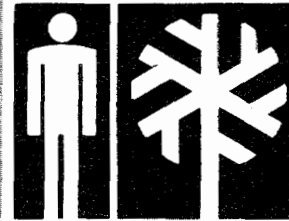


out of the vapors:  
a social and architectural history of bathhouse row

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# HOT SPRINGS



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OUT OF THE VAPORS:  
A SOCIAL AND ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY OF BATHHOUSE ROW

HOT SPRINGS NATIONAL PARK  
Arkansas

by

John C. Paige  
and  
Laura Soulliere Harrison





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## PREFACE

This special study was designed to answer specific historical and architectural questions posed by the staff of Hot Springs National Park and the Southwest Region. These questions formed the basis for this document. Additional material was used to place the study in an appropriate historical context. The first chapter is an effort to place the spa development at Hot Springs National Park in a broader context by giving an abbreviated general world history of spas with special emphasis on spa development in the United States. The second chapter presents a general history of the hot springs from prehistoric times to the present with special emphasis on the rise and decline of bathhouse row. The next several chapters are in-depth discussions of a series of topics related to the bathing industry at Hot Springs National Park. The topics discussed include the construction history of the thermal water distribution system and creek arch; bathing routines over the centuries; bathing as part of prescribed medical treatment for the cure of diseases; the financial aspects of the bathing industry; the treatment of the poor by private enterprise and the government; the treatment of minorities by private enterprise and the government; development of transportation to the hot springs; legal and illegal promotional activities of the hot springs and their medical benefits; criminal activity that took place around the hot springs; fires and floods in the community surrounding the hot springs; the social and recreational activities at the hot springs; scientific investigations of the hot springs; the architecture of the bathhouses; and biographies of the bathhouse designers. These topics provide the framework for discussion of the myriad of human activities and uses of the thermal water at Hot Springs National Park.

The document represents the combined efforts of John Paige and Laura Soulliere Harrison. Chapters 1 through 3 and 5 through 7 are primarily the work of Mr. Paige. Ms. Harrison supplied considerable architectural information and wrote portions of chapters 1 and 2. Ms. Harrison is the primary author for chapters 4, 8, and 9 and is responsible for the illustrations and captions.

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## CHAPTER 1: THE SPA INDUSTRY IN WORLD PERSPECTIVE

### THE HISTORY OF SPAS

#### Prehistoric Bathing

At the beginning of the 20th century, promoters of the spa at Hot Springs, Arkansas, claimed that the bathhouses there served people from around the world and that the curative abilities of that southern spa's waters were of worldwide renown. These claims, however, require careful analysis to evaluate their validity and to properly understand the place of Hot Springs in the broader context of European and United States spa history.

The practice of traveling to hot or cold springs in hopes of effecting a cure of some ailment dates to prehistoric times. Archeological investigations near hot springs in France and Czechoslovakia revealed Bronze Age weapons and offerings. In Great Britain, ancient legend credited early Celtic kings with the discovery of the hot springs at Bath, England.

Many European, Mideastern, African, Australian, North American, South American, Central American, and Asian peoples believed that bathing in a particular spring, well, or river resulted in physical and spiritual purification. Forms of ritual purification existed among the native Americans, Persians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. Today, ritual purification through water can be found in the religious ceremonies of Jews, Mohammedans, Christians, Buddhists, and Hindus. These ceremonies reflect the ancient beliefs in the healing and purifying properties of water.<sup>1</sup> Complex bathing rituals were also practiced in ancient Egypt, in prehistoric cities of the Indus Valley, and in Aegean civilizations. Most often these ancient people did little building construction around the water, and what they did construct was very temporary in nature.

## Bathing in Greek and Roman Times

Some of the earliest written descriptions of western bathing practices came from Greece. The Greeks began bathing regimens that formed the foundation for modern spa procedures. These Aegean people utilized small bathtubs, washbasins, and footbaths for personal cleanliness. They established public baths and showers within their gymnasium complexes for relaxation and personal hygiene. Greek mythology specified that certain natural springs or tidal pools were blessed by the gods to cure disease. Around these sacred pools, Greeks established bathing facilities for those desiring healing. Supplicants left offerings to the gods of healing at these sites and bathed themselves in hopes of a cure. The Spartans developed a primitive vapor bath. At Serangeum, an early Greek balneum (bathhouse, loosely translated), bathing chambers were cut into the hillside from which the hot springs issued. A series of niches cut into the rock above the chambers held bathers' clothing. One of the bathing chambers had a decorative mosaic floor depicting a driver and chariot pulled by four horses, a woman followed by two dogs, and a dolphin below. Thus, the early Greeks used the natural features, but expanded them and added their own amenities, such as decorations and shelves. During later Greek civilization, bathhouses were often built in conjunction with athletic fields.<sup>2</sup>

The Romans emulated many of the Greek bathing practices. Romans surpassed the Greeks in the size and complexity of their baths. As in Greece, the Roman bath became a focal center for social and recreational activity. As the Roman Empire expanded, the idea of the public bath spread to all parts of the Mediterranean and into regions of Europe and North Africa. With the construction of the aqueducts, the Romans had enough water not only for domestic, agricultural, and industrial purposes, but also for their leisurely pursuits. The aqueducts provided water that was later heated for use in the baths. Today, the extent of the Roman bath is revealed at ruins and in archeological excavations in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.



These Roman baths varied from simple to exceedingly elaborate structures, and they varied in size, arrangement, and decoration. In taking a Roman bath, the bather induced sweating by gradually exposing himself to increasing temperatures. To accommodate this ritual, all Roman bathhouses contained a series of rooms which got progressively hotter. Most contained an apodyterium--a room just inside the entrance where the bather stored his clothes. Next, the bather progressed into the frigidarium (cold room) with its tank of cold water, the tepidarium (warm room), and finally the caldarium (hot room). The caldarium, heated by a brazier underneath the hollow floor, contained cold-water basins which the bather could use for cooling. After taking this series of sweat and/or immersion baths, the bather returned to the cooler tepidarium for a massage with oils and final scraping with metal implements. Some baths also contained a laconicum (a dry, resting room) where the bather completed the process by resting and sweating.

The layout of Roman baths contained other architectural features of note. Because wealthy Romans brought slaves to attend to their bathing needs, the bathhouse usually had three entrances: one for men, one for women, and one for slaves. The preference for symmetry in Roman architecture usually meant a symmetrical facade, even though the women's area was usually smaller than the men's area because of fewer numbers of patrons. Usually solid walls or placement on opposite sides of the building separated the men's and men's sections. Roman bathhouses often contained a courtyard, or palestra, which was an open-air garden used for exercise. In some cases the builders made the palestra an interior courtyard, and in other cases the builders placed the palestra in front of the bathhouse proper and incorporated it into the formal approach. Sometimes the palestra held a swimming pool. Most often a colonnade outlined the palestra's edges.<sup>3</sup>

Roman bathhouses offered amenities in addition to the bathing ritual. Ancillary spaces in the bathhouse proper housed food- and perfume-selling booths, libraries, and reading rooms. Stages accommodated theatrical and musical performances. Adjacent stadia

provided spaces for exercise and athletic competitions. Inside the bathhouses proper, marble mosaics tiled the elegant floors. The stuccoed walls frequently sported frescoes of trees, birds, and other pastoral images. Sky-blue paint, gold stars, and celestial imagery adorned interior domes. Statuary and fountains decorated the interior and exterior.

The Romans also developed baths in their colonies, taking advantage of the natural hot springs occurring in Europe to construct baths at Aix and Vichy in France, Bath and Buxton in England, Aachen and Weisbaden in West Germany, Baden in Austria, and Aquincum in Hungary, among other locations. These baths became centers for recreational and social activities in Roman communities. Libraries, lecture halls, gymnasiums, and formal gardens became part of some bath complexes. In addition, the Romans used the hot thermal waters to relieve their suffering from rheumatism, arthritis, and overindulgence in food and drink. The decline of the Roman Empire in the west, beginning in A.D. 337 after the death of Emperor Constantine, resulted in Roman legions abandoning their outlying provinces and leaving the baths to be taken over by the local population or destroyed.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, the Romans elevated bathing to a fine art, and their bathhouses physically reflected these advancements. The Roman bath, for instance, included a far more complex ritual than a simple immersion or sweating procedure. The various parts of the bathing ritual--undressing, bathing, sweating, receiving a massage, and resting--required separated rooms which the Romans built to accommodate those functions. The segregation of the sexes and the addition of diversions not directly related to bathing also had direct impacts on the shape and form of bathhouses. The elaborate Roman bathing ritual and its resultant architecture served as precedents for later European and American bathing facilities. Formal garden spaces and opulent architectural arrangement equal to those of the Romans reappeared in Europe by the end of the eighteenth century. Major American spas followed suit a century later.

## Bathing in Medieval Times

With the decline of the Roman Empire, the public baths often became places of licentious behavior, and such use was responsible for the spread rather than the cure of diseases. A general belief developed among the European populace was that frequent bathing promoted disease and sickness. Medieval church authorities encouraged this belief and made every effort to close down public baths. Ecclesiastical officials believed that public bathing created an environment open to immorality and disease. Roman Catholic Church officials even banned public bathing in an unsuccessful effort to halt syphilis epidemics from sweeping Europe. Overall, this period represented a time of decline for public bathing.<sup>5</sup>

People continued to seek out a few select hot and cold springs, believed to be holy wells, to cure various ailments. In an age of religious fervor, the benefits of the waters were attributed to God or one of the saints. In 1326 Collin le Loup, an ironmaster from Liege, Belgium, discovered the chalybeate springs of Spa in Belgium.<sup>6</sup> Around these springs, a famous health resort eventually grew and the term "spa" came to refer to any health resort located near natural springs. During this period, individual springs became associated with the specific ailment that they could allegedly benefit.

Bathing procedures during this period varied greatly. By the 16th century, physicians at Karlsbad, Bohemia, prescribed that the mineral water be taken internally as well as externally. Patients periodically bathed in warm water for up to 10 or 11 hours while drinking glasses of mineral water. The first bath session occurred in the morning, and the second commenced in the afternoon. This treatment lasted several days until skin pustules formed and broke resulting in the draining of "poisons" considered to be the source of the disease. Then followed another series of shorter, hotter baths to wash the infection away and close the eruptions.<sup>7</sup>

## Bathing in the 18th Century

In the 17th century most upper-class Europeans washed their clothes with water often and washed only their faces (with linen), feeling that bathing the entire body was a lower-class activity; but the upper-class slowly began changing their attitudes toward bathing as a way to restore health later in that century. The wealthy flocked to health resorts to drink and bathe in the waters. In 1702 Queen Anne of England traveled to Bath, the former Roman development, to bathe. A short time later Richard (Beau) Nash came to Bath. Nash was a professional gambler with a great ability for promotion. By the force of his personality, Nash became the arbiter of good taste and manners in England. He along with financier Ralph Allen and architect John Wood transformed Bath from a country spa into the social capital of England. Bath set the tone for other spas in Europe to follow. Ostensibly, the wealthy and famous arrived there on a seasonal basis to bathe in and drink the water; however, they also came to display their opulence. Social activities at Bath included dances, concerts, playing cards, lectures, and promenading down the street.<sup>8</sup>

A typical day in Bath might be an early morning communal bath followed by a private breakfast party. Afterwards, one either drank water at the Pump Room (a building constructed over the thermal water source) or attended a fashion show. Physicians encouraged health resort patrons to bathe in and drink the waters with equal vigor. The next several hours of the day could be spent in shopping, visiting the lending library, attending concerts, or stopping at one of the coffeehouses. At 4:00 p.m. the rich and famous dressed up in their finery and promenaded down the streets. Next came dinner, more promenading, and an evening of dancing or gambling.<sup>9</sup>

Similar activities occurred in health resorts throughout Europe. The spas became stages on which Europeans paraded with great pageantry. These resorts became infamous as places of gossip and scandals. The various social and economic classes selected specific seasons during the year's

course, staying from one to several months, to vacation at each resort. One season aristocrats occupied the resorts; at other times, prosperous farmers or retired military men took the baths. The wealthy and the criminals that preyed on them moved from one spa to the next as the fashionable season for that resort changed.<sup>10</sup>

During the 18th century a revival in the medical uses of spring water took place among some Italian, German, and English physicians. This revival changed the way of taking a spa treatment. For example, in Karlsbad the accepted method for drinking the mineral water required sending large water barrels to individual boardinghouses where the patients drank physician-prescribed dosages in the solitude of their rooms. Dr. David Beecher in 1777 recommended that the patients come to the fountainhead for the water and that each patient should first do some prescribed exercises. This innovation increased the medicinal benefits obtained and gradually physical activity became part of the European bathing regimen. In 1797 in England Dr. James Currier published The Effects of Water, Cold and Warm, as a Remedy in Fever and Other Diseases. This book stimulated additional interest in water cures and advocated the external and internal use of water as part of the curing process.<sup>11</sup>

### Bathing in the 19th and 20th Centuries

In the 19th century, bathing became a more accepted practice as physicians realized some of the benefits that cleanliness could provide. A cholera epidemic in Liverpool, England in 1842 resulted in a sanitation renaissance--more people bathed and washed their clothes. That same year a house in Cincinnati, Ohio, received the first indoor bathtub in the United States. Bathing, however, was still not a universal custom. Only one year later--in 1843--bathing between November 1 and March 15 was outlawed in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as a health measure, and in 1845 bathing was banned in Boston, Massachusetts, unless under the direct orders of a physician. The situation improved, however, and by 1867 in

Philadelphia most houses of the well-to-do had tubs and indoor plumbing. In England, hot showers were installed in barracks and schools by the 1880s.<sup>12</sup> The taboos against bathing disappeared with advancements in medical science; the worldwide medical community was even promoting the benefits of bathing. In addition, the Victorian taste for the exotic lent itself perfectly to seeking out the curative powers of thermal water.

