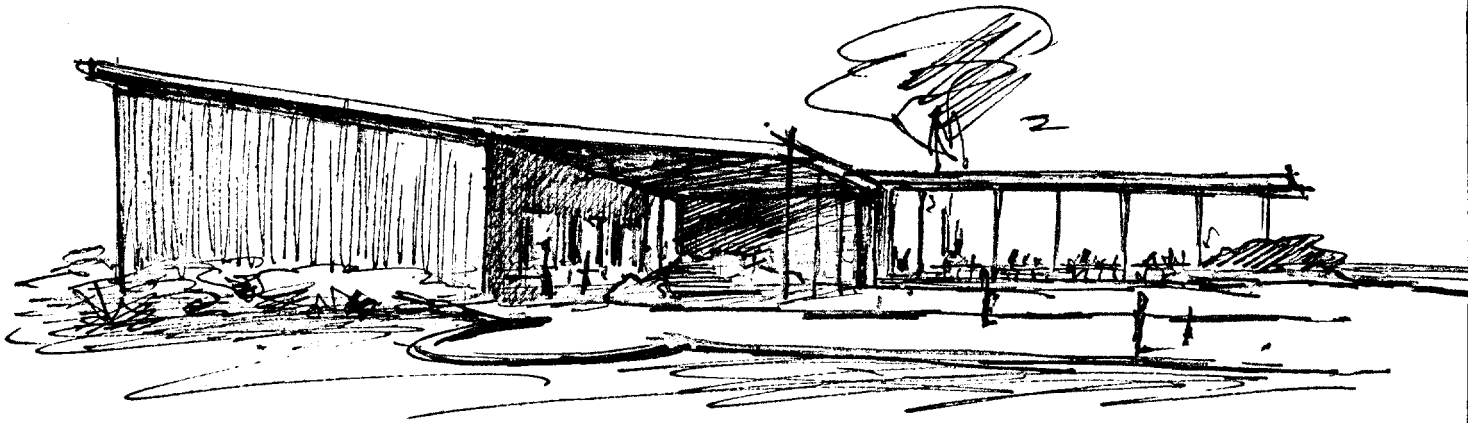
BIERLY - WAGERS PLAN

PROTECTED STABILIZED  
ADobe WALL SECTION



RUINED WALLS COVERED & MARKED BY CURB

FIGURE 6



VIEW TO SHOW PROTECTED RUIN WALLS  
PROPOSED VISITOR CENTER FOR BENT'S FORT

### For Reconstruction

Appleman and Gregg join the Superintendent and park staff in thinking that the reconstruction of Bent's Old Fort is the only way in which the area can be made to have meaning and to be worthy of status as a unit in the National Park System.

They hold that there is not enough original material left to give any impression of what the fort was like. There is almost nothing above ground, and only a very little of adobe construction that can be discerned below ground level. Only two or three storage pits below ground that have been excavated could be displayed as original fort construction features. The two archeological excavations, the first in the mid-50's by the State of Colorado, and the second and more complete one just finished by the Service, have virtually erased whatever may have survived and been visible above ground before they were undertaken. Prior to any excavations there existed at the site only low mounds of adobe that had moldered down into dirt, but served to mark an outline of the fort.

The fact is there is so little left of the original fort that only a person with exceptional knowledge of the fort and an unusual power of visualization could recreate in his mind's eye an image of Bent's Old Fort. Reconstructing on the site would not, could not, destroy anything of the original fort above ground because



there is nothing significant left of it. The toll of past abandonment, deterioration, our archeological work in the past year, and the heavy rains and hail of this past summer have left precious little to show the visitor of what was once historic Old Bent's Fort.

#### Reconstruction Popular

There is good evidence from all parts of the country that the American people, those who visit historic and other places of interest, like reconstruction and restorations of buildings. A model can never take the place of a full-scale replica. This interest and acceptance of reconstructions is shown at places like Williamsburg and Sturbridge Village, and at such areas as Appomattox Courthouse in the National Park System where the Service has reconstructed the McLean House and the Courthouse as essential elements to round out the historic scene. Reconstruction at Independence National Historical Park, where there were many surviving original buildings, has been most acceptable. Service policy has been perhaps a bit backward about embracing reconstruction where it alone will serve the interpretive need and constitutes the best of all media in reaching and informing the public. Bent's Old Fort is an outstanding example of such a need.

Where reconstruction does best serve the objective of presentation and interpretation in an area, and where it is directly related to the structure or object which caused the Congress to authorize the establishment of an area in the first instance, as is the case in Bent's Old Fort, then the matter of whether to reconstruct or not to reconstruct is primarily a matter of need, and not of economy. Appleman and Gregg feel it is a matter of irreplaceable need at Bent's Old Fort.

#### An Historic Exhibit

Their view is that the fort should be reconstructed as an historic exhibit. This would include furnishing of certain rooms and parts of the fort building--those parts that would reflect and illustrate the vital parts of the Fort's activity and importance. Structural strength could be introduced, and hidden in large part, where needed for visitor load and to lessen future maintenance costs. This is accepted practice. The exterior and interior appearance should relate to the original as accurately as research can make it. This point will be touched on later in discussing the Historic Structures Report, Part II.

The Service should seize this opportunity to have an outstanding development at Bent's Old Fort. If our primary motive is to save money, we should have left the fort site in the ownership of the State of Colorado. The reason the State supported the move to

place the area in Federal ownership was to secure adequate financial support for their reconstruction of the fort, which the State found it could not do itself. Before that, the DAR had hoped to reconstruct the fort, but its resources were not equal to it, and this in turn had caused it to turn to the State. Now, both the DAR and State have the expectation that the Federal Government will do it.

And this indeed has been the stated intention of the Service ever since the Master Plan Package was approved in May 1963. The local park staff and also the Midwest Regional Office were fully justified in stating that the Service intended to reconstruct the fort when questions on the point were directed to them, as they have been at different times. It was official policy, and has been for more than 2 years, to reconstruct the fort. As a result, Colorado newspapers have carried publicity about the forthcoming reconstruction of Bent's Old Fort. The historical research and the archeological work at the fort, the latter a major project completed this summer for which the report yet has to be written, all pointed to that final result.

It cannot be overlooked that a climate of opinion exists in Colorado and the Midwest, not to mention perhaps wider geographical reaches, that Bent's Old Fort will be reconstructed. If this is not done, or if the National Park Service announces its intention not to do so, it is the considered opinion of both Appleman and Gregg that

political pressures will be brought to bear on the Service and the Department that cannot be resisted, and that if necessary, there will be Congressional action directing the reconstruction of the fort. Appleman and Gregg want to make sure that this point is made emphatically for the Director's consideration and guidance.

More importantly, their own view, aside from public opinion and political action considerations, is that the fort should be reconstructed because it is desirable and necessary to provide a meaningful visitor experience to present the significance of the area in our southwestern history, the fur trade, and the story of our Nation's expansion to the Pacific. If this story is worthy of the attention of the public, the action taken by the Congress, and the avowed interest of the National Park Service for Federal administration of the area, then it is worth the investment required to carry out a development giving it optimum value in presenting its story.

That story involves the Fort's importance in the early fur trade of the West; relations with the southern plains Indians; the commerce with the Spanish settlements of the Rio Grande basin and on down into old Mexico over the Santa Fe Trail; and the position and use of the fort as an outpost of American influence on the north bank of the Arkansas River, on the very border of Mexico

in the Mexican War; and the march of Kearny's Army of the West to the Rio Grande and the conquest of New Mexico and California.

A reconstructed Bent's Old Fort will have the physical reality to give opportunity for impressive interpretation. Its existence will give strong visual meaning to the area--it will be a magnet for visitation, and there will be something more than an undistinguished river terrace at the place, which otherwise would be little different from thousands of surrounding acres. A shining new visitor center by itself, and nothing more, however cleverly it might display a few feet of adobe within its modern structure, can never project the picture of Bent's Old Fort and its place in western wilderness as a bastion of American commerce on the Southwestern frontier--an extension of American interest that became akin to a jutting jaw thrust against those who would deny the "Manifest Destiny" of westward expansion of the United States.

Let us keep in mind this picture of a small adobe fort standing in the wilderness representing all this, and then let us recognize our need to rebuild this fort to make the picture come true for those living in our own time and on into the future.

To be sure, a reconstructed fort as an historic replica and exhibit and a new visitor center will not be as cheap to build as only one or the other. Possibly there would be economy in a hybrid horse-camel, as Gregg remarked at one point, but for a man who wants to

enter the steeple-chase and also to make extended desert trips, it might be better economy to spend a little more and get two animals less dedicated to the multiple use concept.

It should not be overlooked that there is nowhere in the System, nor is there likely ever to be, another historic structure, either original, restored, or reconstructed, like Bent's Old Fort, should it be rebuilt. There were no others originally that resembled Bent's Old Fort, except Fort John on the Laramie River. It might alone be the exception. But the prospect that Fort John would ever be reconstructed is so remote at this point that it hardly needs to be considered. If archeological and historical findings and future justifications make it in the public interest to reconstruct old Fort John, it should be done; but that future possibility need not divert attention from the need to reconstruct Bent's Old Fort without delay. It may be stated with full confidence that a reconstruction of Bent's Old Fort would constitute a unique educational, architectural, and historical exhibit of top rank in the United States. This alone argues powerfully for its reconstruction.

#### Historic Structures Report

Approval of this report, Parts I and II, normally is necessary for restoration or reconstruction of historic structures in the

National Park System. This report presents the research data which allows a determination whether a reasonably accurate restoration or reconstruction can be done. Accordingly, these documents are of the greatest importance bearing on any projected restoration or reconstruction. This is true of Bent's Old Fort.

The Bierly and Wagers statement indicated doubt that evidence existed to allow a reliable reconstruction, and used the word "conjectural" as being applicable to any reconstruction of the fort. A review of action on the Historic Structures Report for Bent's Old Fort will give the official viewpoint on this matter. It follows:

Part I: Part I of the Historic Structures Report was submitted by the area to the Midwest Regional Office, November 16, 1964. It was reviewed by the staff there and recommended by Regional Director Garrison on December 11, 1964. The WODC also recommended it by memorandum from Acting Chief, Charles E. Krueger, December 15, 1964. The Washington Office review resulted in approval of Part I by memorandum from Acting Assistant Director, Design and Construction, John B. Cabot, February 11, 1965. Part I is a general and brief advance report on the proposed treatment of a structure. This report stated Bent's Old Fort would be reconstructed.

Part II: This is a detailed study assembling all the known historical, architectural, archeological data bearing on the

structure in question, and on it is based the work drawings necessary for restoration or reconstruction. Part II was finished by the area staff with WODC assistance and submitted for review to the Washington Office on August 9. Part II has been reviewed in Washington. Prior to completion of this review the current Committee was established, and final action on clearing plans for reconstruction of the fort was held in abeyance until its study and recommendations were in hand. But in the meantime, technical review of Part II was finished. The latest WODC estimate of cost for reconstructing the fort is \$789,000 (July 26, '6~~4~~<sup>5</sup>). A part of this estimated cost undoubtedly related to visitor center purposes and functions in the proposed dual-purpose reconstruction, and would be absent in a reconstruction for only our historic exhibit.

Mr. John Reshoft's memorandum of August 16 commented on the review of Part II, but indicated withholding of approval in the circumstances. His memorandum failed to make clear whether Part II had been approved on research and technical rounds as constituting a valid basis for reconstruction. This is an important point in considering this matter as a part of this Committee report. Mr. Appleman, therefore, undertook to obtain clarification.

John B. Cabot, Chief Architect, in a memorandum dated September 21, 1965, to Chief, Division of Interpretation and Visitor Services,



stated that the official review action on Part II, relative to adequacy of data to support a reconstruction, was as follows:

If the administrative decision is made to reconstruct, I believe that this report, which evidently exhausts the evidence, includes sufficient information to build a reasonable approximation of the Old Fort. This is not to say that an accurate reconstruction, like those made possible by measured drawings of an original building, would result.

The review check sheet on Part II shows that technical review in the disciplines of history, archeology, architecture, and interpretation cleared the report as adequate for reconstruction.

It must be concluded, therefore, that the Service considers the Historic Structures Report, Part II, Bent's Old Fort, as an acceptable document on which to base a reconstruction of the fort.

#### Visitor Center Location

The Committee unanimously agreed that the reconstructed fort could not serve as a visitor center and provide adequate administrative office space. This line of reasoning indicates that a visitor center would have to be built. Bierly and Wagers have suggested that it be built immediately adjacent to the site of Bent's Old Fort. Bierly's sketches illustrate this viewpoint.

Appleman and Gregg are opposed to this scheme for reasons outlined above. They consider the reconstruction of the fort as an historic exhibit necessary, and they would not favor the location of a new visitor center of any kind immediately adjacent, or even close, to the fort site. It would be disasterously intrusive.

Appleman and Gregg recommended, therefore, that a visitor center be built where the present entrance road leaves State Route 194. Here it would be advantageously located to attract visitors, would serve as an introduction to the area, and would be far enough away from the reconstructed fort to be a minimum intrusive factor. It would have all the facilities ordinarily associated with a visitor center, including an audiovisual room and exhibits concerned with presenting the overall main story of Bent's Fort. The plan could be so prepared that this building and its parking could be well screened by planting from view at the reconstructed fort. Landscape and traffic entrance road planning could assure that very few would or could by-pass the visitor center and go directly to the fort. But whether screening is fully effective or not would not make a critical difference, since the highway is a necessary intrusion that will remain together with the traffic along it. They are some distance away. The fort site is 1,800-2,000 feet from the highway or a little more than a third of a mile away, essentially the same distance, *as the proposed visitor center.*

There would be need for a road between the proposed visitor center site and the reconstructed fort under all proposals so far offered. It would follow generally along the present alignment, which is close to the original Santa Fe Trail approach to Bent's Old Fort from the east. This road would, therefore, have an historical interpretive value as being substantially the same approach to the fort as that used by westbound travelers on the Santa Fe Trail in the days of the Fort's occupancy.

Parking at the fort could be placed, as the Master Plan Package suggests, in the walled corral behind the fort proper. It is believed it would be large enough to accommodate parking needs on all but special occasions, since visitation would always be split between those who had just arrived and were at the visitor center and those who had finished their visit there and had gone on to the fort.

Parking at the fort would be out of sight in this plan. No formal parking other than in the corral would be provided at the reconstructed fort; on a few special occasions the level meadow adjacent to the fort could be used for overflow parking.

#### Interpretive Prospectus Needed

If either of the two alternate recommendations of the Committee is adopted, a new Interpretive Prospectus will be needed. This

is mandatory because the present prospectus is based on the principle that all visitor services and administrative functions will be housed in the reconstructed fort. The new prospectus would have to detail what would go into a new visitor center, and what might go into the reconstructed fort as elements of historical reconstruction and furnishing of rooms.

#### Housing

The Committee unanimously agreed that area housing is not necessary. This can be obtained at either La Junta or Las Animas, both of which are within a few miles of the site. However, if site planning makes it possible to retain the present farmhouse an employee might occupy it and provide some protection value. The question of whether a night guard would be needed would arise in connection with protection needs.

#### Utility and Maintenance Area

The place presently indicated on the Master Plan Drawing, 3004, page 4, for a residential and Maintenance area at the northwest corner of the area would seem to be the best location for a maintenance area.

#### Vista From South Side of Arkansas River--U.S. 50

Highway U.S. 50 crosses to the south side of the Arkansas River, westbound, at Las Animas, some 10-11 miles east of Bent's Old Fort site. This is the most heavily traveled transcontinental auto

route in this region. It is highly desirable that on this road, opposite Bent's Old Fort, there be a vista across the Arkansas to the fort site and then the place be identified and advertised by historical markers on the highway. It happens that a vista is fairly well open at this point now, and obvious to one on the north side of the river at Bent's Old Fort site. But there is nothing on the south side on U.S. 50 to tell the traveler, even though he is doing his best to determine when he is opposite the fort site, when he has arrived at the point. There should be a pullout, with a good sign system in advance, both directions, telling the traveler of it, with a roadside exhibit showing clearly how to get to the site itself and giving sufficient information about the place to excite interest. The interest in this area in Colorado should assure the cooperation of the State Highway Department and the State Historical Society in accomplishing this.

#### Superintendent's View

Superintendent Featherstone and his staff strongly support the plan to reconstruct the fort. The Superintendent's letter of September 8 to the Committee on this subject is Appendix C of this report. Park Historian Dwight E. Stinson's digest of administrative planning action up to the present is included as Appendix D. It constitutes a useful reference document for anyone reviewing this subject.

## FORT UNION NATIONAL MONUMENT

There are no current problems at Fort Union in planning, development, interpretation, or otherwise, that the Committee is expected to report on. Its visit to Fort Union was for the purpose, primarily, of viewing comparative values with the other western military forts. The Committee did take the self-guiding tour, examined the ruins stabilization, inspected the museum and the artifact storage room, and discussed the area with Superintendent Homer Hastings and Park Historian Dale Giese.

The Committee has only complimentary remarks about the management and appearance of the area. It is a credit to the Service and is one of the most successfully displayed areas in the System. Interpretation is not only effective but of a high standard. There are a few minor exceptions to this remark in the museum exhibits. More will be said on this. Maintenance is of a high order, and as a part of this it was noted that care was being taken to keep this work, which never ends, and the equipment to do it, inconspicuous. Specific brief mention may be in order on the following items:

1. The ruins stabilization work seems to have been sound. The methods applied have proven themselves, and this is a credit to the stabilization experts of the Southwest Regional Office and the Globe Archeological Center. The technique

apparently will apply to Fort Bowie, where conditions are similar to some of those found at Fort Union.

2. The trailside informational and interpretive markers and exhibits are good. The new metal-photo historical markers at ruins are excellent. The bird guard (a fine piano-type wire, almost invisible, placed above the panel, which is on a slant) seems entirely effective in preventing birds from perching on the exhibits and soiling them with droppings. The Committee did not see a single instance of a soiled marker. The Committee recommends that the Fort Union marker-exhibit system be copied for other areas.

3. The self guiding trail at Fort Union is 1.41 miles in length. It appeared that most persons who start on the trail finish it. If the spur from the main trail to the Santa Fe Trail and its exhibit is omitted, the trail is 1.3 miles long. This is a very fine foot trail, following historic walks of the fort, and has interesting exhibits at frequent intervals. A trail pamphlet is provided.

4. Some modifications are being made in the museum exhibits, in art work that was improper in subject matter. Artist Nick Eggenhofer of Cody, Wyoming, is under contract for some of the replacements. He is well known as an artist of western subjects, and his work should be an important asset to the museum. Some bad art work apparently will remain.

5. The Committee met Mr. E. E. Manney, President of Manco Films, P. O. Box 10188, Fort Worth 14, Texas, who was visiting the fort. He has been making a 16mm color film on the fort and its story. The Committee thought the film effort amateurish and not of a standard that the Service would want to endorse. The Superintendent and park historian appear briefly in the film. There is a question involved as to whether park personnel should take parts in such films, as their participation may seem to give Service endorsement. As a policy matter, this may need some thought, and possibly instructions to the Regional and park staffs. In this instance, Mr. Manney is entirely well meaning and wholly wrapped up in the Fort Union story.

#### Committee Recommendations

A few recommendations for future developments follow:

1. The museum-administration building needs a multi-purpose assembly room. This is needed for an audiovisual program. It is also needed for multi-purpose assembly uses, including staff training, community--park discussion groups. It could be a wing on the present building, and should have a seating capacity of 100-125.
2. In line with the above recommendation, a 10-12 minute park orientation film, devoted to the Fort Union story, should be prepared.



3. Thought should be given to expanding the present fine small museum exhibits to include subjects presently omitted. It was pointed out when the building was erected and the exhibits installed that they should be considered temporary, and that expansion would be in order after research and the fort story was better known. A new prospectus, based on this expanded knowledge of the fort and its importance, should be scheduled for preparation, with special reference to the gaps to be filled.

4. There should be provision for the public display of at least part of the fine collection of original material relating to Fort Union that is now locked away in a storage room. No one benefits from such a policy and arrangement. Two members of the Committee, Gregg and Appleman, are strongly in favor of display of original objects and material. For large items, such as wagons, this should be in a special outdoor display area, possibly under a kind of overhang or open-air shed roofed over, but with sides that could be open at least in the summer. It should be adjacent to or a component of the visitor center, as at Homestead National Monument. The Committee agreed that there should not be a placing of such items throughout the fort at places where they might be considered as relating to building ruins. Example would be wagons at the quartermaster corral or repair shops. This would result in a cluttering of the now admirably

stabilized ruins and detract from the effective overall appearance of the great fort in ruins, yet one that has unity and clean-cut lines of building presentation.

5. The prominent aluminum water tower at the northeast corner of the area is the most intrusive single feature in the general landscape picture, constituting an objectionable foreign element in the picture of wide-open spaces. The Committee recommends that it be camouflaged. An adobe wall that encircled the tower would not be difficult or expensive to build and would effectively blot out this shiny, new, and modern eyesore from the fine western landscape. Until this can be done a suitably colored and non-gloss paint job would help. This work probably could be done by the local park staff as a current maintenance item.

6. Enlarge the detached arsenal area, the original fort site on the west side of Coyote Creek, west of the main present area, so that it includes all of the original Fort Union site of 1851-1862, together with the cemetery site and possibly some other related fort activity sites. An entrance road to this site, connecting with the present main area, should be obtained. At the present time, visitors cannot get to this part of the Monument without trespassing on private property; and in fact there is no access to it.

7. One example of misorientation of an important part of a major trailside exhibit was noted--that at the Commanding Officers Quarters. The floor plan was not oriented with the building ruins in front or with the other parts and elements of the exhibit. The fault apparently was in decision of exhibit maker to use arbitrary layout to fit space.

## FORT BOWIE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Fort Bowie has been authorized as a national historic site, but it has not yet been established. The reason is lagging land acquisition. There is one overriding action that is needed at Fort Bowie--it is decisive action on land acquisition. The reason for this is that until the land has been acquired there can be no ruins stabilization, and unless work is done on this soon there will be nothing left to stabilize. The deterioration of the ruins to heaps of adobe mud and dirt is already far advanced; every passing month sees it go further. Already there is precious little left--far less than at Fort Union, New Mexico. Some areas can wait on development and there is no serious impact on the surviving historical resources; the reverse is true at Bowie, and because of this the Service should muster its energies to solve the Bowie land problem. Unless the land is acquired soon the question may arise--what is there to save and develop?

### The Land Acquisition Problem

The Act of Congress, Public Law 88-510 (78 Stat. 681), 88th Congress, 2d Session, approved August 30, 1964, established a ceiling of not to exceed \$550,000 to purchase and to carry out the development program. The Hearings on the bill indicate that the Service and the Department estimated the cost of acquiring

the 270 acres of privately owned land within the proposed boundaries as approximately \$13,000. The Senate Committee proposed an amendment to the bill to limit expenditure for land acquisition to \$15,000, but this was not included in the Act as finally passed. The cost of development was placed at \$515,000 by the Service and Departmental Report, with administrative costs about \$26,000.

It is apparent, therefore, that even though the Act does not impose a limitation on expenditure for land acquisition, the sense of the Hearings was that it would be in the neighborhood of \$13,000. The Act does impose a limitation of \$550,000 on total expenditures, which includes an estimated \$515,000 for development. In effect, therefore, there is a limitation on expenditure for land acquisition.

As late as January 1965, the Service in its budget for land acquisition in the 1966 fiscal year used the figure of \$20,500 for land acquisition at Fort Bowie, and the expectation was that the land would be acquired this year. It represents an increase of approximately 50% above the Hearings estimate of the year before. This sum is available for land acquisition this year.

The matter has become critical because the first appraisal received on the Neel and Mosely property to be purchased at Fort Bowie was in the amount of \$172,500 for Neel's 240 acres,

and \$24,000 for Mosely's 30 acres--total \$196,250 for the 270 acres of privately owned land. A glance only is needed to see the ratio increase of this huge sum over \$13,000 and \$20,250. If by any stretch of the imagination the Act could be interpreted, in the light of its language and the testimony at the Hearings, to warrant purchasing the land at that figure, then the limitation of \$550,000 would not permit development.

Mr. Appleman has discussed this entire matter in some detail several times, both before the Committee made its trip and after its return, with members of the Lands Division, WASO. It is their opinion as well as that of Mr. H. G. Smith of the Programs Branch that the land cannot be bought at any such figure without going back to the Committees of Congress and laying the matter before them. Before doing this, the Lands Division desires to obtain a second appraisal to match against the first one of \$196,250. At this writing the Southwest Regional Office has not obtained the second appraisal. When this data is in hand, the Director will have to decide how he wants to handle the matter, and whether to go to the Congressional Committees.

The Committee has urged at all levels of its discussions; in the Region, with the coordinating Superintendent (Ray Ringenbach at Chiricahua), and the Lands Division and Programs Branch, WASO,

that action be taken on this matter, and if necessary that the Director take the matter to the Committees of Congress for whatever authority is needed to proceed at once with land acquisition.