In most instances the formal architectural development of European spas took place in the 18th and 19th centuries. The architecture of Bath, England, developed along Georgian and Neoclassical lines, generally following Palladian structures. The most important architectural form that emerged was the "crescent"--a semi-elliptical street plan used in many areas of England.<sup>13</sup> The architecture of Karlsbad, Marienbad, Franzensbad, and Baden-Baden was primarily Neoclassical, but the literature seems to indicate that large bathhouses were not constructed until well into the 19th century. The emphasis on drinking the waters rather than bathing in them led to the development of separate structures known as Trinkhallen (drinking halls) where those taking the cure spent hours drinking water from the springs.<sup>14</sup>

By the mid-19th century the situation had changed dramatically. Visitors to the European spas began to stress bathing in addition to drinking the waters. Besides fountains, pavilions, and Trinkhallen, bathhouses on the scale of the Roman baths were revived. Photographs of a 19th-century spa complex taken in the 1930s, detailing the earlier architecture, show a heavy use of mosaic floors, marble walls, classical statuary, arched openings, domed ceilings, segmental arches, triangular pediments, Corinthian columns, and all of the other trappings of a Neoclassical revival. The buildings were usually separated by function--with the Trinkhalle, the bathhouse, the inhalatorium (for inhaling the vapors), and the Kurhaus or Conversationhaus that was the center of social activity. Baden-Baden featured golf courses and tennis courts, "superb roads to motor over, and drives along quaint lanes where wild deer are as common as cows with us, and almost as unafraid."<sup>15</sup>

The European spa, then, started with structures to house the drinking function--from simple fountains to pavilions to elaborate Trinkhallen. The enormous bathhouses came later in the 19th century as a renewed preference for an elaborate bathing ritual to cure ills and improve health came into vogue. European architects looked back to Roman civilization and carefully studied its fine architectural precedents. The Europeans copied the same formality, symmetry, division of rooms by function, and opulent interior design in their bathhouses. They emulated the fountains and formal garden spaces in their resorts, and they also added new diversions. The tour books always mentioned the roomy, woodsy offerings in the vicinity and the faster-paced evening diversions.

By the beginning of the 19th century the European bathing regimen consisted of numerous accumulated traditions. The bathing routine included soaking in hot water, drinking the water, steaming in a vapor room, and relaxing in a cooling room. In addition, doctors ordered that patients be douched with hot or cold water and given a select diet to promote a cure. Authors began writing guidebooks to the health resorts of Europe explaining the medical benefits and social amenities of each. Rich Europeans and Americans traveled to these resorts to take in cultural activities and the baths.<sup>16</sup>

Each European spa began offering similar cures while maintaining a certain amount of individuality. The 19th century bathing regimen at Karlsbad can serve as a general portrayal of European bathing practices during this century. Visitors arose at 6:00 a.m. to drink the water and be serenaded by a band. Next came a light breakfast, bath, and lunch. The doctors of Karlsbad usually limited patients to certain foods for each meal. In the afternoons visitors went sight-seeing or attended concerts. Nightly theatrical performances followed the evening meal. This ended around 9:00 p.m. with the patients returning to their boardinghouses to sleep until six the next morning. This regimen continued for as long as a month and then the patients returned home until the next year. Other 19th century European spa regimens followed similar schedules.<sup>17</sup>

At the beginning of the 20th century, European spas combined a strict diet and exercise regimen with a complex bathing procedure to achieve benefits for the patients. One example will suffice to illustrate the change in bathing procedures. Patients at Baden-Baden, which specialized in treating rheumatoid arthritis, were directed to see a doctor before taking the baths. Once this occurred the bathers proceeded to the main bathhouse where they paid for their baths and stored their valuables before being assigned a booth for undressing. The bathhouse supplied bathers with towels, sheets, and slippers.

The Baden-Baden bathing procedure began with a warm shower. The bathers next entered a room of circulating, 140-degree hot air for 20 minutes, spent another 10 minutes in a room with a 150-degree temperature, partook of a 154-degree vapor bath, then showered and received a soap massage. After the massage, the bathers swam in a pool heated approximately to body temperature. After the swim, the bathers rested for 15 to 20 minutes in the warm "Sprudel" room pool. This shallow pool's bottom contained an 8-inch layer of sand through which naturally carbonated water bubbled up. This was followed by a series of gradually cooler showers and pools. After that, the attendants rubbed down the bathers with warm towels and then wrapped them in sheets and covered them with blankets to rest for 20 minutes. This ended the bathing portion of the treatment. The rest of the cure consisted of a prescribed diet, exercise, and water-drinking program.<sup>18</sup>

The European spas provided various other diversions for guests after the bath, including gambling, horse racing, fishing, hunting, tennis, skating, skiing, dancing, golf, and horseback riding. Sight-seeing and theatrical performances served as further incentives for people to go to the spa. Some European governments even recognized the medical benefits of spa therapy and paid a portion of the patient's expenses. A number of these spas catered to those suffering from obesity and overindulgence in addition to various other medical complaints. In recent years, elegance and style of earlier centuries may have diminished, but people still come to the natural hot springs for relaxation and health.<sup>19</sup>



## THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN SPAS

### Spas in Colonial America

Some European colonists brought with them knowledge of the hot water therapy for medicinal purposes, and others learned the benefits of hot springs from the Indians. Europeans gradually obtained many of the hot and cold springs from the various Indian tribes. They then developed the spring to suit European tastes. By the 1760s British colonists were traveling to hot and cold springs in Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New York, and Virginia in search of water cures. Among the more frequently visited of these springs were Bath, Yellow, and Bristol Springs in Pennsylvania; Saratoga Springs, Kinderhook, and Ballston Springs in New York; and Warm Springs, Hot Springs, and White Sulphur Springs (now in West Virginia) in Virginia.<sup>20</sup>

Colonial doctors gradually began to recommend hot springs for ailments. Dr. Benjamin Rush, American patriot and physician, praised the healing virtues of the springs of Bristol, Pennsylvania, in 1773. Dr. Samuel Tenney in 1783 and Dr. Valentine Seaman in 1792 examined the water of Saratoga Springs in New York and wrote of possible medicinal uses for the springs. Hotels were constructed to accommodate visitors to the various springs. Entrepreneurs opened taverns where the travelers could lodge, eat, and drink. Thus began the health resort industry in the United States.<sup>21</sup>

### Bathing in 19th and 20th Century America

After the American Revolution, the spa industry continued to gain popularity. By the 1850s hot and cold spring resorts existed in 20 states. Many of these resorts contained similar architectural features. Most health resorts had a large, two-story central building near or at the springs, with smaller structures surrounding it. The main building provided the guests with facilities for dining and, possibly, dancing on

the first floor, and the second story consisted of sleeping rooms. The outlying structures were individual guest cabins, and other auxiliary buildings formed a semicircle or U-shape around the large building.<sup>22</sup>

These resorts offered swimming, fishing, hunting, and horseback riding as well as facilities for bathing. The Virginia resorts, particularly White Sulphur Springs, proved popular before and after the Civil War. After the Civil War, spa vacations became very popular as returning soldiers bathed to heal wounds and the American economy allowed more leisure time. Saratoga Springs in New York became one of the main centers for this type of activity. Bathing in and drinking the warm, carbonated spring water only served as prelude to the more interesting social activities of gambling, promenading, horse racing, and dancing.<sup>23</sup>

Saratoga Springs in New York had extensive architectural development by the 1830s--a time when the buildings of Hot Springs, Arkansas, were small log and frame structures without particularly distinctive detailing--just basic envelopes to keep occupants from the weather. By 1815 Saratoga had large, four-story, Greek revival hotels. The availability of train and steamship service to that destination by 1832 meant larger numbers of more sophisticated clientele. With the exception of specialized baths provided in boardinghouses or small bathhouses connected with the hotels, Saratoga's development during the 19th century was based on leisure pursuits other than baths. Although Saratoga and other spas in New York centered their developments around the healthful mineral waters, their real drawing card was the complex social life--that included pursuits from gambling on racehorses to seeing the latest Paris fashions. Going to the mountains for the summer was a major exodus undertaken by urban dwellers who could afford it, and Saratoga became a hub of summer activity. Private development there featured enormous hotels with great ballrooms, opera houses, stores, and clubhouses. In 1865 the Union Hotel had its own esplanade, with fountain and formal landscaping, and two small bathhouses. Yet, during the 19th century the bathhouses were auxiliary structures and not the central features of the resort.<sup>24</sup>

During the last half of the 19th century western entrepreneurs developed natural hot and cold springs into resorts--from the Mississippi River to the West Coast. Many of these spas offered individual tub baths, vapor baths, douche sprays, needle showers, and pool bathing to their guests. The various railroads that spanned the country promoted these resorts to encourage train travel. Hot Springs, Arkansas, became a major resort in the Midwest as the railroad opened up the Arkansas resort for people from the large metropolitan areas of St. Louis and Chicago.<sup>25</sup>

The popularity of the spas continued into the 20th century. Some medical critics, however, charged that the thermal waters in such renowned resorts as Hot Springs, Virginia, and Saratoga Springs, New York, were no more beneficial to health than ordinary heated water. The various spa owners countered these arguments by developing better hydrotherapy for their patients. At the Saratoga spa, treatments for heart and circulatory disorders, rheumatic conditions, nervous disorders, metabolic diseases, and skin diseases were developed. In 1910 the New York state government began purchasing the principal springs to protect them from exploitation. When Franklin Delano Roosevelt was governor of New York, he pushed for a European type of spa development at Saratoga. The architects for the new complex spent two years studying the technical aspects of bathing in Europe. Completed in 1933, the development had three bathhouses--Lincoln, Washington, and Roosevelt--a drinking hall, the Hall of Springs, and a building housing the Simon Baruch Research Institute. Four additional buildings composed the recreation area and housed arcades and a swimming pool decorated with blue faience terra-cotta tile. Saratoga spa's Neoclassical buildings were laid out in a grand manner, with formal perpendicular axes, solid brick construction, and stone and concrete Roman-revival detailing. The spa was surrounded by a 1,200-acre natural park that had 18 miles of bridle paths, "with measured walks at scientifically calculated gradients through its groves and vales, with spouting springs adding unexpected touches to its vistas, with the tumbling waters of Geyser Brook flowing beneath bridges of the fine roads. Full advantage has been taken of the natural beauty of the park, but no formal landscaping." Promotional literature again advertised

the attractions directly outside the spa: shopping, horse races, and historic sites associated with revolutionary war history. New York Governor Herbert Lehman officially opened the new facilities to the public in July 1935.<sup>26</sup>