The Committee spent a day walking over the Fort Bowie area, examining the ruins, and noting prospective development sites as set forth in the Southwest Region's Master Plan Brief for Fort Bowie National Historic Site, which was recommended by Regional Director Beard on June 9, 1965. This document had *not* been received in WASO for review at the time the Committee made its trip, but members did have the chance to read it before the area visit. The following comments on proposed developments relate to the proposals set forth in the Master Plan Brief, dated May 1965. Regional Historian William E. Brown of the Southwest Regional Office was present with the Committee throughout its study of Fort Bowie. Superintendent Ray Ringenbach of Chiricahua National Monument, who has been acting as a coordinating superintendent or National Park Service representative concerning Fort Bowie matters in the field, was present at Fort Bowie with the Committee part of the time. The following day a detailed discussion of Fort Bowie matters was held in his office at Chiricahua National Monument.

## Master Plan Brief Proposed Development

The Committee found the Master Plan Brief an interesting and imaginative document, and concurred in many of its basic proposals for developing and interpreting the area. In several instances, however, the Committee has felt it necessary to suggest modifications or substitutions. The basic development proposals will be segregated and discussed separately as far as possible.

One general observation might be made of the terrain and location of all proposed facilities at Fort Bowie. The landscape in Apache Pass is extremely rough and broken, with steep ridges and gullies predominating. This condition means that nearly all the level or semi-level land in the historic area was built on or used for some feature of the fort period, and therefore it cannot be used now for facilities without being on and impairing historic sites and features of the area, or of being so immediately close to them that the intrusive factor is very great. This means that development features will of necessity have to be concerned with and relate to rough and hostile terrain.

### Location of Visitor Center

The Master Plan Brief locates the proposed visitor center on the reverse or back slope of what is called Overlook Ridge. This is a rocky, mountain spur northwest of the Fort Bowie ruins, and



overlooks the site. The ridge drops to an ever lower elevation as it descends toward its eastern extremity. It ends north of the fort area at only a slightly higher elevation than that of the fort area itself. It might be said that the fort was built on land of varying elevation and in part on lower slopes of surrounding ridge lines. The fort was built in an uneven bowl amidst the Chiricahuas. As Overlook Ridge increases in elevation to the west, it peaks out in a high point that overlooks much of the historic scene of Apache Pass, Siphon Canyon to the north, Fort Bowie to the southeast, and the jumble of broken hills within which Apache Pass lies and breaks out westward to its exit into Sulphur Spring Valley.

As located in the Master Plan Brief, the visitor center on the north slope of Overlook Ridge, near its base, is out of sight from Fort Bowie. A lift or elevator arrangement is proposed to take visitors to the crest of the ridgeline above the visitor center for an overlook of the fort ruins below to the southeast. This point would be perhaps 150 feet above the general level of the fort site (a good topo map of the area is not available, and this figure must be considered only approximate).

The Committee unanimously considers this high overlook, reached by a lift arrangement, not feasible, and also possibly one that many visitors would not want to use in any event. The Committee

also is of the opinion that the distance from this overlook and visitor center to the fort area, about 1,200 feet, is greater than desirable and necessary, with a steep grade involved. The cost of the visitor center with an elevator or lift arrangement would be considerable at the proposed location. The Committee recommends against it.

As a substitute location, the Committee recommends that the visitor center be moved eastward on the north side of Overlook Ridge several hundred feet to a point about 500-600 feet from the fort site. There it could still be hidden behind the low nose of the ridge at a level or semi-level place that offers a reasonably good building site. From here the distance is shorter to the fort area, the elevation is only slightly different from that of the fort area and a good trail to it could easily be built. Visitor comfort would be greatly increased. The adjacent nose of the ridge is still high enough above the fort area to provide an overlook effect. A viewing area or platform on the low ridge crest could be connected by a short walk or terrace as an integrated feature of the visitor center complex, as the starting point of the trail to the fort area.

#### Visitor Parking

This would be behind, or north of, the visitor center at the northern base of Overlook Ridge, and out of sight from the fort area.

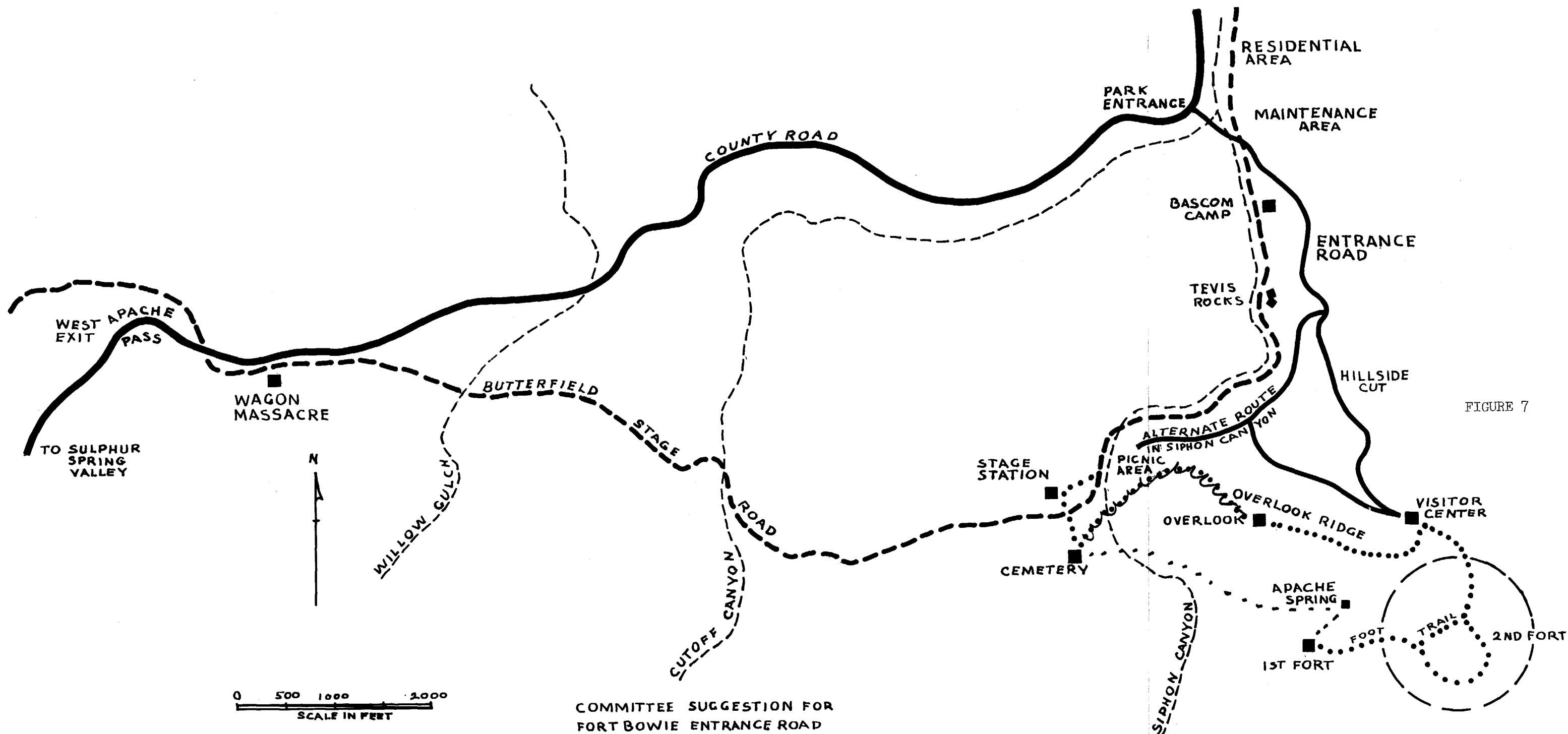


FIGURE 7

COMMITTEE SUGGESTION FOR  
 FORT BOWIE ENTRANCE ROAD  
 VISITOR CENTER, RESIDENTIAL  
 AND MAINTENANCE AREAS.

# FORT BOWIE

### Entrance Road

Here a major difference develops between the views of the Committee and the entrance road proposed in the Master Plan Brief. The Master Plan Brief map, NHS-BOW, 3001 (page 20 of Brief), shows the entrance road leaving the county road just north of Cutoff Canyon about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles in a direct line northwest of the fort, crossing Siphon Canyon about 1,000 feet north of the Butterfield Stage House site, and then climbing to a narrow pass of a spur ridge that runs at right angles to Overlook Ridge, then dropping down behind, or north of, Overlook Ridge to the proposed visitor center site. The grade difficulties of this proposed alignment would be considerable after the road crossed Siphon Canyon.

This access-entrance road would cross the Butterfield Stage route and be an intrusion on this aspect of the historical values of the area. Such a road would make a glaring scar in the scene lying westerly from the overlook point at the west end of Overlook Ridge. It also has intrusive effect generally on this part of Apache Pass. The Committee believes this area can be kept in its natural condition by selecting another road location which it favors.

The Committee recommends that the entrance road leave the county road at the mouth of Siphon Canyon to the north-northwest of the

fort, follow up the canyon on its east side but away from the stream bed and at the foot of the flanking ridge and, after passing the sites of the Bascom-Cochise encounter and Tevis Rocks, start a climb along the west face of the mountain on that side (the east side) of Siphon Canyon. It could be "Garden Wall" type of road with an even or constant grade to the saddle between this mountain and the Overlook Ridge. It would cross the same saddle as the access road suggested in the Master Plan Brief, and then drop gently down the north slope of Overlook Ridge to the proposed visitor center parking area site.

The road, so located, would be adjacent to but not on historic ground in the sense that it would not cross or infringe closely on any historic feature. It would be entirely out of sight from the fort area, would be near and command views of the eastern leg of the Butterfield Stage route which ran up Siphon Canyon. It would pass immediately adjacent to the Bascom campsite on the east side of Siphon Canyon, making possible roadside interpretation of this important site where the Bascom-Cochise incident occurred, triggering the 10-year long Cochise Chiricahua war. The length of this road would be about 1 mile, and accordingly is shorter than that shown on the Master Plan Brief. This route should be studied and engineering cost figures developed for comparison with those of the Master Plan road proposed.

While all the Committee members favor an access road ascending Siphon Canyon from its mouth, Raymond Gregg has particularly suggested the "Garden Wall" type of road climbing along the side of the mountain to the saddle. The other Committee members are ready enough to subscribe to this if engineers find it acceptable as the best way to get the road over to the north side of Overlook Ridge. They would not object, however, to a road that held to the side of the canyon and near the canyon floor so long as it did not occupy the site of the Butterfield Stage Road and did not directly traverse or damage the site of the Bascom camp, but kept to the uphill side of it.

This proposed access road location is related to another Committee recommendation--the residence area. This could be located at the mouth of Siphon Canyon where the park road would leave the county road. There would be a far better building site there than that shown on the Master Plan Brief, it would not be intrusive on the fort historical area, water would most likely be more available, and it would not be as isolated.

A sketch map indicates the general location of access road, residence and maintenance areas, visitor center and parking areas as recommended by the Committee.

#### Housing

In the preceding section the Committee has indicated its views on a location for a residence area, favoring a site at the mouth

of Siphon Canyon. The residence area shown on the Master Plan Brief is about 250-400 feet northeast of the main fort area in a little pocket along the ravine that drains down from the saddle between Overlook Ridge and the adjoining spur. It is a cramped site, and intrusively close to the fort area. While it may be argued theoretically that the residence site here would be hidden and could be screened from the fort site, this is considered questionable by the Committee because of both terrain and bioclimatic considerations. It is very close to the fort, and visitors are likely to find their way into it if they go exploring at all. The presence of children, families, and all that goes with such residences so close to the fort area is likely to result in a deplorable intrusive factor. And there is no question that a prominently visible residence area as located on the Plan would be seen by all visitors from the visitor center. In fact, it would be very close to the visitor center parking area, and thus even more undesirable. From the trail to the vista point on Overlook Ridge the residence area would be especially conspicuous. Only the most compelling circumstances, and the complete lack of any substitute site elsewhere, could justify placing the residential area here, in the Committee's view. Other sites are available. The Committee unanimously, therefore, recommends against the residential area near the fort as shown on the Master Plan Brief.

While the Committee's preference for location of a residence area has been stated above, this depends on the extension of the boundaries to the mouth of Siphon Canyon. If for any reason this cannot be done and the boundaries must remain where they are presently drawn, and the approach road remain where it is shown, then a residential area site might be considered near the point where the approach road would leave the county road. This would be far better than the location adjacent to the fort shown on the Master Plan Brief, and would not be intrusive on the fort area itself. But the Committee considers that alternative location inferior to the recommended site at the mouth of Siphon Canyon.

#### Need for Boundary Revision

The Committee's recommendation on the park access road to come up the side of Siphon Canyon, with the residential area at the mouth of the canyon, will make necessary, if they are adopted as planning proposals, a change in the park boundaries. The present boundary proposal extends down Siphon Canyon to include the Bascom-Cochise site. It should go 1,500-2,000 feet farther down the canyon to the north to reach its mouth, where the access road would leave the county road and the residential area could be placed. An additional strip of land, not extensive, would be required on the east side of the Siphon Canyon along



the slope to allow the building of the access road so as to reach the saddle on the best possible alignment and grade.

Of these proposed additions, only the land at the mouth of Siphon Canyon might have an appreciable value. Perhaps the relatively small amount of land needed here could be obtained by exchange of BLM land with Mr. Mosely, the owner. We should think this adjustment should not be difficult to effect as the land involved does not have any developments and is rough mountain-desert terrain, with vegetation of low density and forage value. This proposed extension of the eastern boundary also has the advantage, historically, of obtaining the eastern entrance to Apache Pass from the San Simeon Valley, and would offer interpretive advantages. It does provide the natural and best access road to the area.

There is also the need to obtain a slight extension of the park boundaries at the west end of Apache Pass, as the present boundary does not include the western portion of the pass. Here again, the extension westward would not need to be more than about 1,000-1,500 feet. This is important to give scenic control of the Sulphur Spring Valley, the Dragoon Mountains westward, and to include physical remains of the old Butterfield Stage Road.

In the Pass the Butterfield Stage road track is located about 300 feet north of the pipeline slash north of the county road at the west end of the Pass. It then passes to the right of a knob of ground to the west. The Butterfield Stage Route can be traced without any difficulty all the way from the Wagon Massacre site near the west end of the Pass on to the western exit, as Gregg and Appleman actually did on the ground.

#### Maintenance Area

This area should be located near the mouth of Siphon Canyon, close to but separated suitably from the Residential area.

#### Butterfield Stage House and Corral

The stone ruins of the Butterfield Stage Station, closely identified with the Bascom-Cochise incident and its aftermath that brought on the Cochise war, is an historic site of great importance in the general story of Fort Bowie and of Apache Pass. It is now in the form of a low mass of stone in a rough rectangular shape, set in a copse of scrub oak and other desert growth at the western side of the rincon that forms around the upper part of Siphon Canyon. It is approximately 3,000 feet, or a little more than half a mile, west-northwest of Apache Spring. It is on level ground. It should receive major trailside interpretation. Its present appearance should be retained, as a stabilized ruin, with a certain amount of cleanup in its vicinity.

A park spur road could come to the point marked in the Master Plan Brief for a lunch area from the point where the access road, as recommended by the Committee, turns east to cross the saddle to the visitor center site. From the lunch area a foot trail would lead along the general alignment of the Butterfield Road to the Stage House. This would be a distance of about 1,000 feet. A foot trail would also connect the Stage House ruins with the fort area, Apache Spring, and the Cemetery. The latter is about 700 feet south-southeast of it.

#### Trail System

The Master Plan Brief contemplates a trail system that will connect points of historical interest along the Butterfield Stage route with the 1st and 2d fort sites and Apache Spring. This trail system is a valid project, and should be retained in any scheme of development that is eventually adopted, modified only as necessary to tie in with the park road system, visitor center location, and roadside stops.

The trail system should include foot trails that will go from the fort area and the visitor center to the top of Overlook Ridge; from the 2d fort site (the principal ruins remaining) to the 1st fort site; and on to Apache Springs, the post cemetery, the Stage House site, and from there along the route of the

Butterfield Stage line to both the eastern and western exits of the pass. On the eastern leg of the trail, the site of the Bascom-Cochise incident will be a major stop. Tevis' Rocks will also be a feature, as well as several well preserved sections of the Butterfield Stage road on the edge of Siphon Canyon. These sites could also be roadside interpretive stops if the entrance road should be located as recommended by the Committee. The eastern entrance of Siphon Canyon, if this land can be acquired, would be an important scenic-historic feature, and of course be a feature on the entrance road as proposed above.

The western leg of the trail from the Butterfield Stage House site would pass several well preserved and interesting historic features of the Butterfield Stage Road, including a walled section against the hillside, and the stone bridge abutments where the Butterfield Road crossed Willow Gulch. There Cochise had removed most of the flooring and had planned to wreck the eastbound stage the night after the incident at Bascom's camp. Farther on is the Wagon Massacre site, and then the western exit from the pass.

#### Stabilization of Ruins and Cleanup of Fort Site

There has already been prepared by Gordon Vivian and his associates of the Globe Archeological Center a comprehensive study of the ruins stabilization program needed at Fort Bowie. A catalogue of

building sites has been prepared and most of the features in the fort area identified by location. There is to be no restoration or reconstruction. In general, the treatment of Fort Bowie will be similar to that carried out at Fort Union in New Mexico.

Here the problem may be even more difficult because the disintegration of the ruins has proceeded further than at Fort Union. A 3-year program of ruins stabilization has been projected at a cost of about \$90,000, or \$30,000 a year. The 1967 F.Y. program carries \$17,000 for ruins stabilization work at Fort Bowie, but actually doing it depends upon land acquisition. In any event, ruins stabilization will be in good hands with supervision being given by the Globe Archeological Center.

There was a difference of opinion among the Committee as to the extent of cleanup of scrub oak and other low growth that has developed all over the fort area, in many places obscuring or even hiding ruins. Appleman was of the opinion that the cleanup should be complete, with all growth removed, in the manner of the treatment at Fort Union. There was general opposition to this viewpoint from the other members of the Committee, most of them favoring the retention of a considerable amount of the growth. They thought it would lend atmosphere and a touch of abandoned wild ruins to the scene. Regional Historian Bill Brown from the

Southwest Office and Coordinating Superintendent Ray Ringenbach joined in this view.

Appleman commented that most of the growth would have to be removed, he believed, in the course of the ruins stabilization work, and that the retention of growth in many places would endanger stabilization of walls. The ultimate decision on this, it was understood, would necessarily rest in large part on the ruins stabilization work, and that if approved stabilization practice in any instance called for the removal of growth, then it should be removed.

The Committee agreed on the unique appeal of the whole Apache Pass complex-- its utter wildness and remoteness from modern life--and its resource capability of taking one back a hundred years to the desert frontier of Apache land. It believes the area has potentials for a type of development and appeal that no other Service area will ever have, that its development must be carefully planned to minimize intrusive elements, yet make the facilities needed for visitor use and appreciation of the place practicable in terms of location and accessibility.

## FORT DAVIS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

The major problem confronting the Committee in its review of the Fort Davis development and interpretive programs was the Director's decision to have a review of the area's total program for the restoration, reconstruction, and furnishing of historic buildings, and to await the Committee's report before approving the 1967 F.Y. program for rehabilitation of historic structures.

The Committee went over the current rehabilitation program, and that projected for the next 3 fiscal years, with Superintendent Franklin G. Smith. Park Historian Jerry L. Rogers was present during the area and buildings inspection. Regional Historian William E. Brown was present throughout.

### The Rehabilitation Program

The rehabilitation of historic structures at Fort Davis is progressing very satisfactorily, and according to plan. This involves a pattern of roofing all structures to be preserved and of placing porches on the row of officers quarters facing the parade ground, and other buildings that had them originally. The current 1965 and 1966 work has already given a favorable appearance to the Fort, and provides clear indication that a strong program of preservation and rehabilitation of historic structures is in progress. The Committee is pleased to report

a favorable reaction to this work. Except as noted below, it recommends that the rehabilitation of historic structures program continue without interruption in the 1967 and 1968 fiscal years.

Thus far, this program has been a strong and impressive one, and it should not be allowed to lag.

#### Visitor Center -- A Reconstruction

The visitor center is to be located in the northern half of the Cavalry Barracks at the southeastern corner of the Parade Ground. This Barracks is being reconstructed to give an exterior historic appearance, with the interior adapted to visitor center purposes and administrative office space. Work on it is well advanced. The visitor center parking will be immediately to the southeast of the building. It would have been logical to have had the visitor center in the southern part of this reconstructed building, which would be adjacent to the parking, but this space has been given over to administration offices; the northern part, more remote from the parking, is to be the visitor center.

Three members of the Committee, Bierly, Gregg, and Appleman, consider this arrangement all but incomprehensible as it would seem to have been far preferable to have brought the visitors directly from the parking into the visitor center. This would



have served as the door to the fort if the visitor center had been placed in that part of the building nearest to the parking area, and at the southeast corner of the fort. The visitor center then would have been the gateway. As it is, visitors have to pass and go around it, and somehow get to the next part to reach the visitor center. In the process of doing this the possibility exists that they may wander off over the fort area which they have already entered. Bierly, Gregg, and Appleman feel strongly that a mistake was made here, and that the administrative office section should have been where the visitor center is located and the visitor center where the administrative offices are situated. But furring and other interior arrangements have proceeded so far that to change the two parts about seemed impractical.

One feature is being added to the visitor center that had not been in the plan for the building--an audiovisual room. This is in the wing that projects to the back, or east. This, the Committee was informed, had been added through consultations by former Superintendent Becker with WODC and the SW Regional Office. It will seat about 75-80 persons with comfort, it is estimated. Physical conditions probably would permit future enlargement by relocation of storage functions now being installed in adjacent space. Although unplanned for in the formal prospectus, the Committee considers this feature a highly justified and useful addition to the visitor center.

## Museum Exhibits

Both Bierly and Wagers feel strongly that the museum exhibits under construction at the Western Museum Laboratory do not represent the best trend in modern museum interpretation, and were hopeful that they could obtain a stay on their preparation and a restudy of the exhibit plan in order to effect important changes. But, after learning of the advanced state of construction on the building to accommodate the previously approved exhibits, and that contracts had been let for special equipment relating to some features of the exhibits, they decided not to recommend a restudy.

They feel, however, that the museum exhibits will be weak and uninteresting. Their principal criticism is against the type of wall panels and exhibit cases, with long labels, that characterize many of the exhibit units. They would have preferred to see few exhibits, and to have had an audiovisual show that would have carried the main burden of the Fort Davis interpretive story. Bierly and Wagers feel that the Historical Handbook and the museum exhibits are repetitive of each other and try to tell the story the same way, and that this is not good planning.

Appleman, with concurrence in principle by Gregg, does not share these views as to repetition, as he thinks repetition of the main theme of any area story should be an objective in all the media used. In some repetition the main theme story is most likely to

get across to the greatest number of people. Appleman and Gregg, therefore, do not agree with Bierly and Wagers in this aspect of their criticism. This is not to say that they feel the present museum exhibit prospectus could not be improved. And they, too, believe that an audiovisual program will strengthen the overall interpretive program. Their main point is that each medium serves a varying portion of the visitor audience at different times, and in different character and psychology.

Wagers states the viewpoint of himself and Bierly in the following comment:

There is an extreme need to reevaluate the interpretive needs of the area and critically reexamine how all media might be employed to develop a stronger and certainly better coordinated interpretive effort. This thinking must be reflected in a revised prospectus.

All members of the Committee agree that the park should take steps as soon as possible to prepare a plan or document for an audiovisual program that can be carried into effect as a part of the Park interpretive program, now that the visitor center will have the facility for it.

The Committee as a whole did not agree that an entirely new interpretive prospectus is needed at this point. After an AV program has been installed, the interpretive program then should

be reevaluated on the basis of visitor reactions to determine if any changes are desirable and necessary.

#### Reconstruction-Restoration and Furnishing

Two historic structures are being restored and will be furnished. They are the Commanding Officer's Quarters in Officer Row and the Squad Room of the Cavalry Barracks north of the visitor center, in Building 23. The Committee agrees with this program. The Committee recommends one change in connection with the furnished squad room--that the Orderly Room, a very small ante-room to the Squad Room, also be furnished instead of having exhibits as proposed in the present plan. The remainder of this barracks building will be stabilized and not reconstructed.

#### Proposal to Reconstruct and Furnish part of Quartermaster Corral

Superintendent Smith made a strong case for an item not presently included in an approved program, the reconstruction and furnishing of part of the Quartermaster Corral complex of structures. This would be the row of shops--wagon repair and wheelwright, blacksmith, and related necessary repair facilities--that kept the fort activities and trail traffic a going concern. This structure (its ruins still stand in the form of low walls) was located east of the barracks row on the east side of the San Antonio-El Paso Road. It can be a focal point to tell much of the story of

that road and its traffic, which was an important factor in the establishment of Fort Davis. This road passed through the center of the fort, literally, and its presence is worthy of emphasis and interpretation.