Other leading spas in the country during this period were French Lick, Indiana; Hot Springs and White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia; Hot Springs, Arkansas; and Warm Springs, Georgia. French Lick specialized in treating obesity and constipation through a combination of bathing in and drinking the water and exercising. Hot Springs, Virginia, specialized in digestive ailments and heart diseases, and White Sulphur Springs, Virginia, treated these ailments and skin diseases. Both resorts offered baths where the water would wash continuously over the patients as they lay in a shallow pool. Warm Springs, Georgia, gained a reputation for treating infantile paralysis by a procedure of baths and exercise. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who earlier supported Saratoga, became a frequent visitor and promoter of this spa.<sup>27</sup>

By the late 1930s more than 2,000 hot- or cold-springs health resorts were operating in the United States. This number had diminished greatly by the 1950s and continued to decline in the following two decades. Today's spas emphasize dietary, exercise, or recreational programs more than traditional bathing activities. The public bathing industry remains stagnant, but companies selling the individual home spas attract a large and growing market.<sup>28</sup>

## Notes from Chapter 1

1. Alfred Martin, "On Bathing," Ciba Symposia 1 (August 1939): 134-135; and John Hatton, comp., Bath: Britain's Historic Spa (n.p.:The Corporation of Bath, n.d.), p. 1.
2. Martin, "On Bathing," pp. 139, 140-141; and Spyr P. Lambros, "The Serangeum in the Piraeus," The Athenaeum 109 (March 20, 1897): 385-386.
3. In the reign of Augustus Caesar women were not permitted to bathe with men, but later emperors permitted mixed bathing. Donald S. Robertson, Greek and Roman Architecture, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 243; Arthur Inkersley, "Bathing in Ancient Rome, and Its Effects on Roman Character," Education 16 (November 1895): 134-137; Martin, "On Bathing," pp. 142-143; Robert H. Lowie, "Bathing Through the Ages," The American Mercury 15 (September 1928): 62; and "The Bath Near Pompeii," The Athenaeum 104 (December 22, 1894): 868.
4. Martin, "On Bathing", pp. 137-144; Hatton, Bath pp. 2-6; Inkersley, "Bathing in Ancient and its effect on the Roman Character," pp. 134-140; Robertson, pp. 243-244, 258-262; and "Upon the Use of Hot Water--With Special Reference to Hot Springs, Arkansas," Hot Springs Medical Journal 5 (December 1896): 397.
5. Martin, "On Bathing", pp. 143-145.
6. Ibid. Chalybeate refers to salt-free mineral water impregnated with iron.
7. W. Fraser Rae, "Life at Bohemian Baths," Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine 148 (October 1890): 516-517.
8. Lowie, pp. 62-64; Louis Kronenberger, Kings and Desperate Men: Life in Eighteenth-Century England (New York: Vintage Books, 1942), pp. 171-175; Pamela Steen, "Spas: Pleasure or Penance?," History Today 31 (September 1981): 30-34; William Addison, English Spas (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd., 1951), p. 3; and Hatton, Bath, pp. 5-10.
9. Kronenberger, Kings and Desperate Men, pp. 172-173.
10. Ibid., pp. 174-175; and Steen, "Spas," pp. 30-35.
11. Rae, "Life at Bohemian Baths," pp. 518-519; and Dian Dincin Buchman, The Complete Book of Water Therapy (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1979), p. 9.
12. "Evolution of the Bath," Literary Digest, 89 (June 19, 1926): 46; and Martin, A., pp. 147-148.

13. Germain Bazin, The Baroque: Principles, Styles, Modes, Themes (Greenwich, Connecticut: New York Graphic Society, 1968), pp. 133, 320.
14. Rae, "Life at Bohemian Baths," pp. 515-529.
15. Mary Roberts Rinehart, "Taking the Cure in Europe," Saturday Evening Post, 205 (October 1, 1932): 6-7.
16. Buchman, The Complete Book of Water Therapy, pp. 515-529; Steen, p. 35; "They Want the Earth," The Hot Springs Medical Journal 1 (May 15, 1892): 91; and Addison, English Spas, p. 1.
17. Rae, "Life at Bohemian Baths," pp. 520-521.
18. "Baden-Baden," Spa Therapy File, Francis J. Scully Collection, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas (Typescript) (hereafter referred to as Scully Collection); Relief Health Through the Hot Springs of Baden-Baden, Scully Collection; Baden-Baden: Little Guide through the Grosse Gesellschaftsbad in the Friedrichsbad, Scully Collection.
19. Emily Wilkens, Secrets from the Super Spas (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1976), pp. 118-135; Igho Hart Kornbleuh, Spas and Health Resorts in the U.S.S.R. (n.p.; Clinical Medicine Publications, Inc., 1960), p. 1; Andrew Marton, "By the Waters of Budapest," The New York Times, February 26, 1984, sec. 20, p. 40; and "Schaftsbad in the Friedrichsbad," Scully Collection.
20. Wilkens, Secrets from the Super Spas, pp. 118-135; New York Conservation Department, Saratoga Spa (State of New York Conservation Dept., Division of Saratoga Springs, 1941), p. 1; and Henry W. Lawrence, "Southern Spas: Source of American Resort Tradition" Bathhouse Row General File, Box 3, Diane Rhodes Collection, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas (hereafter referred to as Rhodes Collection).
21. Walter S. McClellan, "American Spas and Organized Medicine," paper presented at the 5th annual meeting of the Association of American Spas, Marlin, Texas, 7 October 1959.
22. The 20 states with spring resorts were New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Lawrence, Bathhouse Row General File, Rhodes Collection, pp. 1-2, 3-5; and William L. Whitwell and Lee W. Winborne, The Architectural Heritage of the Roanoke Valley (Charlottesville, Virginia: University of Virginia Press, 1982), pp. 57-58.
23. Stanley Frank Norsworthy, "Hot Springs, Arkansas: A Geographic Analysis of the Spa's Resort Service Area" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 1970), pp. 30-31; E. Merton

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24. Freeman, pp. 1-56.

25. Patricia Dean, "The True Carlsbad of America: The Hotel Broadwater and Natatorium of Helena, Montana," in Victorian Resorts and Hotels: Essays from a Victorian Society Autumn Symposium, ed. Richard Guy Wilson (n.p.: The Victorian Society in America, 1982), p. 80; Marie L. Ahearn, "Health Restoring Resorts on the New England Coast," in Victorian Resorts and Hotels: Essays from a Victorian Society Autumn Symposium, ed. Wilson, p. 41; "The Sutro Baths," Scientific American, July 23, 1898, p. 52; and F.W. Parsons, "Sutro Baths of San Francisco," Scientific American, 29 April 1899, p. 266.

26. New York Conservation Department, pp. 1-32; Wood Hutchinson, "Taking the Waters: The Humbug of Hot Springs," Everybody's Magazine, February 1913, p. 169; "Saratoga Spa," Time, 5 August 1935, pp. 28-29; and "Saratoga: \$8,500,000 Spent to Make N.Y. Spa World's Best," Newsweek, 3 August 1935, pp. 32-33.

27. The spa treatment at Hot Springs, Arkansas, will be discussed later in this study. "Saratoga Spa," p. 28; and "Saratoga: \$8,500,000 Spent," pp. 32-33.

28. Richard Kovas, "American Spas," 17 Hygeia, (March 1939): 208.





## CHAPTER 2: THE HISTORY OF BATHING AT HOT SPRINGS, ARKANSAS, UNTIL THE CIVIL WAR

### THE NATURAL SETTING

#### Geology

The hot springs of Hot Springs National Park are the result of complex natural geological processes. The park is in the Ouachita Mountains of central Arkansas. The topography of the park is mountain ridges running from east to west, intermontane basins, and the piedmont plateau. Hot Springs lies at the southern edge of these ridges. These mountains are mainly of sedimentary composition, encompassing geological formations from the Ordovician (440 million years ago) period and, possibly, as early as the Cambrian (470 million years ago) period. During most of the Paleozoic era (470 to 230 million years ago), what became the Ouachita Mountains lay submerged under an ancient shallow sea that extended from Louisiana to New Hampshire. Approximately 500 million years ago, geological stresses deep in the earth resulted in the exceedingly slow movement of the South American plate northward to collide with the North American plate. This collision of tectonic plates slowly over geological time created the Ouachita Mountains.<sup>1</sup> The enormous pressures of this geological activity caused the shale and sandstone layers to fracture and fissure. These huge rock layers moved up and down along the fault line, causing local relief to vary as much as 1,000 feet.<sup>2</sup>

Over the centuries, rainfall in the area northwest to northeast of the park has percolated down through rock fractures and fissures in the Big Fork formation and Arkansas novaculite where the heat from the interior of the earth warms the water causing it to rise to the surface by way of joints and faults in the Hot Springs sandstone formation. The surface water temperature is more than 140 degrees. This journey from rainwater to spring water takes about 4,000 years. At the surface the water

escapes from the ground in both liquid and gaseous forms. The dissolved minerals in the water precipitate to form the white to tan travertine or "tufa rock" seen near the openings of the hot springs. Slightly less than a million gallons of water a day flow from the 47 springs in the park.<sup>3</sup>

The geography has obviously affected the development pattern of the area. All of the springs issue from the west slope of Hot Springs Mountain at a mostly lower level, and originally they drained directly into Hot Springs Creek. In the area making up what is now Bathhouse Row, the creek runs north-south along the base of Hot Springs Mountain through a relatively narrow gorge that is between Hot Springs Mountain and West Mountain. The remaining floodplain is relatively flat and has been used as a major thoroughfare since the early 19th century. The road originally crossed and recrossed Hot Springs Creek several times, but the channeling of Hot Springs Creek in the latter part of the century resulted in straightening the road. The limits on the immediate vicinity posed by the geography only allowed for a linear north-south development.

#### Flora and Fauna

Forestation characterizes the flora of the park. The northern slopes of the ridges and basins provide a suitable habitat for deciduous forest dominated by oak and hickory. Pines predominate on the south sides of the ridges. Other shrubs and trees that flourish in this environment include yaupon, eastern hackberry, elm, juniper, dogwood, serviceberry, redbud, and holly. Ground cover in the spring and summer includes pinks, verbenas, phlox, spiderworts, golden ragwort, purple cornflower, rose gentians, asters, butterfly milkweed, and sunflowers. These species are a few of the various wildflowers found in the area.<sup>4</sup>

A wide variety of animals have lived in the park area over the centuries. Bison, wapiti, mountain lion, and wolf left the region after the arrival of European and American settlers. Some of the present-day species near

the hot springs include squirrel, rabbit, opossum, fox, coyote, skunk, raccoon, gopher, weasel, mink, rat, frog, and armadillo. Hot Springs National Park lands lie in the Mississippi flyway, which means migratory birds, game birds, and waterfowl spend portions of the year in the park vicinity.<sup>5</sup>

Hot and humid weather characterizes the climate during the late spring and summer months, with occasional periods of drought occurring during late summer. Long falls, mild winters, and early springs with few frosts and snows mark the seasonal progress of the year. This climate produced a typical southeastern woodland environment conducive to exploitation by aboriginal people.<sup>6</sup>

#### PREHISTORY AT THE HOT SPRINGS

Archeological evidence suggests that during the Paleo-Indian period (circa 12,000 to 8000 B.C.), early humans quarried for novaculite, a dense, chert-type rock, near the hot springs. Prehistoric peoples discovered that novaculite rock took a fine serrated edge when worked, making it valuable for use in a variety of tools and weapons. Lanceolated novaculite points are found in Paleo-Indian sites in southern portions of Arkansas along the Ouachita and Red rivers.<sup>7</sup>

About 8000 B.C., significant environmental changes accompanied the final melting of the great glacial ice sheets at the end of the Pleistocene period. Dramatic fluctuations in rainfall and temperature might have occurred. The modern geographical positions of the major life zones gradually formed during this period. Perhaps most significant for prehistoric people, many of the larger Pleistocene fauna (such as the elephant, horse, camel, and certain species of bison) became extinct.<sup>8</sup>

The Archaic period (8000 to 1000 B.C.) is characterized by the human adaptation to these changed environmental conditions. An economy based on gathering, fishing, and small-game hunting developed, thus marking

the end of the Paleo-Indian tradition. The Archaic period included a proliferation of local or regional tool traditions that seem to indicate adaptations to various environments. Typical artifacts include chipped and ground stone tools, atlatls, grinding stones, fishhooks, and various styles of projectile points. Late in the period fully grooved axes and tubular smoking pipes were added. Ample evidence exists that some of these tools and projectile points were made from novaculite quarried near Hot Springs. Novaculite tools from the Hot Springs quarries have been unearthed in Indian graves and mounds from the shores of the Gulf of Mexico to the Atlantic Ocean.<sup>9</sup>

Paleo-Indians and their descendants lived and built mounds along major waterways such as the Ouachita River (which the Gulpha Creek and Hot Springs Creek empty into). Various Indian tribes frequented the Hot Springs and Gulpha area for the novaculite and the water, but no evidence exists to suggest a significant settlement in the very area of the Hot Springs. The closest mound building activity took place near where Gulpha and Hot Springs Creek enter the Ouachita River.<sup>10</sup>

Around the 18th century the Caddo settled in the area, followed by the Choctaw, Cherokee, and other tribes in the early 19th century. These Indians told early white settlers that no tribe claimed the hot springs, but that all tribes bathed in the healing waters of the springs. The Indians, most likely, either lay in natural warm water pools or sat in spring-carved solution channels that were heated by the hot springs water and acted as vapor baths. The Quapaw lived in the Arkansas River delta area (Mississippi) and went to the Ouachita area to hunt and use the springs. In the 19th century the Quapaw were placed on a reservation southeast of Hot Springs. On August 24, 1818, the Quapaw ceded land including the Hot Springs to the U.S. and were removed to the Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma).<sup>11</sup>

## EUROPEAN DISCOVERY OF THE HOT SPRINGS

### Possible Discovery of the Hot Springs by Soto

After 1492 a number of Spanish expeditions set out to explore the New World and the interior of North America. In 1528 Panfilo de Narvaez led an expeditionary force of 400 men in a small fleet from Cuba to Florida. His fleet anchored in Tampa Bay where the troops disembarked. Narvaez and his army went inland. The ships waited as long as possible for their return, but finally departed. Discovering that he had missed his rendezvous, Narvaez considered several courses of action and finally decided to march his army inland. After enduring months of starvation, disease, and Indian attacks, the men returned to the coast and the surviving 240 men constructed five small boats in which they sailed west toward Mexico. In late October 1528 a storm wrecked three of the five boats. Some survivors eventually landed near present-day Galveston, Texas, while others landed farther along the Texas Islands. After eight years of wandering throughout the Southwest, four members of the expedition arrived at the Spanish settlement of Culiacan on the Gulf of California. One of the survivors, the Spanish nobleman Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca, went to Mexico City and related his adventures to authorities.<sup>12</sup>

On Vaca's return to Spain, he was invited to Hernando de Soto's home. Soto had served under Francisco Pizarro in Peru and had returned to Spain from that expedition a wealthy man. Just three months prior to Vaca's arrival in Spain, Soto had obtained permission to conquer Florida from the king of Spain, Charles V. Charles V granted him the title of governor and captain-general of Cuba and Florida. The king granted these concessions willingly, with Soto offering to bear all costs for the conquest. After questioning Vaca, Soto believed that great riches, comparable to those of the Aztecs and Incas, were his for the taking in the continent's interior. Confident, Soto left Spain on April 6, 1538, with a fleet of nine vessels and 600 men.<sup>13</sup>

Soto's army arrived in Cuba where they prepared for an assault on the American wilderness. On May 18, 1539, his armada sailed toward Florida and landed near Tampa Bay. The conquistadors marched inland in search of treasures. After 23 months and hundreds of miles, Soto's expedition arrived at the Mississippi River in April 1541. The Spaniards probably crossed the river at a point above thirty-five degrees latitude--not far from the mouth of the Arkansas River.<sup>14</sup>

By mid-September 1541 Soto's army reached the Tunica village of Tanico on the Ouachita River. The expedition remained there until the middle of October when they moved farther south to establish winter quarters. Two members of the expedition made references in their diaries to possible hot springs in the area. A book published in 1557 by the "Gentleman of Elvas" claimed that near the Tunica village the expedition's horses drank from a very warm and brackish pool. Diary notes taken by Soto's private secretary, Rodrigo Ranjel, described hot streams in this vicinity. These remarks possibly could be the first European description of the Arkansas hot springs.<sup>15</sup>

After leaving the Tunica village, Soto's army wandered through the Southwest. In April 1542 they again emerged on the banks of the Mississippi from the west. Soto fell ill and died here on May 21, 1542.<sup>16</sup> Luis de Moscoso de Alvarado took command of the ill-fated expedition after Soto's death. He led the beleaguered force back into the wilderness, hoping to locate a land route to Mexico. Unable to accomplish this goal, the army arrived back at the Mississippi above the mouth of the Arkansas River in December 1542 and established winter camp. They acquired needed supplies from the local Indians and set about constructing seven brigantines with which to descend the river. On July 2, 1543, the Spaniards launched their makeshift crafts along with some canoes. Shoreline Indian attacks and hazards arising from navigating down an unknown river punctuated their voyage to the Gulf of Mexico. Eighteen days later, 311 survivors of the original 600 men arrived at the mouth of the Mississippi River. After a dangerous coastal voyage, the remnant of Soto's army reached Mexico on September 10,

1543. Although the expedition failed to find any material wealth, it left a legacy of discoveries--including the knowledge of natural hot springs in what became Arkansas.<sup>17</sup>

### Spanish and French Exploration and Claims after the Soto Expedition

The failure of Soto's expedition delayed further Spanish attempts to penetrate the American wilderness for 10 years. In 1553 the king of Spain, angered by Indian attacks on Spanish sailors who were wrecked along the Florida coast, directed the organization of a military campaign to chastise the tribesmen. Don Tristan de Luna y Arrellano assembled and equipped an expedition of 1,500 men for that purpose. The expedition failed and this was the last significant attempt by the Spanish to explore and exploit the area of North America drained by the Mississippi River.<sup>18</sup>

French explorers undertook the next sustained effort at exploration of the region. French exploration centered on finding a water route from the Great Lakes to the sea through the interior of North America. During one exploration, Rene Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle, claimed the lands drained by the Mississippi for France on April 9, 1682. He named it Louisiana in honor of French King Louis XIV. La Salle tried to establish a colony at the mouth of the Mississippi, but was unsuccessful. A French expedition under Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville, and Jean Baptiste le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville II, established a settlement near the mouth of the Mississippi in 1699, which they named Biloxi (Fort Maurepas).<sup>19</sup>

Even before the founding of Biloxi, Iberville had traveled up the Mississippi to the vicinity of the confluence of Red River. There he conferred with the Tunica chief to form an alliance between the Tunicas and the French. Contacts continued between these two groups and, perhaps in this manner, the French learned about the hot springs near the Ouachita River. In 1833 an early American settler, Hiram Whittington, reported a local oral tradition that French hunters had

discovered hot springs around 1733. A few of the French settlers on the Mississippi River possibly visited and bathed in the hot springs before the formal transfer of Louisiana to Spain in 1767.<sup>20</sup>

A vacillating French foreign policy, an unstable French monarchy, and a series of ruinous colonial wars hindered the French effort to explore and settle Louisiana. The outbreak of the Seven Years' War in 1755, known in North America as the French and Indian War, concluded in 1763 with the expulsion of the French from North America. In 1762 France persuaded Spain to enter the conflict, promising the cession to Spain of Louisiana lands on the west bank of the Mississippi and those lands on the east bank below Bayou Manchac, which included New Orleans. The Treaty of Fontainebleau in 1762 formalized this agreement. The Treaty of Paris in 1763 further clarified the military and diplomatic aspects of the agreement. Great Britain received the provinces of East and West Florida from Spain in exchange for La Habana, Cuba, which the British had captured during the war. Great Britain also obtained from France that portion of Louisiana lying east of the Mississippi and north of Bayou Manchac to a point on the east bank of the Mississippi above Natchez. Spain received from France those sections of Louisiana described in the Treaty of Fontainebleau.<sup>21</sup>

In March 1766 Spanish officials arrived in New Orleans to take possession of Louisiana from the French. The formal transfer of the colony from France to Spain occurred on January 20, 1767. Colonial unrest kept the Spanish authorities from exercising full control over the colony until 1770.<sup>22</sup>

During the Spanish occupation, Don Juan Filhiol, following instructions from the Spanish Louisiana governor, conducted an exploration of the upper parts of the Ouachita River. Near the river he found hot springs coming from the ground, boiling and clear. These hot springs cooled as they mingled with the waters of cooler mountain streams in the area. In December of 1787, Filhiol petitioned the Spanish government for a land grant for an area occupied by these springs.<sup>23</sup>



## AMERICAN EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT

### The Hunter and Dunbar Expedition

The Treaty of Paris of 1783, which formally ended hostilities of the American Revolution, left several important matters unresolved. The newly independent American colonies wanted the right to freely navigate the Mississippi. Also, the precise demarcation between the Spanish provinces of Louisiana and the Floridas on the one hand and the United States on the other needed to be determined. Before the American Revolution, Great Britain and Spain had conflicting boundary claims. The Treaty of San Lorenzo in 1795 between the United States and Spain established a new boundary between these two countries at the thirty-first parallel on the south and the Mississippi on the west. The treaty further guaranteed the United States the right to navigate the Mississippi and to deposit goods in New Orleans.

This agreement did not satisfy American desires for greater control of the lower Mississippi, and negotiations continued between the two countries. The Spanish king, in the secret Treaty of San Ildefonso on October 1, 1800, ceded Louisiana back to France. The Treaty of Madrid on March 21, 1801, reconfirmed this agreement. Actual transfer of Louisiana from Spain to France occurred on November 30, 1803.<sup>24</sup>

In light of these developments, President Thomas Jefferson instructed his minister to Paris, Robert R. Livingston, to negotiate with French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte for the purchase of Louisiana. Livingston set out for France in March 1803, with permission to offer up to \$10 million for the purchase of New Orleans and the Floridas. (Jefferson erroneously believed that Spain had ceded the Floridas as well as Louisiana to Napoleon.) The French emperor met the American envoy and offered to sell all the Louisiana Territory to the United States for \$15 million, with the proviso that France maintain trading privileges with Louisiana for 10 years following the transfer. On April 30, 1803, Livingston accepted the proposal and Napoleon ratified the treaty. The United States Congress

ratified the agreement on May 22, 1803. On December 20, 1803, the French, represented by Pierre de Laussat, formally turned over the Louisiana Territory to the United States Territorial Governor William C.C. Claiborne.<sup>25</sup>

President Thomas Jefferson requested that Congress fund several expeditions into the newly acquired Louisiana Territory. Jefferson wrote to his friend William Dunbar of Natchez, asking him to lead the expedition planned for the region of the Red and Arkansas rivers. Dunbar agreed to plan and prepare the expedition, but requested that President Jefferson send a younger scientist to travel with the expedition as he was too old for such a strenuous undertaking. Jefferson selected Doctor George Hunter from Philadelphia for this task. The lack of adequate government funding and feared Spanish and Indian hostilities forced the expedition to reduce the original scope of exploration. Dunbar suggested that they undertake a more modest trip to the hot springs near the Ouachita River. He commented that these spring waters reputedly could cure diseases. Dunbar knew of several paralytic people who traveled from the Natchez area to these hot springs in hopes of recovery. President Jefferson agreed, and Dunbar decided to accompany the expedition.<sup>26</sup>