The Committee concurs with this proposal and recommends that it be added to the reconstruction and furnishing program already approved. It would not be repetitive of any reconstruction or furnishing activity already included in the program, and would add important interpretive features to it. Large objects, including perhaps vehicles, could be displayed here.

Proposal to Reconstruct the Cavalry Barracks Building at the Northeast Corner of the Parade Grounds

The Superintendent informed the Committee that at a recent meeting in the area, Regional Director Beard and Chief of WODC Hill joined the Superintendent in believing the barracks building at the northeast corner of the Parade Grounds should be reconstructed. They will recommend it for the 1969 F.Y. program. The main argument seemed to be that it would better delineate the Parade Grounds rectangle. This would involve demolition and removal of the present post-historic period concrete block structure that stands on part of the site.

The Committee agrees that this concrete block structure should be removed as soon as possible. But, it does not concur that this barracks building should be reconstructed. It would be repetitious of other barracks buildings already reconstructed, would be very expensive, particularly if the period tin roof were included in its reconstruction. The Committee believed the dimensions of the Parade Ground rectangle will be sufficiently apparent from the other three corners being filled in with structures. The Quartermaster Corral buildings recommended for reconstruction and furnishing behind, or to the east of, this site will be better viewed and advertised to the visitor if this barracks building is not reconstructed. The Committee, therefore, recommends against including this structure in an approved Fort Davis development plan. Perhaps removal of the superimposed concrete structure will reveal original foundations which can be exhibited.

#### Cavalry Stables Ruins-Walls

The ruins here are now low adobe walls, varying from slightly above ground to perhaps four feet or more in some places. The Superintendent proposes that the walls be built up to a common level of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  or 4 feet, and capped to stabilize the wall ruins much as similar walls have been treated at Fort Union. He thinks this is the best way to preserve what remains of these walls,

and at the same time to give them enough dimension so that they will be readily apparent to the eye. This appears to be clearly within the legislative guidelines for treatment of Fort Davis. This project is new; it is not now in an approved program. After considerable discussion, and an inspection of the ruins on the ground, the Committee concurred that this should be done, and, accordingly, it recommends this project for approval in the 1968 fiscal year program.

#### Stabilization of Hospital Ruins

This building was the subject of extensive discussion on the part of the Committee. It was initially proposed for reconstruction and furnishing as an historic structure by the Park and the Region in the prospectus. This was disallowed in the Washington Office review, and approval was given only for stabilization of this structure. In the discussion of this proposed work, it developed that some of the ruins stabilization work is going beyond stabilization, and is more in the category of reconstruction or restoration. This relates specifically to the roof. The building historically had a tin roof. That is scheduled for replacement. The other buildings nearby in Officers' Row are roofed with shingles. Shingles for the Hospital building would be in keeping with the other fort buildings that have been stabilized, and would accomplish the stabilization purpose.

A tin roof also will carry out the stabilization purpose, but it also constitutes reconstruction of the original. The pertinent fact here for consideration is that the tin roof will cost about \$15,000 more than a shingle roof, according to information given by the Superintendent. The Superintendent and architect Crellin of WODC insist that the roof must be tin because it was that initially. The roof is estimated to cost about \$25,000 in tin; it would be about \$10,000 in shingle, according to the Superintendent Smith. Is it justified? The Committee holds that it is not justified as a stabilization feature. And it cannot be justified as a restoration or reconstruction feature because neither legislative nor Service approval for such was ever given.

#### Principles of Stabilization vs. Reconstruction and Restoration

The above discussion makes clear that either there is an uncertain knowledge of the distinctions between stabilization practices on the one hand and restoration and reconstruction on the other, or there is a failure to make the distinction when there may be a preference for reconstruction of a certain item or feature, as in the case of the tin roof. If the cost of the two were the same or approximately the same, perhaps there would be no special reason to make this a matter of comment at this time. But where



there is an apparent difference of \$15,000 in the cost of a roof for one building, as is the case in the Hospital Building, the Committee thinks it is a matter for comment. If similar practices were carried out in other cases, the overall cost of the ruins stabilization work at Fort Davis might be much greater than otherwise, and be difficult to justify either legally or dollarwise.

It is the Committee's recommendation that all Superintendents and officials engaged in ruins stabilization work, including personnel of the Design and Construction Offices, realize the difference between approval for stabilization and that for reconstruction and restoration. Where there is an appreciable difference in cost between the two, and both will result in equally good stabilization, there should be specific approval by designated authority for restoration or reconstruction of an item, if that is desired. In the case of the Hospital Building, the Committee feels the addition of \$15,000 is not warranted. That amount of money could accomplish considerable if applied to some other phase of the Fort Davis development and interpretive program.

#### Flag Pole

There is an intent to erect a large period flagpole, of the Fort Union type, at Fort Davis, but there apparently is no feeling of

urgency about it. The Superintendent takes the view that ruins stabilization should come first, and in this he is right in theory. Saving the ruins naturally is the first requirement at Fort Davis. The cost of the flagpole and flag is estimated to be \$3,500. This is so small an amount in comparison with the overall ruins stabilization program, that it does not seem sensible to wait upon completion of the ruins stabilization program to erect the flagpole. The flagpole and a large 37-star flag will be a dominant feature of the Fort Davis and Parade Ground scene, and so important from the viewpoint of visitor impact and interpretation that it should be erected at an early date. The Committee recommends that it be erected during the 1966 F.Y. program, if at all possible. If this cannot be done, it should be added to the 1967 F.Y. program. If necessary, the required amount of \$3,500 should be added to the program, or that amount deducted from some item already proposed.

#### Bugle Calls

The Committee heard the bugle calls several times. The calls are played at intervals throughout the day according to what their time of call was in the 1876 schedule of garrison events. They are audible throughout the fort area, except at distant points with a strong wind blowing against the music. The calls are pleasant to hear, and not disturbing. The Committee approves

of this feature. It believes a similar program would be appropriate at Fort Larned, Kansas, and at Fort Laramie, Wyoming. Appleman would include Fort Union, New Mexico. Appleman mentioned that when approval was given for this program it included playing the entire series of calls, in a 15-minute long program, twice a day, once about mid-morning and again in mid-afternoon when good visitation could be expected. The Superintendent and other members of the Committee were opposed to this, and thought it would be out of place. Gregg suggested such a program might be suitable for the audiovisual room.

The Committee did not have the chance to hear the Retreat Ceremony recording, as the necessary amplifying equipment had not been installed. Most of the Committee, however, had auditioned the Retreat Ceremony recording previously at other places. They were by no means certain that it would be a desirable feature at Fort Davis, and perhaps not elsewhere. Accordingly, the Committee withholds comment on it.

#### Artifacts

Fort Davis, like the other western military forts, has a big collection of objects and military items that have been donated or collected from the area by archeological or other procedures. A temporary exhibit of some of these items has already been installed, and in the opinion of some of the Committee is effective.

Here again, one comes up against the fact that there is no Service-wide plan for the use and display of this important and interesting body of material. In fact, there is at work an opposite tendency--not to display it as being dull and uninformative. Appleman and Gregg take issue with this viewpoint, and suggest that this material is one of the most important interpretive assets the parks have. They feel that every visitor center and interpretive program in the western fort areas should make special provision for the display of a considerable number of the better pieces of these collections. They are original materials. And it is a known fact that for many persons such material has a subjective interpretation that nothing else can have.

Chief of Museum Operations Branch Ralph Lewis has suggested that a central repository for the western military forts' collection of artifacts should be established. It would afford a central place for research in the material. He expects to discuss this subject at a meeting in the autumn of 1965. The Committee found in broaching the subject of a central repository that the several Park Superintendents and their staffs feel that most of their collections should remain in the parks to which they specifically relate. If this is to be done, then some method must be devised to make better use of them than has been done to date, particularly with respect to their availability to the public and their use as interpretive media.

FORT SMITH NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

The basic problem concerning the development of this area derives from the Director's review of the 1967 fiscal year program. This review has questioned the desirability of constructing a new visitor center, as proposed in the Park Master Plan Package and assumed in the Interpretive Prospectus. The Director's review has led to the suggestion that instead of a new visitor center, space in the existing Barracks Building could be adapted to visitor center uses, and possibly also park administration offices. The feasibility of putting an elevator in the building was to be studied. This basic question of a visitor center was central to the Committee's study at the park.

A recent Southeast Regional Office management team study has suggested that the site of the First Fort, the Belle Point area, not be developed for public visitation. This is a subject that was considered by the Committee and will be commented on.

A third important factor which bears on all other problems and aspects of development, temporary or permanent, is the inability of the park to acquire the Coca Cola Bottling Plant property because of the high evaluation placed on it by the owners. Until this key tract is acquired, permanent development as contemplated in the approved Master Plan Package cannot proceed.

The Fort Smith Interpretive Prospectus, submitted in May 1965, has been reviewed in the Washington Office, but approval withheld pending the submission and study of this report.

The Committee discussed all the above problems and related matters of park development with Superintendent Charles L. Peterson and Park Historian James N. Haskett in some detail, and examined the buildings and sites with them. The more important aspects of the park problems will be discussed below under separate headings.

Land Acquisition: Coca Cola Tract

The Service and Departmental Report on the Fort Smith bill before Congressional Committees estimated land acquisition costs at \$319,000. That sum was written into the legislation (75 Stat. 489, approved September 13, 1961), as a limitation on land acquisition costs. The Service finds itself now in a situation where its land acquisition funds have been expended except for \$900 without having acquired the most costly tract needed to round out the authorized boundary. This is the Coca Cola Bottling Company tract east of the railroad cut, owned by the Meek family. There is still about \$75,000 within the limitation that was transferred for land purchase in another area. So actually a sum of approximately that amount could

still be appropriated for land acquisition at Fort Smith and be within the legislative limitation. Beyond that figure new Congressional authority would be needed.

There has been an inability to reach a firm appraised evaluation of the property in question, but all appraisals, estimates, and asking price figures seem very high, and all are unattainable without further Congressional authorization. A few citations will illustrate the problem and dilemma. An early estimate made by a Coca Cola Company representative from Atlanta placed the cost of the establishment at \$190,000. But this did not represent the viewpoint of the owner. In a memorandum of July 16, 1965, Assistant Regional Director E. M. Lisle, Southeast Regional Office, quoted an appraisal by W. E. Donham giving a value of \$470,101 for the site and equipment in the plant owned by the Meek heirs, with a cost of \$70,556 to move the equipment to a new location. This produces a total estimate of \$540,657 for the Coca Cola plant.

According to Park Historian Haskett, the Meek heirs asked \$750,000 in the fall of 1964 for the site and plant. But a Southeast Regional Office memo of October 30, 1964 to the Director gave the sum of \$550,000 as the proffered sale price, plus salvage rights. Former Superintendent Tom Norris has stated that the figure of \$425,000 was proposed reluctantly by the Meek family as the sale price in October 1964, but was never confirmed in writing.

It all adds up to the fact that there may be no firm figure at the present time which represents the owner's current asking price, that there is no complete and current appraisal evaluation, and no clear idea of what acquisition of the Coca Cola property will cost. It is apparent, however, that it will run into several hundred thousands of dollars. There is only \$900 available to the Service as a carry over from the 1965 land acquisition funds, and about \$75,000 remaining within the authorization. It would seem that Congressional authorization must be sought to lift the ceiling of \$319,000 on total land acquisition before anything can be done toward settling the land problem at Fort Smith. If the Congress will grant such authority, the Service needs the capability of posting a fair appraisal value with a condemnation suit and declaration of taking, and the authority to pay whatever price is established by the Court.

The Committee recommends that a firm appraisal be obtained on the property without further delay, without, or together with a firm offer-to-sell figure from the owners, and that on the basis of this information sufficiently flexible legislation be sought authorizing the purchase. Until the Coca Cola property is added to the park, the permanent development cannot be carried out.

#### Visitor Center

After a careful consideration of the alternatives, the Committee unanimously agreed that a new visitor center designed for the



purpose is needed at Fort Smith, that none of the existing buildings can be converted successfully to such use. Three members of the Committee concurred in the location as placed on the current Master Plan. Appleman felt that a better location would be on Belle Point, overlooking the junction of the Poteau and Arkansas Rivers.

The Director and others have made the suggestion that the Barracks Building, which is serving as the present temporary visitor center, might be adapted to permanent visitor center purposes, or the Jail adjunct be converted to that purpose. In connection with this proposal, the Director asked that the feasibility of putting an elevator in the building so that the upper floor could be used more efficiently be studied. The Committee considered this possibility among many, and unanimously recommends against it.