While the Hunter-Dunbar expedition was in preparation, Joseph Macrery and a small party from Natchez visited the hot springs during the summer months of 1804. Macrery said he witnessed volcanic activity near the spring and observed molten rock. These findings remained unconfirmed by later explorers--with one exception. Timothy Flint, during his visit to the area in the 1820s, claimed to hear noises like those accompanying volcanic eruptions in the mountains around Hot Springs. Macrery and Flint believed that the volcanic activity heated the spring waters.<sup>27</sup>

On October 16, 1804, the Hunter-Dunbar expedition left Natchez for the hot springs with a small military escort and two local guides. The military escort was a lieutenant, a sergeant, and 12 men. This small expedition rowed a 23-oared boat up the Mississippi to the Red River and

continued up Red River to Black River and into the Ouachita River. The shallow water hampered the progress of the boat, which was abandoned in favor of another one to get over the shallows. The expedition arrived in the vicinity of the springs on December 6, 1804, and the next day traveled to the hot springs.<sup>28</sup>

Dunbar observed: "We found at the Hot-Springs an Open Log-Cabin and a few huts of split boards, all calculated for summer encampment, & which have been erected by persons resorting to the Springs for the recovery of their health."<sup>29</sup> On December 10, Dunbar conducted a detailed survey of the hot springs. He described six principal springs located either in the creek bed or on the east side of the creek. The temperatures in these springs ranged from 148° to 150° Fahrenheit. Dunbar found that in the cooler months vapor from the hot springs floated above the creek.<sup>30</sup>

The expedition spent several more weeks in scientific investigation of the springs. They discovered one kind of algae and one kind of mollusk living in the hot springs. Their local guides told tales of how the hot springs relieved the stiffness from rheumatism and other diseases of the joints. At the end of December the expedition departed. Shortly after returning to Natchez, Dunbar and Hunter sent a report of their observations to President Jefferson.<sup>31</sup>

#### Other Early Accounts of the Hot Springs and Settlement

Lieutenant Zebulon Montgomery Pike led an expedition up the Arkansas River to the Rocky Mountains in 1806. There he dispatched Lieutenant James B. Wilkerson to return down the Arkansas River on a mapping expedition. Pike headed south where he was apprehended by Mexican officials and detained for a year. Wilkerson arrived in Arkansas Post on January 9, 1807. The maps that he drew located the hot springs sites.<sup>32</sup>

About 1807 Jean Emmanuel Prudhomme, a plantation owner, arrived at the hot springs and constructed a cabin. He came there to regain his health.

After two years of bathing in the hot water and a diet of local foods, he had fully regained his health and returned home to Louisiana.<sup>33</sup>

Visitors continued to come during the summer months to bathe in the hot waters. These early visitors built cabins or sheds for protection from the weather and hired local hunters to supply their camps with food. John Perciful (also known as Percifull or Percival) settled in the area and made a living selling food to the visitors and renting cabins for the summer months. By 1814 more than 20 summer shelters could be found in the valley, and two years later maps depicted trails from the Mississippi to the hot springs.<sup>34</sup>

Major Stephen H. Long of the Army's topographical engineers visited the area in January of 1818. He found approximately 60 hot springs in the vicinity of Hot Springs Mountain and estimated that the springs issued more than 1,000 gallons a minute. Long found that water in the hottest springs could be used for brewing tea or cooking meat or eggs.<sup>35</sup> The community around the hot springs consisted of 14 or 15 primitive cabins, which Long found unoccupied except for one. He believed these cabins to be primarily for summer habitation.<sup>36</sup>

Thomas Nuttall, an English naturalist, visited near the hot springs in May 1819. He wrote that someday the place would become a resort for people from the Midwest and South. Nuttall learned from Long that a rude structure for taking steam baths stood by one of the springs and that the springs varied in temperature from 86° to 150° Fahrenheit. That same year an Arkansan visited the springs and found a few cabins there for visitors. He observed that one of the other visitors gave daily lectures on the origin and medical benefits of the hot springs.<sup>37</sup>

In 1820 a party from Stephen Long's expedition to the Rocky Mountains stopped on their way back east to examine the hot springs. They found a Doctor Wilson at the springs dispensing medical advice on the use of the hot waters. This party observed that the baths consisted of a few excavations in the rocks. Bathers regulated the flow of hot water to suit

their pleasure. That same year Joseph Mellard (also referred to as Millard) built a double log cabin, which served as the first hotel for the area. He gave up this business in 1826 or 1827.<sup>38</sup>

The year-round population around the hot springs remained small, with the 1820 census listing only 153 individuals in the Hot Springs township of Arkansas Territory. Development occurred slowly during the 1820s, with a number of cabins being erected near the hot springs. Indians continued to come during the spring and early summer to bathe in the warm water pools. A visitor to the springs in 1827 found an operating tavern and observed that many people came to the springs seeking cures for liver, spleen, and joint diseases. In 1828 Lucovicus Belding took over the vacant Perciful's cabins and constructed a hotel for visitors. Belding's hotel offered the amenities of good meals, clean linen, and silverware to entice visitors. The community around the hot springs became known as Thermopolis for a short period of time.<sup>39</sup>

One visitor to the springs in 1829 praised the benefit of the springs in the following manner:

They [the hot springs] have produced extraordinary cures in rheumatism, paralysis, liver complaint, enlargement of the spleen, eruptions, pulmonary complaints, obstructions and chronic disorders of every kind.

Where the system has been saturated with mercury which has been imperfectly purged out, they will salivate again after a great lapse of time carry off the mercury. <sup>40</sup>Old and fixed venereal taints are also eradicated by their use.

He found the bathing accommodations less praiseworthy and commented:

The accommodations for using the water are so entirely deficient that it would not be wonderful if but little was effected by them. The sweat house is rudely constructed with boards which but partially exclude the air; and the mouth of it is stopped by a blanket.

The patient has to come into the open air to dry himself, hurry on his clothes and go home.<sup>41</sup>

During the next few years improvements came slowly, with Asa Thompson constructing the first bathhouse in 1830. It was a simple log building with one wooden tub near the sweat bath. People traveled either by steamboat from New Orleans to Little Rock and then overland to Hot Springs or by trail from the Mississippi to the springs. The construction of a second log bathhouse with wooden tubs occurred before 1832. These bathing facilities were near the present-day Arlington Lawn and Hale Bathhouse. In addition to the bathhouses, several settlers began using their cabins as stores that served visitors.<sup>42</sup>

#### Transfer of the Hot Springs to the United States Government in 1832

By the late 1820s people in Arkansas and elsewhere were aware of the value of the hot springs. John Pope, the Arkansas territorial governor in 1829, requested the United States Congress to erect at Hot Springs a building to accommodate the sick and either donate or lease the structure to the territory. The Congress took no action on this proposal. In 1830 Ambrose H. Sevier, Arkansas territorial representative, sent a letter to the editor of the Arkansas Gazette suggesting that the Arkansas Territorial Assembly may wish to lease the hot springs and dispense the proceeds to the needy. The territorial assembly did not act on this proposal until 1832 when the United States Congress passed superseding legislation.<sup>43</sup>

In 1832 Sevier introduced a bill in Congress stating:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives that the Hot Springs in Arkansas Territory, together with four sections of land with the springs, as near the center as may be, are hereby reserved and set apart for future disposal by the United States Government, and are not to be entered, preempted,<sup>44</sup> or appropriated for any purpose or purposes whatever.

This bill, in slightly modified form, passed Congress and became law on April 20, 1832. Little opposition arose to the proposal in either the House of Representatives or the Senate. The Arkansas Gazette credited Sevier for his efforts to get the bill passed. The next year the Arkansas Territorial Assembly requested Congress to improve the navigable water routes to Hot Springs to aid the hundreds of invalids who made their way to the springs each year. Congress took no action on the request.<sup>45</sup>

The question of state or federal ownership of the hot springs remained open for the next several years. In 1836 the Arkansas Constitutional Convention debated a proposal to request the federal government return the hot springs to the state for disposition. The convention rejected the proposal and the springs remained under federal control.<sup>46</sup>

#### Bathhouse Row in the 1830s

The same year that the United States Congress acted to place the hot springs under federal control, some 400 people traveled to the springs in hopes of restoring their health. A few cabins--used as residences, stores, and boarding houses--were scattered around the springs. The visitors usually came in the spring and remained until fall before departing to their homes in the south and border states.<sup>47</sup>

In 1833 the United States government awarded a mail contract, which stipulated that postal service to Hot Springs be conducted on a weekly basis. George W. Featherstonhaugh, an English adventurer and scientist, arrived in Hot Springs in December 1834. He observed the local community consisted of four small cabins with one serving as a store.<sup>48</sup>

Featherstonhaugh described his own accommodations at Hot Springs as follows:

It [the cabin] had a roof to it as well as a little portico, as a defense against the rays of the sun, but this was literally all

that it had, for not an article of furniture, was there either in the shape of table or chair. The floor was formed of boards roughly and unevenly hewn, and, unfortunately, some of them wanting. Being reckoned, however, the best lodging in the place, we made the best of it, and through our new friends got skins, blankets, and other appliances to serve as bedding. We next laid in firewood and constructed a kind of table, so that when we succeeded in borrowing two old chairs, we looked with some satisfaction upon our new attempt at housekeeping. We were sure at any rate of being alone, and of being out of reach of filth of every kind; in fact it was almost as desirable as being in the woods, and had the advantage of shelter. How invalids contrive to be comfortable, who come to this ragged place, I cannot image, yet I understand<sup>49</sup> that ten or a dozen people are often crammed into this room.

Visitors in 1835 found two log stores open for business. These early tourists stayed in cabins or tents and bathed in pools or in small bathhouses. A few of the pools contained wooden curbing and hollowed out gum logs for bathtubs. A hack service offered visitors transportation from Little Rock to Hot Springs. The next year a stage line began operations. The improvement in public accessibility resulted in increased visitation and additional bathing facilities. By the end of the decade, travelers reported five bathhouses which provided tub and sweat baths standing near the springs.

Lack of more sophisticated technologies limited Hot Springs' first buildings to simple, primitive structures. Early builders squared logs and split planks for the handcrafted structures. This type of rugged frontier construction continued until about 1835, when a sawmill made cut lumber readily available for building.<sup>51</sup> The introduction of the sawmill resulted in a radical change in local architecture. Builders began to add architectural elements and decorative details which would have been difficult or virtually impossible to build without the new technology.

The addition of new functions in the settlement also affected changes to the architectural evolution of Hot Springs. The first small structures served simple, utilitarian purposes--residences, liveries, hotels, boarding houses. As larger numbers of people came to the springs, the hotels



expanded operations to provide more for their guests than just a bed to sleep in at night. One entrepreneur constructed a "house of entertainment" for guests' amusement.<sup>52</sup> The new structures were larger than their predecessors, and more of them appeared to serve the burgeoning spa industry.

#### Bathhouse Row in the 1840s and 1850s

In the 1840s the vapor bath still operated. Here the bather sat in a small wooden enclosure over a spring with the steam rising from below through the wooden floor planks. Most bathers did not bother obtaining medical advice, but they preferred prescribing their own treatments. Occasionally, a person calling himself a medical doctor came to the springs and gave questionable medical consultation. The majority of people coming to the hot springs were men; however, a few women sought the benefits of the hot water.<sup>53</sup>

During the 1840s the community of Hot Springs continued to grow, with saloons, boardinghouses, and hotels constructed to accommodate the increased visitation. The stage line began making trips to Hot Springs from Little Rock three times a week instead of twice. The trip took a day and a half and cost \$6 one way. Road improvements, later, reduced the stage time to between 10 and 12 hours.<sup>54</sup>

The community of Hot Springs expanded in the 1850s. William H. Hammond became the first permanent physician in Hot Springs in 1850. The next year the people of Hot Springs incorporated the settlement as a city. An estimated 3,000 visitors from throughout the South, Midwest, and East traveled to the community in 1854. Each proprietor of the newly constructed hotels claimed that his hotel represented the most modern and luxurious in town.<sup>55</sup>

At the same time the primitive bathhouse technology was becoming slightly more advanced. John C. Hale arrived in Hot Springs in 1838, and by

1854 he had erected a hotel and updated a large frame bathhouse. He built wooden troughs that carried water directly from one of the springs to a tank at the rear of his bathhouse, undoubtedly similar to the system shown in figure 1. Inside, the bather entered a dressing room, disrobed, and then proceeded to the bathroom where he immersed himself in a small wooden tub. The tub was equipped with a cold water spout and a rope controlling the hot spring water spout from the tank. The bather let in as much hot water as he wanted. When he was done bathing, he went to a vapor room--most likely a room built over a thermal spring with space between the floorboards where the vapor naturally rose--and then to a simple shower and back to the dressing room.<sup>56</sup> At least one bathhouse had a small "ladies department" as shown in figure 2. Those who could not afford bathhouse fees still immersed themselves in the stream (fig. 3), and drinking the waters directly from the spring (figs. 4 and 5) remained a most popular pastime.

During the late 1850s the well-established settlement continued to grow. Physically limited by the topography, the north-south linear development sat wedged along Hot Springs Creek between West Mountain and Hot Springs Mountain. On the east side of the creek adjacent to the springs, seven bathhouses and three drinking pavilions had individual access bridges over the creek so that patrons could reach the facilities. On the west side of the creek, more businesses opened their doors--doctors' offices, grocery stores, and dry good stores. Some of the bathhouses and hotels began year-round operations. Hotels continued to increase their patronage by adding ice-cream and soda fountains and drinking and billiard saloons.<sup>57</sup>

## Notes from Chapter 2

1. Jeffrey S. Hanor, Fire in Folded Rocks: Geology of Hot Springs National Park (n.p.: Eastern National Park and Monument Association, 1980), pp. 22-30; Kirk Bryan, "Report on the Hot Water Supply of the Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas," Report prepared for the National Park Service by the U.S. Geological Survey, November 10, 1921 (Typewritten), p. 10; Forrest M. Benson and Donald S. Libbey, "History of Hot Springs National Park," (Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas, ca. 1950) p. 4; James Gilluly, Aaron C. Waters, and Alfred O. Woodford, The Principles of Geology (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1959), p. 99; Charles M. Baker, "Archeological Inventory of Hot Springs National Park" (Fayetteville, Arkansas, June 1975), p. 2 (Typewritten); and Walter Harvey Weed, Geological Sketch of Hot Springs District, Arkansas, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office (hereafter referred to as GPO), 1902), pp. 82, 84.
2. Hanor, Fire in Folded Rocks: Geology of Hot Springs National Park, pp. 22-30; Benson and Libbey, p. 5; Gilluly, Waters, and Woodford, The Principles of Geology, p. 99; Baker, "Archeological Inventory of Hot Springs National Park," p. 2; and Francis J. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park: The Story of a City and the Nation's Health Resort (hereafter cited as Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park) (Little Rock, Arkansas: Pioneer Press, 1966), pp. 134-137.
3. A discussion of the chemical content of the water is included later in this report. *Ibid.*, pp. 138-139; Bryan, "Report on the Hot Water Supply," p. 18; and "Waters Take 4,000-year Trip," Scene (May 1982), p. 5.
4. M.S. Bedinger, Valley of the Vapors: Hot Springs National Park (Philadelphia: Eastern National Park and Monument Association, 1974); and Baker, p. 3.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 10; Benson and Libbey, "History of Hot Springs National Park," p. 3; and Ronald J. Mason, "The Paleo-Indian Tradition in Eastern North America," Current Anthropology, 3 (April 1962): 234.
8. For further details of post-Pleistocene climatic change, see Ernst Antev, "Climatic Changes and Pre-White Man," University of Utah Bulletin, 27 (1948): 168-91, and D.H. Denton and W. Kalen, "Holocene Climatic Variations: Their Pattern and Possible Cause," Quaternary Research 3 (August 1973): 155-205; for further details regarding lifezone shifts, see H.E. Wright, Jr. "The Dynamic Nature of Holocene Vegetation," Quaternary Research 6 (December 1976): 581-96, and, James

B. Stoltman, "Temporal Models in Prehistory: An Example from Eastern North America," Current Anthropology 19 (December 1978): 703-29.

9. William G. Haag, "The Archaic of the Lower Mississippi Valley," American Antiquity, 26 (January 1961): 318-319; Baker, "Archeological Inventory of Hot Springs National Park," p. 10; and John R. Fordyce, "Hot Springs National Park: Archeology, Legends and History in the Evolution of the Bath," Area and Service History 1900-1952 File, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas, 1933.

10. Letter from Eldon G. Reyer, Associate Regional Director, Planning and Cultural Resources, Southwest Regional Office, National Park Service to Manager, Denver Service Center, National Park Service, October 30, 1987.

11. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 5-6; Benson and Libbey, "History of Hot Springs National Park", pp. 3-4; "Manataka," The Arkansas Gazette, 5 April 1892, p. 1; Ruth Irene Jones, "Hot Springs: Ante-Bellum Watering Place," The Arkansas Historical Quarterly, 14 (Spring 1955), p. 3; Baker "Archeological Inventory of Hot Springs National Park," p. 11; and Letter from Eldon G. Reyer, Associate Regional Director, Planning and Cultural Resources, Southwest Regional Office, National Park Service to Manager, Denver Service Center, National Park Service, October 30, 1987.

12. For background information on Spanish exploration, see John Francis Bannon, The Spanish Borderlands Frontier: 1513-1821 (New York: Holt, Rhinehart, and Winston, 1970) and Frederick W. Hodge and Theodore H. Lewis, eds., Spanish Explorers in the United States, 1528-1553 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907). Daniel Aaron, Richard Hofstadter, and William Miller, The United States: A History of the Republic (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1967), pp. 3-5; and Frederic Austin Ogg, The Opening of the Mississippi: A Struggle for Supremacy in the American Interior (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1968), p. 43.

13. Alcee Fortier, A History of Louisiana, vol. 1 Early Explorations and the Domination of the French, 1512-1768 (New York: Manzi, Joyant, and Co., 1904), pp. 4-5.

14. Ibid., pp. 5, 9; Alcee Fortier, Louisiana: Comprising Sketches of Parishes, Towns, Events, Institutions, and Persons. Arranged in Cyclopedic Form, 2 vols. (Century Historical Association, 1914), 2:161; and Ogg, The Opening of the Mississippi, p. 34.

15. The final report of the De Soto Expedition Commission did not favor the route which placed Soto near the Arkansas hot springs. Joseph Sanchez, Chief of the Spanish Colonial Research Center, in his translation of the Elvas account found in Relacao Verdadeira dos Trabalhos que o Governador D. Fernando de Souto e certos Fidalgos Portugueses passaram no descobrimento da Provincia da Florida agora novamente escrita por um Fidalgo de Elvas discovered the word "alagon". In previous translations,

the word was translated to mean lake. Sanchez believes the word, as used in the sixteenth century, more accurately translates to mean pool or marshlands. This translation could mean that possibly Soto and his men were in the vicinity of the Arkansas hot springs. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 8-11; John Gould Fletcher, Arkansas (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1947), pp. 16-18; U.S. Congress, House, Final Report of the United States De Soto Expedition Commission, H. Doc. 71, 76th Cong., 1st sess., 1939, pp. 254-255; and Frederick W. Cron, "The Hot Springs of the Ouachita," on file at Garland County Historical Society and Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas, pp. 7, 10.

16. The reemergence of Soto's army has been variously placed--near the mouth of the Arkansas River, near the mouth of Red River, and near present-day Natchez. Ogg, The Opening of the Mississippi, pp. 37-40; Fortier, History of Louisiana, 1:10; and Benjamin Franklin French, ed., trans., 5 vols., Historical Collections of Louisiana Embracing the Translations of Many Rare and Valuable Documents Relating to the Natural, Civil and Political History of that State Compiled with Historical and Biographical Notes (New York: Redfield, 1952), 4:46.

17. A number of works detail the movements of Soto's expedition from its landing in Florida through its descent of the Mississippi River. The best of these are: Buckingham Smith, trans., Narrative of the Career of Hernando De Soto by a Gentleman of Elvas (New York: Bradford Club, 1866); Verdadeira Relacam, Discovery and Conquest of Terra Florida, ed. and trans. Richard Hakluyt (New York: Franklin Press, 1966); Theodore Maynard, De Soto and the Conquistadores (New York: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1930); Theodore Irving, Conquest of Florida Under Hernando de Soto, 2 vols. (Fort Myers, Florida: Island Press, 1973); and Peter Lily, The Great Riding: The Story of De Soto in America (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1983). A useful compilation of material concerning the Soto expedition can be found in the U.S. House of Representatives, Final Report of the United States De Soto Expedition Commission. H. Doc. 71, 76th Cong., 1st sess., 1939. Fortier, History of Louisiana, 1:10; Ogg, The Opening of the Mississippi, pp. 40-41; and French, Historical Collections of Louisiana, 4:xv, 46.

18. Joseph Wallace, The History of Illinois Under the French Rule Embracing a General View of the Dominion in North America with Some Account of the English Occupation of Illinois (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke Company, 1899), p. 33.

19. The lands drained by the Mississippi included what became the state of Arkansas. Ogg, The Opening of the Mississippi, pp. 92, 110, 118-119, 180; Fortier, History of Louisiana, 1:23, 38; French, Historical Collections of Louisiana, 4:48-49, 174-75; and Marcel Giraud, A History of French Louisiana, 4 vols., trans. Joseph C. Lambert, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1974), 1:11.

20. William O. Scroggs, Early Trade and Travel in the Lower Mississippi Valley (Baton Rouge: Ortieb's Printing House, 1911), pp. 6-7; Fortier,

History of Louisiana 1:39, 43, 625; Richebourg Gaillard McWilliams, Fleur de Lys and Calmet: Being the Penicaut Narrative of French Adventure in Louisiana (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1953), p. 23; Giraud, History of French Louisiana, 1:12; Cron, "The Hot Springs of the Ouachita," p. 346; and Mary D. Hudgins, "A Thumbnail History of Hot Springs," Hot Springs Natural History Journal 2(1954): 4.

21. Fortier, History of Louisiana, 2:153, 455-56; Wallace, The History of Illinois Under the French Rule Embracing a General View of the Dominion in North America with Some Account of the English Occupation of Illinois, pp. 363, 365; and Ogg, The Opening of the Mississippi, pp. 287-288.

22. James Wilbert Miller, "The Spanish Commandant of Baton Rouge, 1779-1795" (Master's thesis, Louisiana State University, 1964), p. 2; John Preston Moore, Revolt in Louisiana: The Spanish Occupation, 1766-1779 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1976), pp. 2, 40; and Fortier, History of Louisiana, 1:148-49.

23. Cron, "The Hot Springs of the Ouachita," p. 3.

24. Amos Stoddard, Sketches, Historical and Descriptive of Louisiana (New York: AMS Press, 1973; orig. pub. Philadelphia: Mathew Carey, 1812), p. 132; Rose Meyers, A History of Baton Rouge, 1699-1812 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1976), pp. 73-74; Arthur Preston Whitaker, The Mississippi Question, 1719-1803: A Study in Trade, Politics, and Diplomacy (Gouster Mass.: Peter Smith, 1962), p. 51; and Aaron, Hofstader, and Miller, The United States, pp. 206-208.

25. Ogg, The Opening of the Mississippi, p. 591; Fortier, History of Louisiana, 2:226, 237, 247, 269; John Francis McDermott, ed., The Spanish in the Mississippi Valley, 1762-1804 (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1974), p. viii; and Asbury Dickins and John W. Forney, eds., American State Papers: Documents of the Congress of the United States in Relation to the Public Lands from the First Session of the Twentieth Congress, March 3, 1829, 8 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Gales and Seaton, 1860), 5:708.

26. Erow Rowland, comp., Life, Letters and Papers of William Dunbar of Elgin, Morayshire, Scotland, and Natchez, Mississippi: Pioneer Scientist of the Southern United States (Jackson, Mississippi: Press of the Mississippi Historical Society, 1930), p. 134; Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 21; John Francis McDermott, ed., The Western Journals of Dr. George Hunter, 1796-1805, New Series, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, vol. 53, part 4 (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1963), p. 11; and James D. Richardson, comp., A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the President, 1789-1897 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1896), p. 398.

27. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 23; Bryan, K., "Report on the Hot Water Supply," p. 16; Timothy Flint, The History and Geography of the Mississippi Valley to which is Appended a Condensed Physical Geography of the Atlantic United States,

and the Whole American Continent, 2 vols. (Cincinnati: E.H. Flint and L.R. Lincoln, 1832), 1:283; and Norsworthy, "Hot Springs, Arkansas," p. 47.

28. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 21; McDermott, ed., The Western Journals, p. 12; and Norsworthy, "Hot Springs, Arkansas," p. 20.

29. Rowland, Life, Letters and Papers of William Dunbar of Elgin, Morasphire, Scotland, and Natchez, Mississippi, p. 272.

30. Ibid., p. 273.

31. McDermott, ed., The Western Journals p. 106; Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 22-23; and Rowland, Life, Letters and Papers of William Dunbar of Elgin, Morayshire, Scotland, and Natchez, Mississippi, pp. 299-300.

32. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 23; and Robert G. Athearn, High Country Empire: The High Plains and Rockies (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1960), pp. 17-18.

33. Several authors claim that Prudhomme arrived at the hot springs in 1806 and others state that he did not arrive until 1807. Neither group offers overwhelming evidence to support its position. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 26; Benson and Libbey, "History of Hot Springs National Park," p. 14, Dallas T. Herndon, ed., Centennial History of Arkansas, 3 vols. (Chicago: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1922), 1:859; Work Projects Administration, Arkansas: A Guide to the State (New York: Hastings House, 1941), p. 156; and Fay Hempstead, Historical Review of Arkansas: Its Commerce, Industry and Modern Affairs (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1911), p. 1:546.

34. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 26-27; Benson and Libbey, p. 14; and Jones, "Hot Springs: Ante-Bellum Watering Place," p. 5.

35. Dee Brown, The American Spa: Hot Springs, Arkansas, (Little Rock, Arkansas: Rose Publishing Company, 1982), p. 12.

36. Eugene L. Schwab, ed., Travel in the Old South: Selected From Periodicals of the Times, 2 vols. (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1973), 1:135.

37. Thomas Nuttall, A Journal of Travels into Arkansas Territory During the Year 1819, ed. Sovaie Lottinville (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1979), pp. 124-125; and "Early Days in Hot Springs County and Vicinity," Southern Standard (Arkadelphia), 17 February 1896, p. 1.

38. Brown, The American Spa, p. 63; Fay Hempstead, A Pictorial History of Arkansas From Earliest Times to the Year 1890 (St. Louis:

N.D. Thompson Publishing Co., 1890), p. 1,150; Work Projects Administration, Arkansas, p. 157; Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 23, 27; Hempstead, Historical Review of Arkansas 1:548; and Hudgins, "A Thumbnail History," p. 5.

39. A more detailed discussion of the medical properties of the springs and early bathing regimens will be discussed in later sections of this report. "Hot Springs: Ante-Bellum Watering Place," Jones, 14:6-9; Cron, "The Hot Springs of the Ouachita," pp. 54-55; and Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 27-28.

40. "The Hot Springs," The Arkansas Gazette (Little Rock), 26 August 1829, p. 1.

41. Ibid.

42. By this time, the small community around the waters had become known as Hot Springs. Jones, "Hot Springs: Ante-Bellum Watering Place," 14:9; Hempstead, Historical Review of Arkansas, p. 548; Herndon, Centennial History of Arkansas, 1:863; Work Projects Administration, Arkansas, p. 157; and Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 42-43.

43. Lonnie J. White, Politics on the Southern Frontier: Arkansas Territory, 1819-1836 (Memphis, Tenn.: Memphis State University Press, 1964), p. 97; and Clarence Edwin Carter, comp. and ed., The Territorial Papers of the United States, vol. 20 The Territory of Arkansas, 1825-1829, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1954), p. 631.

44. Benson and Libbey, "History of Hot Springs National Park," p. 2.

45. Jones, "Hot Springs: Ante-Bellum Watering Place," 14:8; and Clarence Edwin Carter, comp. and ed., The Territorial Papers of the United States, vol. 21 The Territory of Arkansas, 1829-1863, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1954), p. 828.

46. Ibid., p. 1,189.

47. Jones, "Hot Springs: Ante-Bellum Watering Place," 14:11; and Norsworthy, "Hot Springs, Arkansas," pp. 5, 9.

48. Carter, The Territory of Arkansas, 1829-1836, 21:760-761; and George W. Featherstonhaugh, Featherstonhaugh's Excursion Through the Slave States (London: John Murray, 1844), p. 106.

49. Ibid., pp. 106-107.

50. Jones, "Hot Springs: Ante-Bellum Watering Place," pp. 14-16; Hempstead, Historical Review of Arkansas, p. 550; Herndon, Centennial History of Arkansas, 1:864; Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 43; and Benson and Libbey, "History of Hot Springs National Park," p. 15.



51. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 25.
52. Ibid., p. 38.
53. Norsworthy, "Hot Springs, Arkansas," p. 26; and Featherstonhaugh, Featherstonhaugh's Excursion Through the Slave States, pp. 106-107.
54. Jones, "Hot Springs: Ante-Bellum Watering Place," pp. 14-16; Hempstead, Historical Review of Arkansas, p. 550; and Herndon, Centennial History of Arkansas, 1:864.
55. Brown, The American Spa, p. 63; Norsworthy, "Hot Springs, Arkansas," p. 29; Benson and Libbey, "History of Hot Spings National Park," p. 15; and Work Projects Administration, Arkansas, p. 157.
56. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 35, 39-41.
57. Jones, "Hot Springs: Ante-Bellum Watering Place," pp. 24-29.



## CHAPTER 3: THE EVOLUTION OF BATHING AND MEDICAL PRACTICES AT HOT SPRINGS IN THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES

### BATHING PRACTICES OVER THE YEARS

#### Bathing Procedures in the 19th Century

The earliest bathing procedure consisted of merely reclining in natural pools of hot springs and cool creek water for long periods of time. This procedure continued until the bather was cured or left the hot springs. In 1804 a member of the Hunter and Dunbar expedition told how he lay in Hot Springs Creek with a blanket over himself and drank hot water until he broke out in a sweat. He then plunged into cold water, got out, and dried himself off. After resting for a while, he repeated the procedure. Usually, he took three baths a day for three days and rested for a day or two after the treatment; then he repeated the process. After two weeks he felt strong enough to join his companions in a hunting expedition.<sup>1</sup>

During the 1820s crude vapor baths stood over the springs, and bathers breathed in the vapors for extended periods of time. A bather coming to the hot springs either set his own regimen of vapor and pool baths or took the advice from other bathers. Some patrons spent only a few hours in the hot water; others lay in Hot Spring Creek day and night.<sup>2</sup>

During the 1830s a few of the bathhouses offered patrons wooden tubs. A visitor to a bathhouse in 1834 found the building divided into two portions. The first served as a place to undress; the second room, constructed over a hot springs, consisted of benches placed over a floor of 2-inch-wide boards set 2 inches apart. Steam from the springs rose through these separations. A person remained in this steam room for 30 to 40 minutes and received a dousing with cold water when he reentered the dressing room. After taking this steam bath in the morning, the bather usually took a water bath in a tub or the creek during the afternoon.<sup>3</sup>

One writer on the benefits of the hot springs wrote in 1841 that two vapor baths were required each day, the first coming before breakfast. He warned that one should neither stay in the bath longer than 15 minutes nor in water over 104 degrees. Some individuals did not take the entire bath, but placed their affected arms or legs in a pool or in rushing water to get relief. Other advice in area newspapers included the assertion that the best times to visit the hot springs were from March 1 to July 1 and from September 1 to January 1. Another authority recommended that after one or two months of bathing a respite of some time was necessary before continuing with the baths.<sup>4</sup>

Starting in the 1850s physicians began taking up permanent residence in Hot Springs, although many visitors did without their services. By the late 1850s a series of troughs brought the water to the bather as he reclined in a wooden tub. A series of levers and wooden blocks released hot and cold water until the desired temperatures were achieved. Also showers came into use, which allowed hot water to cascade down on the bather from above and, preferably, on that portion of the body needing treatment. During the bath the bather drank thermal water as part of the cure. Bathers remained in Hot Springs from one week to two months taking baths.<sup>5</sup>

A few changes occurred in the bathing regimen after the Civil War. Each bather brought two towels, a flannel bathing suit, a tin cup, and a bucket capable of holding two quarts of hot water to the bathhouse. Bathers undressed in one room and proceeded to another room to take a tub bath for 15 to 20 minutes. By the 1870s some bathhouses recommended only three minutes for the hot bath, and a three-minute timer stood by the tub. Next came the steam bath in which the bathers remained for as long as they could stand the heat--usually six to eight minutes. During the bathing regimen, they constantly drank the hot water. After the steam bath, they went back to the dressing room where a bath attendant wrapped them in blankets. Then they walked back to their hotel or boardinghouses where they rested for 30 minutes under the blankets. The bathers were warned not to fall asleep as this was considered dangerous.<sup>6</sup>

Also popular was a spring known as Ral Hole. Here the hot water pool had a mud bottom and was channeled to a lower pool for cooling. The bathers took off their clothes in the woods nearby and entered the lower pool slowly, going in deeper as they got used to the water temperature. After 10 to 20 minutes they returned to the bank and plastered themselves with mud. They lay for several hours with the mud pack on before returning to the pool and washing themselves off. Sometimes 20 people crowded into this pool for a bath. Men used the pool during the afternoon and women bathed there in the morning.<sup>7</sup>

By the mid-1870s the bathing regimen became more diverse, and physicians prescribed various types of baths for patients. Physicians prescribed specific times and manners for a person to bathe, steam, and lie in pack blankets. Visitors were cautioned against taking the water without a doctor's advice. The period of time for tub baths became six to 10 minutes and the time in the steam bath shortened to two minutes; only one bath regimen took place each day. The water mixture for the tub baths consisted of two parts cold water to one part hot water.<sup>8</sup>

In 1878 the first superintendent at Hot Springs, Benjamin Kelley, established regulations for bathing. Kelley closed Ral Hole for bathing, and later the first Government Free Bathhouse operated at the site. Also he recorded the types of tubs in use at Hot Springs. His 1881 inventory of bathhouse equipment lists zinc-, slate-, iron-, wood-, and copper-trimmed tubs in use during the bathing regimen. Two years later porcelain tubs were in use at a few bathhouses. In addition, the bathhouses offered electric baths and mercurial vapor baths.<sup>9</sup>

During the 1880s a few of the open springs gradually dried up. Corn Hole, a popular spring for people to soak their feet, dried up in 1882, and government officials covered over the mudhole. Other open springs were either covered over by the government or the bathhouse owners to prevent their pollution.<sup>10</sup>

The bathhouses began using vapor cabinets around 1884. The bather sat in the cabinet with the lid closing tightly around the neck. Vapor from the hot water rose through the floor of the cabinet. Most of the bathhouse bathing attendants kept the temperature of these cabinets around 110 degrees and tub baths at 98 degrees. A few bathhouses preferred to keep the vapor baths at more than 130 degrees. The bather sat in the cabinet from 10 to 20 minutes. The closed lid prevented the steam from going into the bather's lungs. The bather also received a douche of hot water poured or sprayed on an affected area of the body. This usually occurred with the bather in the tub. Physicians recommended that bathers take the baths early in the morning and on an empty stomach.<sup>11</sup> Toward the end of the 1880s the bathhouses offered Russian and Turkish baths, and in the 1890s German needle baths and Scotch douches were added to the types of water treatment available. By this time bathhouses offered separate bathing facilities for men and women. Earlier, men and women had bathed at different times. Another change in the bathing regimen was the use of a cooling room for bathers to cool down and rest after completing their baths.<sup>12</sup>

Most of the bathhouses opened each day seven days a week. They offered bathers the option of purchasing tickets for one, five, 10, or 21 baths. Twenty-one baths, which took three weeks to complete, were considered appropriate for one stay in American spas.<sup>13</sup>