The Committee feels that the original barracks building should be restored exteriorally, and the Judge Parker courtroom and offices inside restored as historic exhibits. It is now known that the wing, which is commonly called the jail, was built during Parker's regime during the 1880's. It is the Committee's thought that this wing should have exterior restoration as a jail. It might eventually be used for storage, if that is needed.

This structure could not be used for either visitor center or administrative offices if it is to retain its historic outer appearance, because it has only two narrow doors, and no windows on the end. The earlier plan to demolish this wing is hardly warranted now in view of the discovery that it is an historic structure built in 1887-1888 by Judge Parker for use in his administration of law and order, and that it was in use as a jail in March 1888. Gregg made the suggestion that steel deck storage could be placed interiorally, comparable to the jail interior division, which was structurally independent of the building walls.

The Committee, while expressing its general views as stated above on the Barracks Building and the jail wing, recommends that no final administrative decision be made on these structures until the usual procedure for historic structures has been complied with.

This means the submission and review of the Historic Structures Reports, Parts I and II. Part I for the Barracks Building has been submitted, but Part II has not yet been submitted. The latter is the critical one, on which decision is made as to treatment to be accorded a given historic structure.

The Committee believes a permanent visitor center cannot or should not be built until the Coca Cola property has been acquired. Until that time, the present temporary visitor center facilities

should be continued in the Barracks Building. Administrative offices should also be continued on the same basis.

Of the Committee, only Appleman did not think the proposed location of the visitor center the best for visitor use of the park. He thinks the visitor center should be located on Belle Point, south of the site of the first or original fort, with parking immediately adjacent at the south edge of the Belle Point tract. His reasons for his view are that this is the most spacious area of the historic site and affords the most advantageous location and arrangement for a visitor center building and parking, that it gets visitors to the most pleasing part of the area--to the fine overlook of the Arkansas River and the Oklahoma bank opposite, the Indian Territory of earlier days--and immediately adjacent to the site of the first fort. There the reasons for the site's importance can be demonstrated and interpreted--it is the key spot in the park, and location of the visitor center there would assure that visitors would get there. He believes that a grade crossing entrance road across the railroad tracks is feasible and can be as safe as such crossings can be made--that an expensive overpass bridge is not needed. A secondary parking area at the second fort site could be provided for those who wished to park there. This would be west of Third Street and north of Garland Avenue.

### Museum in Old Commissary Building

It is the unanimous recommendation of the Committee that the present museum exhibits in this building, maintained by the Old Fort Museum group of Fort Smith ladies and the local historical association, be moved to other quarters. As composed and displayed they are not appropriate for the National Park Service interpretive program, although there are several objects and items that would be suitable for a Service museum if they were made available.

Raymond Gregg suggested that the local museum be placed in the Frisco Railroad Station after that building becomes excess to the Railroad's needs, as the Committee understood could be the case with the end of passenger service to Fort Smith, effective in September 1965. This station building is almost adjacent to the stone Commissary Building and would be close to, but not under the administration of, the park. The cooperation of the Frisco Railroad would be needed to accomplish this move. This whole matter of the exhibits in the Commissary Building and their future use involves a delicate public relations issue, and can best be handled by the local park Superintendent and staff who know or can ascertain the controlling local sentiment on the matter. Mr. Gregg's present residence in Fort Smith would make his assistance available if he were called upon.

The Service general policy in the matter should be guided, however, by the fact that the local museum should be completely separate from the Federal area. Those objects of greatest significance to the history of Fort Smith probably could not be isolated and secured for the use of the Service apart from the collection as a whole. The goal of the Service should be to get the local museum operation out of the Commissary Building as soon as may be consistent with maintaining good relations in the community.

#### Belle Point

The Committee considers the recommendation of the Southeast Region management Team study that there be no present development and public use of Belle Point as an unwise policy. The Committee feels that Belle Point is fully as important historically as the later second fort area east of the railroad tracks, that it is scenically superior, that access to it and the river overlook is necessary in the interpretation of the area, and that local public opinion will not tolerate placing this part of the area in a stand-by condition for an indefinite future development and use. To act in this direction would be a breach of faith with the chief proponents of the historic site, and the donors of the land.

The history of the City's action in clearing title to this tract and in obtaining it for donation to the Service, the archeological work already done at the site of the first fort, and the expressions of the community leaders of the project at Fort Smith in the Belle Point area from the very beginning indicate their great interest in this area and their assumption that it will be developed and made accessible to the public. In the Senate Committee of Interior and Insular Affairs Report on the bill (H.R. 32) the statement appears that, "The foundations of the original Fort Smith have recently been definitely located and will be uncovered and marked for the benefit of visitors to the area."

In short, the Committee believes the Director and the Service are inviting embarrassment and trouble if they permit the idea to get out that Belle Point and the site of the first fort will not be developed. Aside from this important public relations aspect, the Committee is of the view that Belle Point on its merits should be developed as soon as possible and made accessible.

Accordingly, it recommends that Belle Point be developed concurrently with the second fort site, or even ahead of it if problems of land acquisition at the Coca Cola plant site hold up early permanent development there.

#### Access to the Belle Point Area west of the Railroad Cut

Plans in the past have postulated the need for pedestrian overpass from the second fort area to the Belle Point, across

the railroad cut and tracks of the Missouri Pacific and the Frisco Railroad tracks. The two railroads, the Missouri Pacific on the west side, and the Frisco on the east side of the cut, separate the two parts of the historic site from each other. Two members of the Committee, Bierly and Wagers, think that feasibility studies should be made for an underpass or tunnel under the tracks. The other two members of the Committee, Gregg and Appleman, think that neither an overpass nor an underpass tunnel is needed. They believe that a grade crossing can be made safe, and should be used.

The depth of the railroad cut between the two parts of the fort area varies. In the central section, it is about 8-10 feet below the highest ground level on either side. At the southern end, in the vicinity of Garland Avenue, it is much less and approaches a relatively level crossing. By appropriate grading a crossing can be made where Garland Avenue terminates at the Frisco tracks that will be virtually a level crossing, with good sight distance in both directions. If found desirable, Garland Avenue could be extended as a City street across the tracks to the Belle Point area. The crossing, however, should be at an angle to the southwest from the present street terminus so that it will come into the Belle Point area at its southern part, away from the site of the first fort, especially if it is to be

a vehicular crossing. Here there is ample room for a proper landscaped terminus of the crossing, whether it be a vehicular road or a pedestrian path. There is room here, also, for vehicular parking if that should be desired. Unless demands are too great, parking would not encroach on the first fort site nor on the river overlook, but it would be close to both, a desirable thing. There would be only a very slight upgrade walk from it to the first fort foundations and the river overlook.

The cost of such a grade crossing to Belle Point would be negligible as compared to either an overpass or a tunnel. The figure of \$70,000 has been mentioned as an estimate of the cost of a pedestrian overpass which would have to allow for a 23-foot clearance above the tracks. Appleman and Gregg feel there is immeasurably less danger in a grade crossing at Fort Smith than inviting persons into Yellowstone with the wildlife there, or to take the stairways to the falls overlook at the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, or to cross in the pedestrian lanes from the Lincoln Memorial to the Reflecting Pool in Washington, D. C.

If one will put aside worn-out alarms and shibboleths in the matter of safety and compare the situation of a well designed and marked grade crossing at Fort Smith with everyday practice all over the Nation, practices and cautions that everyone has to exercise in order to live in our society, he will find the



situation at Fort Smith would be less a hazard than is customarily faced daily by most persons in their everyday life.

The Committee received information that soon there will be no more passenger traffic over the Frisco lines, and this presumably will lead to closing its passenger station at Fort Smith.

Freight traffic on both the Frisco and the Missouri Pacific tracks has declined markedly in recent years. And none of the traffic is fast moving. The railroad stations are only a few hundred feet from where the crossing would be. Even now there is only the crawling type of yard traffic one sees in the slow shuttling of a few freight cars back and forth in siding action. Flagmen and trainmen are much in evidence at these times.

Electric warning signals can be installed. Very likely fencing on both sides of the track except at the crossing area would be desirable. With good sight distance, slow moving rail traffic and little of it, there is virtually no danger in the use of a grade crossing given the controls and safety features that can be installed, in light of the conditioned familiarity of Americans to urban traffic conditions of today. Gregg pointed out that for many decades in the heyday of railroads, pedestrians freely and safely crossed between the Frisco and Missouri Pacific stations in far greater numbers than can ever be expected to cross the tracks between the two fort sites.

Even if there was an overpass, the area would be as wide open as it is now, and has been from time immemorial, for anyone, child or adult, to cross the tracks anywhere he will, by clambering down and up banks, and at certain places cross the track nearly on the level. Yet, there appears to have been no problem, and there is no record known to the Committee of a pedestrian or vehicular-train accident here.

Gregg and Appleman recommend, in summary, that a pedestrian grade crossing from the second fort area to the Belle Point area be planned on the most suitable alignment, probably in the vicinity of the present intersection of Third Street and Garland Avenue. (If visitor center and vehicular parking are to be located on Belle Point then this should be vehicular crossing.)

#### The First Fort at Belle Point

The Committee, with the exception of a qualified dissent by Gregg, does not favor the Master Plan and Interpretive Prospectus proposal to rebuild a corner bastion at the First Fort and place exhibits and interpretive devices in it. The Committee feels that to rebuild an isolated bastion in this fashion would be neither fish nor fowl. It is convinced that such a structure could be an eyesore and might fail to accomplish its intended purpose. It is considered better to outline the fort foundations, which have been excavated and located, and leave the area in grass.

One of the Committee suggested that at some time in the future it might be well to consider reconstructing the First Fort. The Committee, however, is not making this recommendation at this time. In any event, the site of the First Fort should not be compromised against any future use by any present conflicting development or construction on Belle Point. Interpretation can be accomplished by low foundation outline, suitable markers and inscription, perhaps a field audio station, by literature, and by exhibits in the visitor center.

#### General

The Committee felt that the staff at Fort Smith is doing a good job in the present trying circumstances. The audiovisual program on Judge Parker that has been installed in the Barracks Building is reasonably good. Some of the exhibits in the restored Courtroom are interesting and authentic. Others need to be checked, since they may be bogus. The outdoor markers are not of a good quality, and should be replaced. Maintenance is good. The Interpretive Prospectus has many excellent features, but probably should not be approved at the present time because of uncertainty about a visitor center. Appleman believes the exhibits proposed in it need to be increased in number and varied from those proposed.

Superintendent Peterson expressed himself as agreeing with the Committee that the Belle Point area should not be put into deep freeze, but should receive current attention in any development program for the park. On most other matters, however, he did not express convictions since he has just recently arrived to assume the superintendency and was still getting acquainted with the problems and their background. He told the Committee he would send it comments on the subjects discussed within two or three weeks, but they have not been received as of the date this report was completed. Otherwise, they would have been mentioned here, and his views included verbatim as an appendix to the report.

\* \* \*

November 10, 1965

APPENDIX A

Fort Laramie National Historic Site  
Fort Laramie, Wyoming 82212

August 26, 1965

Mr. Roy Appleman  
National Park Service  
Interior Building  
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Roy:

It is very kind of you, as well as being downright revolutionary, to want to have a superintendent's views on the Fort Studies.

I believe the Fort Study Team made a sincere and hardworking study here in the brief time you had, and I appreciate the work you put into it.

It should be noted for background information that although this was not a Master Plan Study in the usual sense, we did in one evening and two nervewracking days go over nearly all the ground, ask nearly all of the questions, and question all the hard-won decisions which had been fought out in 4 years of master planning here. During that 4 years two full scale master plan study teams and any amount of individual and staff cogitation had in turn recapitulated the previous 25 years of planning here. In effect, we have a 25 year old Master Plan which has not yet been approved.

1. Location of Visitor Center

a. I understand and appreciate your thought that the land across the Laramie River from Fort John and in sight from the fort grounds should not be profaned by modern construction and intrusions. In the long run it might well be considered as worthwhile to have acquired the land to preserve the scene.

However, since this site has been accepted in the planning for so long a time, departing from the generally agreed on plan will run into strong opposition, especially since we do not have a spectacular and easily saleable alternative.

Other factors are: the logic of the attractive approach from the east and the ready separation of the fort grounds from the non-historic modern facilities proposed; the sheer inertia of the current long-standing proposal; and, of course, the espousal of the present general plan at high levels.

I believe the possible site you showed us here, north and a bit east of the Cavalry Barracks, would not afford enough room for the size of parking area we would eventually need, or for a building actually large enough to meet needs in the near future. It would serve for a time, then when we sought to enlarge various facilities, there would be no place for easy expansion. This of course is nothing new in the Park Service.

This location would, I believe, soon bring us to the question of seeking another boundary revision and purchase of the remainder of the Foote farm, a 20 year undertaking. It might also encourage adverse developments along the approach road and on the Foote farm, which would not be protected by a NPS controlled buffer zone by present boundary lines. It also might be harder to justify the necessary land acquisition if the plan is changed before we get the land.

We should not regard lightly the probability of really obtrusive small developments along the road all the way from the Army Bridge to the north end of the fort grounds, and the damage to that part of the historic scene should we adopt the above plan. Also, we would have no control over the traffic or hazards on this county road although it lies between two segments of the Historic Site and we would be concerned.

The above location does have the considerable advantage of avoiding a large expense in road and bridge building, and of preserving the historic scene from the parade ground. I would not oppose it should it be accepted by Region and Washington offices.

b. Concerning the current and long-standing proposed location, it would function well enough, and have room for expansion, but I am afraid that the developments would be executed without sufficient imagination or vision, and some booby traps built in, in the name of economy.

There appears to be a strong school of thought that a combination vehicle and foot bridge would serve for both visitor foot traffic and maintenance vehicles, or even that no vehicle access is needed from this location to the fort grounds. I regard this as a built-in hazard, or in the case of no bridge, a built-in time and mileage waster, as well as a reckless loss of getaway time in the event of building fires or emergencies.

Volume of visitation is increasing rapidly here, and we believe this will continue at a faster rate than the statistical projections indicate, due to a breakthrough in publicity much as anything. I doubt if the full implications of this have been considered greatly by anyone other than the area staff. We should contemplate having to provide for a quarter of a million visitors in a very few years, and will get nearly a hundred thousand this year.

This means that space should be allowed for parking area expansion, that maintenance facilities and service roads should not be too restrictive, that traffic and circulation problems should not be built in, that the maintenance area, facilities, and roads should be well separated from the orientation or visitor center focus of activities, and in general that vision and foresight should be used in planning here even though the original cost might appear high at present.

It would be very easy to do the wrong thing in several ways at the proposed site on the south bank of the Laramie. Whatever we were to build there would clobber the open and historic scene. Next, if we build too short-sightedly there, we will also clobber daily operations and build in a number of management problems which will haunt the Service indefinitely. The present remodelling and parking situation at Custer Battlefield is a good illustration. It is not big enough right now, even while they are working on it, and in a year or two this will be apparently to nearly everyone.

Apropos of this, a visitor from New York state commented this week on his appreciation of the open space around this Fort, in contrast to the frequent situation in the East, where a number of forts have been restored, but are so surrounded by civilization that it is hard to visualize their meaning. I believe that the only way we would find out how many people feel this way would be to wreck the scene and then try to answer the complaints.

Superintendent's recommendations:

Make a decision on one of the following alternatives and start to carry it out promptly:

1. Adopt a long-range view of the values involved, plan for an approach from the northeast approximately as suggested by Historian Roy Appleman, but expand this to include seeking an additional boundary revision to run the boundary along the county road, and plan to acquire the entire Foote and Jack Gregg properties within this revision.

This would provide adequate space and control for roads, parking area, buildings and all facilities needed, and avoid necessity of building any bridges. It would also preserve the historic scene for a sufficient distance around the Fort to make the Historic Site meaningful regardless of future developments.

This would require a number of temporary facilities and adjustments which could be worked out at very moderate expense. It might take from 10 to 20 years to accomplish full development under this proposal.

2. Accept the present formulations, which are the result of some 25 years of master planning, and go ahead. But by all means plan and develop with sufficient vision so that the facilities will not be overcrowded and obsolete the day they are put in use.

2. Furnishings

I recommend that the furnishings programs be carried out substantially as it is and has been planned.



This means to go ahead with the 1866 Guardhouse, the 1849 Magazine, and one-half (1 unit) of the 1874 Cavalry Barracks. I believe we have all concurred that the Commissary-Storehouse now in use as temporary orientation center, visitor services offices, and maintenance storage, should not be refurnished, and will be more appropriate for other uses. This leaves one building, Officer's Quarters E which has become a focus of controversy. I believe that Mrs. Carson still feels that it should be ultimately used as the Post Surgeons Quarters, and has good reasons for this. I have no especial feelings about this structure other than that it is historic and should be preserved, and that whatever we do should not foreclose its future use.

Discussion: Here again we encounter pressures engendered by different viewpoints, and by the current squeeze between costs of increasing and expanding visitor use and the strong need for economy in operation and maintenance.

It is very easy and logical to adopt the obvious measure-- just stop furnishing buildings at Fort Laramie, we have enough there already. It may even be necessary to do this for a time.

However, I believe that this would be both short-sighted, and an abrogation of our often proclaimed policy that parks are for people, that we are a people-serving agency.

First, we have a going operation in furnishings, an extremely capable specialist in the person of Mrs. Nan Carson, we have gained a great deal of knowledge and paid considerable tuition in the school of experience. The job can be done with greater efficiency and economy now than if it lapses and is started again at some future time. There is also a wide-spread and strong interest in the project which results in a number of good donations and a good support.

Second, we do not have to guess whether people want to see the furnished buildings or want to see more. We have a daily survey going, where hundreds of people each day come over to the Cavalry Barracks, read the sign, and ask us when it will

be ready and open. On week ends, from 100 to 500 walk down the porch, look in all the windows, come into my quarters if the door is open, and let us know in one way or another that they want to see a historic Cavalry Barracks, furnished.

Aside from cost, the only argument I have heard against continuing the furnishings is that we have about all that people can see in one trip, that not every visitor will see everything here during his stay, and why add more.

This thesis applied to all the Parks would really result in economy. We could dispose of 95 per cent of the Yellowstone, a great amount of Grand Teton, most of Williamsburg, and the list is unlimited. I do not regard this as a valid thesis. I am convinced that we really have something here, that we should develop it, protect it, and show it to the people.

3. What interpretive features to be in Visitor or Orientation Center?

At this stage I am glassy-eyed from reviewing these ancient problems, and none too sure of what should go in the interpretive center.

Broadly, a first-class film could carry the main orientation. This could run from 12 to 19 minutes. It should be done by no one less than John Secundari or one of his few peers. The operations should be backed up by no less than three projectors, and a number of prints.

A modest number of some kind of exhibits could be included. I believe a sizeable, properly interpreted (by whatever means), and properly protected visible collection storage would be of considerable interest to a great number of visitors, and should be included, with ample room to view it.

As far as I am concerned, an exhibit can be anything from a mural to a pretty girl in a bikini, to the Gettysburg Cyclorama. There are some wonderful possibilities in audio-visual installations, but they should be high, wide, and handsome, and they should work.

How about a big, open room with subdued lighting, whose focus was a great rear-projected panel, a window into history. On this would be a continuous play of scenes to orient visitors on the main themes of the story, accompanied by appropriate sound. This would have a modest amount of random-placed seating, ample stand-up room, be open and inviting, no announcements, no distractions, there it is, lets look at it. The film could take this form. I am quite serious about this, after seeing the DuPont museum at Hagley, on the Brandywine; the Richmond Civil War Centennial center, and Disneyland. There are some real and modern examples of what is being done. I believe the staff here would be receptive to any of several ways of orientation, provided that they are not half-way measures, and that they work.

This has developed into a report. Your request for the superintendent's views and recommendations was about the first and no doubt the last time this has been done, and I got carried away.

The superintendent and staff here can and will cheerfully do their best to carry out whatever decision is reached on the planning here.

Sincerely yours,

/s/

Charles C. Sharp  
Superintendent

In duplicate

APPENDIX B

Status of Land Acquisition Fort Laramie NHS  
(Supplied by Supt. Charles C. Sharp.)

August 3, 1965

Mr. Appleman:

Regarding: Land acquisition, Fort Laramie

To be acquired:

|   | <u>Acres</u> | <u>Presented<br/>to Congress</u> | <u>Owners<br/>Asking Price</u> |
|---|--------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1965 FY - Sophia M. Foote property  | 136.18       | \$ 35,000                        | \$ 47,500                      |
| Jack F. Gregg   | 46.46        | 12,500                           | 12,500                         |
| (includes trade of 16.51<br>acres govt. land and well,<br>option signed July 26, '65) |              |                                  |                                |
| Total 1965 actual--   |              | <u>\$ 47,500</u>                 | <u>\$ 60,000</u>               |
| 1966 FY - B. Urbach   | 0.66         | \$ 200                           | ?                              |
| B. Shoemaker  | 1.12         | 200                              | ?                              |
| E. Haynes (Charles Oliver)  | 27.00        | 6,000                            | ?                              |
| D. Paules   | 26.00        | 5,000                            | ?                              |
| Flannery estate   | 2.45         | 600                              | ?                              |
|   |              | <u>\$ 12,000</u>                 |                                |

Grand total as presented to Congress-- \$ 59,500

Region has requested authorization and funds (\$1,300) to make two current appraisals of Foote property--last appraisal in June 1963 for \$34,453.00.

Has also requested authorization and \$1,000 to appraise the 5 parcels listed in the '66 FY program. This will be a second and current appraisal on Urbach and Shoemaker parcels.

Further, I have requested authority and funds for government to pay title costs on Urbach, Shoemaker, and Flannery parcels, as are too small for owners to pay costs out of appraised value.

Assume: that Foote property is appraised high enough to meet her asking price, that appraisal costs are added to land acquisition costs as per latest instructions, that other owners will sell at above price: We would need to complete the land acq. here:

|                   |            |                                    |
|-------------------|------------|------------------------------------|
|                   | \$ 47,500  | Foote                              |
|                   | 1,300      | Appraisals (2)                     |
|                   | 1,000      | Appraisal (1) on 5 tracts          |
|                   | 200        | Urbach                             |
|                   | 200        | Shoemaker                          |
|                   | 600        | Flannery                           |
|                   | 6,000      |                                    |
|                   | 5,000      |                                    |
| (last 3 entries   | 40         | Shoemaker                          |
| pay for abstracts | 70         | Urbach                             |
| of title)         | <u>250</u> | Flannery (estate not all probated) |

Grand Total-- \$ 62,160 + \$ 12,500 to J. Gregg

COMPARED TO MINUTEMAN, INDEPENDENCE, POINT REYES, THIS IS NOT A LARGE SUM!!!

(It appears from the above figures that if the land listed above can be bought at the appraised or asking prices tabulated, the total cost would be \$ 73,660, or \$ 14,160 more than the estimates given to the Congress. rea.)

APPENDIX C

Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site  
La Junta, Colorado 81050

September 8, 1965

Memorandum

To: Chairman Roy Appleman, Fort Study Committee

From: Superintendent, Bent's Old Fort

Subject: Reconstruction of Bent's Old Fort

Since I was not present at the review conducted by the Fort Study Committee at this Park August 8 and 9, I would like to state my views on the reconstruction of the Fort for the Committee's consideration.

Bent's Old Fort should be reconstructed as envisioned in the approved master plan. Exhibition of the pitifully meager existing bases of walls and partitions is not a new idea -- this was considered and rejected by the team which produced the master plan in 1963. I am in full agreement with the general principle that it is better to preserve than to restore or reconstruct. However, the preserved portion of a structure must be of sufficient size for the visitor's imagination to fill in the missing parts. Not anywhere near enough of this fort remains for this to happen.

The record shows that the Services' officials have been consistent in holding out to the people of Colorado the prospect of the Fort's reconstruction. The Services' program to date has been directed specifically to this end. The Congress expected it when it authorized the historic site (See Reg. Dir. Garrison's memo to WODC, Aug. 9, 1965).

I know of no new condition which would make a reversal of the plan for reconstruction logical or worth the hostile reaction of a disillusioned public.

Park Historian Stinson has written me a memorandum on this subject which I am enclosing for your use because it summarizes in detail the consistent progress of the plan for reconstruction through the Service's offices over the last two years. Note too, in Part I his cogent reasons for reconstruction apart from the Service's official actions toward this end.

I can foresee the total loss of the enthusiastic support the local people have given Bent's Old Fort if an inadequate development now supplants the one they have all come to expect. The startling appearance of this 19th Century Fort on a landscape not much different from the contemporary one, will, in itself be of more interpretive value than that which a modern visitor center, intruding on the landscape, could ever afford.

/s/

William L. Featherstone

cc:  
Reg. Dir. M.W.

APPENDIX D

Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site  
La Junta, Colorado 81050

September 7, 1965

Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Bent's Old Fort

From: Historian, Bent's Old Fort

Subject: Reconstruction of Bent's Old Fort

The following report is submitted to assist in preparing a statement of views for the Chairman of the Fort Study Committee. It consists of two parts, the first being my personal evaluation of the reconstruction question. In it I have attempted to provide adequate justification for the views expressed. The second part is an abstract of the official progress of development during the 29 months before your entry as Superintendent, which I believe will be of some value in your assessment of the situation.