Government regulation of the bathhouses controlled the bathing regimen in only the broadest manner. These regulations set the manner and sale of bath tickets, the sanitary conditions of the bathhouses, and the economical use of the thermal water by the bathhouses. Other procedures concerning the bathing regimen were left to the judgment of the lessees.<sup>14</sup>

At the end of the 19th century the bathhouses all used porcelain-lined or solid porcelain tubs. Marble or wooden partitions separated individual dressing stalls. Besides the bathing facilities, some bathhouses contained reading, writing, massage, gymnasium, and smoking rooms. These

bathhouses were replaced by the present ones on Bathhouse Row at the beginning of the 20th century.<sup>15</sup>

### Bathing Procedures in the 20th Century

At the beginning of the 20th century Superintendent Eisele acted to increase government control over the bathing regimen. A federal board of medical commissioners inspected the bathhouses in 1903 and found a number of unsanitary conditions. The board found that the laundry facilities of the bathhouses were inadequate to sterilize the towels and robes, that syphilitic patients and others drank hot water from the same glasses, that toilets were not properly cleaned after use by patients suffering from venereal diseases, and that bath attendants passed contagious diseases from one bather to the next.<sup>16</sup>

Superintendent Eisele believed the report might be hypercritical of the conditions of the bathhouses, but he planned to take action on these matters. In February 1903 the Arkansas state legislature passed an act granting jurisdiction over a portion of the Hot Springs Reservation to the federal government. Eisele took advantage of this act to develop and promulgate new regulations for the bathhouses. These regulations set the responsibility and fees collected by the bath attendants, stipulated that bathers furnish bath towels and robes, and required the bathhouses to keep bathing facilities and toilets in a sanitary condition. In addition, the regulations required the bathhouses to provide a safe place for bathers' jewelry, money, and other valuables.<sup>17</sup>

In 1904 Superintendent Eisele changed the procedure of collecting fees because bathers tended to avoid paying the attendants. The superintendent permitted the bathhouses to collect the attendants' fees when bathers purchased their bath tickets. Eisele believed that the practice of doctors directing patients to particular bath attendants distributed the work load unevenly. He ordered doctors not to specify one particular bath attendant for their patients. This practice gradually

ended, but many bathers requested the same bath attendant year after year.<sup>18</sup>

During the first decade of the 20th century several changes occurred in the bathing regimen. The bathhouses began employing masseurs, chiropodists, and mercury rubbers. Also, the bath attendants began using bath mitts during the tub portion of the bath. The patient drank a glass of hot water at the beginning of his tub bath, and then the attendant rubbed the bather down with a bath mitt and soap. The bather received another glass of water and lay down in the tub for a bath.<sup>19</sup>

The demolition of the old bathhouses and construction of the new ones during the first two decades of the century resulted in changes to the bathing regimen. The Maurice Bathhouse claimed to have 300 dressing rooms, extra-large tubs, and individual vapor, shower, and douche rooms. After the bath, the bather rested in a 40-foot by 40-foot lounge that was separate from the bath area. The Maurice offered a sun parlor, gymnasium, private rooms, and a hydrotherapy room. The Maurice also had a beauty parlor. It had "sunglow" glass to impart a healthy color to the skin and a gigantic mirror. Separate facilities were available for men and women. The bather could take electric light cabinet, Sitz, Nauheim, and Turkish baths. Other bathhouses operated similar facilities.<sup>20</sup>

By 1912 the government had instituted programs to test both physicians and bathhouse attendants as to their fitness in their professions. The superintendent required the bathhouse attendants to submit to a physical examination before they would be allowed to work. Masseurs and mercury rubbers were required to register their qualifications with reservation officials. The superintendent amended the rule stipulating that bathers furnish their own bathrobes, and the bathhouses were required to supply bathers with sheets, which was considered more sanitary. Reservation officials frequently inspected the bathhouses during bathing hours to check on sanitary conditions. Women's sections were inspected after the close of business.<sup>21</sup>



In addition to these regulations, bathhouse managers were required to keep the following information:

A complete daily report is rendered by the manager of each bathhouse, showing the name, home and local address, attendant, and doctor, if any, of each purchaser of a bath ticket, together with the total number of baths given each day, supplemented by a sworn monthly statement of the business of the bathhouse, and then at the end of each fiscal year a sworn annual statement is submitted by each bathhouse and the Arlington Hotel, showing the total receipts, itemized expenditures, and net profits for the fiscal year just closed; all the monthly and annual reports are carefully checked immediately upon receipt, and any discrepancies discovered are called to the attention of the lessee or manager and corrected at once.<sup>22</sup>

Several bathhouses during the 1920s found an increasing demand for larger and more diverse facilities. They enlarged the women's bathing facilities to meet the needs of that growing clientele. They updated the men's gymnasium by providing it with new exercise equipment such as barbells, Indian clubs, and punching bags.<sup>23</sup>

Although the bathhouses offered many amenities, the bathers still furnished their own bath mitts, towels, and blankets. The bathhouses laundered the towels and blankets and kept an extra supply for those customers who arrived without their own. The bathhouses furnished sheets. All sheets and towels were used only once before being laundered. The bathhouse managers kept close supervision over the use of these items because the bathhouses operated on Saturdays, Sundays, and one-half day on most holidays--when laundry services were closed.<sup>24</sup>

Government regulation modified the bathing procedures slightly during the 1930s. The tub bath could not take more than 20 minutes and the shower no more than 90 seconds. Also the Maurice and Fordyce bathhouse managers asked for and received permission to construct hydrotherapy pools. The Maurice Bathhouse constructed a pool in the basement of the bathhouse in 1932, and the Fordyce Bathhouse opened a Hubbard Currence tub in 1939.<sup>25</sup>

In the 1930s and 1940s park officials continued to conduct training courses for bath attendants and publish lists of registered physicians. Bath attendants received a course of instruction followed by an examination before they could work in one of the bathhouses. In addition, they took monthly physical examinations to make sure that patrons were not exposed to contagious diseases. A federal registration board gave a written exam to any doctor wishing to prescribe bathing in Hot Springs. This was done to ensure the quality of medical treatment in the spa community.<sup>26</sup>

Superintendent Preston P. Patraw set the following procedures for the bathing regimen:

Maximum Permitted Temperatures	Time
Bath, tub . . . . . 100 (Drink 1 or more cups of water)	20 min.
Douche, to affected part . . . . . 105	1 min.
Douche, vaginal . . . . . 102	3 min.
Vapor, head-in . . . . . ... (Only when under constant attention of attendant)	2 min.
or head-out . . . . . ... (Apply cold sponge to head if desired)	5 min.
Pack Room . . . . . ... (Drink 1 or more cups of water)	30 min.
Packs--wet, hot or cold to affected parts . . . . . ... (Change every 3 to 5 min.; not more than 3 changes permitted)	15 min.
Bath, sitz . . . . . 110 (No internal water treatment permitted while in sitz bath)	10 min.
Shower and Needle after pack . . . . . ... (Begin at 98 degrees and reduce to 90 degrees)	1 min.
Cooling Room . . . . . ...	60 min. <sup>27</sup>

The actual bathing regimen consisted of an individual entering the bathhouse and going to the purchasing counter. The patient purchased a ticket, stored valuables, and gave the doctor's bathing instructions to the

counter person. The bathing instructions were passed on to the attendant and the bather was shown to a changing room to undress. After undressing and going into the bath room, the bather immersed himself in a tub of hot water between 96 and 98 degrees Fahrenheit. The bath attendant carefully watched a thermometer to keep the temperature constant and gradually raised it to 99 degrees. While in the tub, the patient drank warm water and received a rub with the bath mitt, which had coarse fiber on one side to stimulate the skin. Upon removal from the tub, the patient spent a short time in a vapor cabinet and sitz bath if prescribed by the physician. Next, the bather proceeded to the 115-degree pack room, after which he went to the cooling room for a tepid needle shower and then a light massage and alcohol rub.<sup>28</sup>

During the next few years, a number of small changes occurred. In 1944 the bathhouse managers requested and received permission to furnish all towels for bathing. The next year the bathhouse managers decided to close on Sundays. In 1946 the Quapaw Bathhouse constructed a small laundry in the basement to wash towels, sheets, and other items connected with the bathing operations. Soon most of the other bathhouses began to operate laundries.<sup>29</sup>

In the late 1950s and early 1960s the bathhouses began installing whirlpool equipment on their bathtubs. This equipment moved the warm water rapidly around the bather to provide a more relaxing bathing experience and relief for muscles and joints. Also, some bathhouses began changing from the traditional bath fee schedule of one, seven, 14, or 21 baths to one, six, 12, or 18 baths.<sup>30</sup>

The bathing regimen gradually changed, with doctors' prescriptions being replaced by a generic one recommended by the park. In 1980 John Bannon Albright, a travel reporter for the New York Times, took a bath in the following manner. He spent 20 minutes in the bathtub and then received a rubbing with a bath mitt. Next he spent two minutes in a steam bath and 15 minutes wrapped with hot packs. Finally he rested in a cooling room for 20 to 30 minutes before dressing. These procedures

are representative of the bathing regimen in the 1980s.<sup>31</sup> All bathhouses are supposed to offer showers, steam cabinets, and sitz baths.

## MEDICINAL ASPECTS OF BATHING

### Joint and Skin Disease Treatment

Newspaper accounts from the 1820s describe people who were suffering from rheumatism coming or being carried to the hot springs. These people found that soaking in the thermal water relieved their stiffness. One writer describes one such case in the following way:

For the rheumatism it is perfectly specific--the time requisite for cure depends on the standing and violence of the attack. To give you some well authenticated instances, a man of the name of Dean was brought to the springs in 1827, in a wagon, who had been incapable of motion for three months--in six weeks time he completely recovered, and at an election held at the time made one of the hardest kind of fights.<sup>32</sup>

By the 1840s patients took vapor and tub baths to cure their stiff joints. One patient who threw away his crutches after seven days of bathing claimed that the ideal water temperature for a cure was between 95 and 100 degrees. Hot douches became popular in the 1850s. This consisted of a hot stream of water being focused on a specific part of the body, such as a leg or shoulder, for half an hour or longer. Some bathers complained that after their first bath the rheumatic pain spread throughout their body and disappeared only after a few weeks of bathing. Scientific experts claimed that the baths cured joint diseases by stimulating the blood to circulate faster and clean out dead and poisonous materials around the joints. Skeptics claimed that the cure mainly consisted of people relaxing at Hot Springs and believing they would be cured.<sup>33</sup>

By the 1870s the rheumatic or arthritic patrons who came to Hot Springs took the standard tub and steam bath regimen to effect a cure. One doctor in Hot Springs used a vapor bath through which electricity passed to benefit sufferers of rheumatism, sciatica, paralysis, and neuralgia. Several contemporary doctors claimed that the natural electric qualities of the water promoted the cure of joint diseases.<sup>34</sup>

The procedure for treating rheumatism and other joint diseases changed slightly in the 1880s as physicians began prescribing medicine such as quinine and benzoate of lithia along with the baths. One Hot Springs physician found the thermal waters of little value for the relief of rheumatic gout or rheumatic arthritis; other physicians highly recommended the water for those ailments. Hot Springs physicians generally agreed that the hot waters relieved the pain of gonorrheal rheumatism. Unknown to 19th century physicians, this relief provided only a temporary respite from the disease. People did best at Hot Springs when they arrived in a robust condition before the water treatment.<sup>35</sup>

Rheumatism ranked second to syphilis in the reasons why people came to Hot Springs in 1885. Many testimonials from the departure register of the Government Free Bathhouse describe how an invalid came to the springs crippled and left in good health. Doctors claimed that the hot water stimulated all bodily functions and this effected the cure.<sup>36</sup>

During the 1890s the treatment of rheumatism changed slightly. Patients drank large quantities of hot water because physicians believed this would stimulate the flow of bodily fluids. Physicians claimed that the hot water enlarged the blood vessels, promoting the secretion of poisonous wastes within the body. Doctors discovered that rheumatism was better treated after the inflammatory stage passed.<sup>37</sup>

The first decade of the 20th century resulted in two discoveries that bolstered Hot