Part I

The principle reasons for the reconstruction of the Fort are as follows:

1. Since 1920 three bodies (DAR, State, National Park Service) have announced intentions of reconstructing the Fort. Until now, none have succeeded. Failure to do so would put us in the same category as the others.
2. Failure to reconstruct would seriously effect the image of the government by opening the question of expenditure of funds for two years for the expressed purpose of pre-construction research.
3. Since the establishment of the Park extensive publicity has been given to the fact that we would reconstruct the Fort. Local public relations would suffer irreparable damage should we be forced to announce otherwise.
4. The significance of the Park lies in the fact that the Fort was here, not in any particular event that occurred.



5. The physical condition of the remains has deteriorated too far to allow an adequate display as a ruin.

**BACKGROUND:** The Daughters of the American Revolution acquired the site in 1920 with the announced intention of restoring the walls. Finances precluded the project and the group contented itself with protecting and marking the site to some degree. In 1954 the State of Colorado acquired the site with similar fanfare but ended by erecting a 5 foot high wall to mark the outline. In 1963 the Federal government took possession and announced intentions to reconstruct the Fort. The project has thus passed from Local to State to Federal, all intending to reconstruct but, to date, none being able to do so.

**GOVERNMENT IMAGE:** It is well known locally, and to a lesser extent throughout the state, that the State Historical Society conducted a one month archeological excavation in 1954, and that we have been doing the same thing for two years. Few people other than professionals can discern the difference in the excavations. They are tolerant only because they are sure we will reconstruct. To do otherwise would be to expose the Federal government to the charge that it wasted large sums to accomplish the same thing the State had done in 1/24th of the time.

**PUBLICITY:** The Master Plan team conducted its field study on April 1 - 11, 1963 one week after the entry on duty of Superintendent Young. On April 7, Paul Thomas (WODC Architect) of the team spoke at the monthly meeting of the Otero County Historical Society. Two days later an item headlined "Rebuilding Fort Bent is 2 or 3 years away" appeared in the La Junta paper which stated that during Mr. Thomas' talk he remarked that actual reconstruction was three to five years away. Also that "reconstruction cannot be started until a master plan has been developed.

On April 12, 1963 the same paper carried a picture of three of the planners including in the caption, "A reconnaissance team from the National Park Service is at work ... in preparation for restoration of old Fort Bent."

Other items appeared throughout April in one of which Superintendent Young was quoted as saying restoration of Ft. Bent will attract thousands of visitors to that site every year.

On August 18, 1963 the Pueblo paper quoted the Historian on a talk given in Las Animas in which reconstruction of the Fort and interpretive facilities were discussed in some detail.

Since the establishment of the Park all of the frequent newspaper publicity (including state-wide papers) has assumed and emphasized that the Fort would be reconstructed. All talks, on and off-site, by Park personnel have carried the same theme. The former interpretive stand at the ruins, as well as the present one, have stated that the National Park Service plans to reconstruct the Fort.

**ESTHETIC VALUE:** Professionally speaking, to display the remaining ruins of the Fort (even were they in good condition) would not be in keeping with the high standards of the Service. The Fort was, in the last analysis, a mercantile institution erected for the sole purpose of acquiring wealth. The fact that it was hundreds of miles from white civilization does not cloud the motives, and it is questionable that the motives are so awe-inspiring as to evoke much response from viewing the remains. It is not a place where a dramatic, historic event took place, much less the "hollowed ground" of a battlefield. The events which did take place, which are interesting and significant to some degree when pooled, would not have occurred here if the structure were not here first, anymore than Lincoln would have spoken at Gettysburg had there not been a battle on the very ground. By the same token, no matter how ingenious an interpretive program is devised, I believe it will be a miserable substitute for a building.

**CONDITION OF RUIN:** Having operated for over two years on the assumption that the Fort would be reconstructed, no serious efforts have been made to permanently stabilize the entire ruin. Rain, sun, snow, and hail have beaten

on the exposed remnant during this time and the condition of the walls is such that a suitable display could not be prepared. This was apparent to the Fort Study Committee when they visited the site.

## Part II

**MASTER PLAN:** Two weeks after Superintendent Young's entering on duty a Package Master Plan team from MWRO arrived at the Park. The team produced a Master Plan which, under Guidelines contained the statement;

Reconstruct Bent's Old Fort and restore ...  
the surrounding lands ... to the character  
and appearance of the period 1833-46.

The entire plan was geared to and based upon a full construction with administrative and interpretive facilities centralized in the reconstructed Fort.

The complete Master Plan went through the following stages of concurred and approval;

April 11, 1963 - Foy L. Young, Superintendent  
April 16, 1963 - Sanford Hill, Chief, WODC  
April 16, 1963 - Howard W. Baker, Regional  
Director, MWRO  
May 22, 1963 - A. Clark Stratton, Assistant  
Director

The Management and Development schedule called for the reconstruction to begin in 1967 Fiscal Year, having completed the following preliminary steps;

Historic Structures Report, Part I  
Historic Structures Report, Part II  
Interpretive Prospectus

All of the above would be completed by the end of 1965 Fiscal Year.

HISTORIC STRUCTURES  
REPORT, PART I:

According to the Historic and Prehistoric Structures Handbook, this document is "a brief advance report recommending the general character of the proposed treatment of the structure and providing sufficient information ... to base administrative decisions to approve or disapprove the proposed treatment."

The document was submitted to MWRO on November 16, 1964 and included the proposal that "the reconstructed Fort will contain the primary visitor reception and interpretive facilities."

The proposal was recommended by Regional Director Garrison on December 11, 1964 who included in his transmittal memorandum the statement:

... we are convinced that it is feasible and would have a decided impact on visitors. We are convinced that any alternative plans would be considerably more expensive, and yet far less effective.

Recommendation was also received from Acting Chief, WODC, Charles E. Krueger on December 15, 1964.

On February 11, 1965 the plan was approved by Acting Assistant Director, D&C, John B. Cabot. Mr. Cabot's notification of approval stated:

The fort, which is shown as a reconstruction on the approved Master Plan, will provide an attractive visitor focal point otherwise lacking in the Park.

HISTORIC STRUCTURES  
REPORT, PART II:

The project having been approved in Part I, the second step was this document--"a working report that contains the basic information necessary to proceed with the final construction drawings ..."

By memorandum of February 26, 1965 Acting Regional Director Novak, MWRO, advised Chief, WODC of the WASO approval of Part I:

We are pleased that this hurdle has been cleared, and we are anxious to accelerate efforts toward the completion of the Part II report, which should bring us into position for preparation of final drawings and the actual reconstruction job.

He added that the entire Part II report should be in the hands of the Director by September.

By August 9, 1965 all portions of the Report except the section on Historic Furnishings had been submitted to WASO. In reporting this to WODC on the same date Regional Director Garrison stated:

... all of our thinking to date has been on the basis of a total restoration of the Fort, incorporating administrative and maintenance elements within the walls. The original proposal submitted to Congress for establishing BEOL was predicated on full restoration.

INTERPRETIVE  
PROSPECTUS:

Work on this document proceeded concurrently with research for the Part II Report. On April 15, 1965 a Prospectus was transmitted to MWRO based completely on housing the interpretive facilities within the reconstructed Fort. MWRO transmitted the Prospectus to WASO on April 23, 1965 for the customary pre-approval review.

Since that time no official word has been received although a June 4, 1965 memorandum to the Park from Acting Regional Chief of Interpretation & Visitor Services Thompson contained reference to a May 14 memorandum from Mr. Everhart on the subject. We have not seen this memorandum nor know of its contents.

FORT STUDY  
COMMITTEE:

By memorandum of July 15, 1965 (received from MWRO on July 26) we were advised of a visit by this committee on August 8 & 9. The stated purpose of the visit was to "review the interpretive development planned for each of the forts in terms of the total interpretive program of our military fort areas."

The memo went on to state "The purpose is not to revise presently approved master plans and interpretive prospectuses, but to establish general guidelines which will be of help to you." As reported, the visit was actually a discussion of the entire development program in which the question of reconstruction was paramount.

SYNTHESIS: The first official notification of the interrelationship between Part II and the Fort Study Committee is found in an August 16 memo from Assistant Director D&C John A. Reshoft to the Regional Director in which Mr. Reshoft acknowledged receipt of the Historic Structures Report. The memo stated in part:

Approval, however, is in abeyance due to the fact that reconstruction funds have been removed from the current program. A final decision on the project will await completion of a special report currently underway by the research team studying overall interpretive approaches to Bent's and six other frontier forts ...

PCP: Both the Part I and Part II Historic Structures Report require Project Construction Proposals as a component. On July 2, 1964 Superintendent Young submitted a draft PCP (B-8, "Reconstruct Bent's Old Fort") to MWRO. The PCP was given critical review during the week of October 23, 1964 which resulted in a net increase of \$100,000 in Mr. Young's original estimate. The draft PCP was received from MWRO and went through the following stages of approval:

November 10, 1964 - Foy L. Young, Superintendent  
November 16, 1964 - Harvey B. Reynolds, Assistant  
to Regional Director, MWRO  
December 9, 1964 - Sanford Hill, Chief, WODC

This is the PCP used in the Part I Report. It called for a Grand Total of \$454,100 of which \$347,000 was directly chargeable to Construction. The figure was based upon an estimated roofed area of 9,600 square feet at \$30 @. (The erroneous figure for roofed area

was taken from the Design Analysis section of the Master Plan.) The Architectural Section of the Part I Report used a figure of 15,500 square feet of roof area.

On July 24-26, 1965 Architect A. Lewis Koue, WODC, visited the Park. As a result of his study the figure for roofed area was revised to 18,800 sq. feet and a new PCP (B-8 Revised) prepared which estimated a cost of \$25 per square foot. This, and other revisions brought the Grand Total to \$789,000 of which \$682,700 was directly chargeable to construction of the building. The new PCP was approved as follows:

August 6, 1965 - Dwight E. Stinson, Jr.  
Acting Superintendent  
August 9, 1965 - Lemuel A. Garrison,  
Regional Director

The revised PCP was included in the Part II Report.

Although the increase of \$334,900 was rather unexpected it was not a consideration in sending out the Fort Study Committee. This body was definitely constituted prior to the revision of the PCP since the memorandum outlining its mission was written on July 15, 1965 while Architect Koue did not arrive at the Park until July 26, 1965.

PHYSICAL REMAINS: From the time of the approval of the Master Plan (May 22, 1963) to the visit of the Fort Study Committee (August 6, 1965) there has been no serious consideration at the Park level to the ultimate displaying of the Fort as a ruin. On the contrary, certain actions concurred in by MWRO, have taken place which would preclude the possibility.

In the early part of 1964 Superintendent Young became increasingly concerned over interpretive potential during the Interim Period, that is the period starting with the completion of the Archeological Excavation and ending with the commencement of construction. It was estimated that the period would be roughly August 1965 - June 1966. It was felt that during this period the ruins would be the primary interpretive feature of

the Park. To maintain the original walls applications of Epoxy (Sandstone Adobe Coating) were applied to the exposed portions in June and July of 1964. It did not prove successful. In August of the same year black polyethelene sheeting was placed over selected portions but by September it was evident that the method caused moisture to develop underneath the sheeting and the sheeting was difficult to keep secure in the wind.

At the request of Superintendent Young, Acting Resource Studies Advisor Mattes and Supervisory Archeologist Logan, both MWRO, visited the Park on October 27, 1964 to discuss ways and means of protecting selected portions of the ruin which might be used as exhibits in the reconstructed Fort.

On November 7, 1964 MWRO completed drawings for wooden protective shelters to preserve selected portions of original wall. Work was begun immediately and by early January the shelters were in place at a cost of \$2904.46. It is felt that approval and implementation of a plan to protect selected portions of the ruin precluded any thought of a permanent or ultimate display of the ruin. This was further demonstrated through acts of nature when through the effects of normal weather the remaining portions of original wall deteriorated, climaxed by a heavy hail-storm on July 2, 1965 which destroyed any remote chance of a full-scale exhibit worthy of the name.

SUMMATION: Since the establishment of the Park in March, 1963 all development activities have been directed toward the goal of reconstruction of Bent's Old Fort. Deadlines have been met on all required documents:

1. Master Plan                      Approved May 22, 1963
2. Historic Structures  
   Report, Part I                 Approved February 11, 1965
3. PCP                             Approved August 9, 1965
4. Historic Structures  
   Report, Part II
5. Interpretive Prospectus

/s/

Dwight E. Stinson, Jr.



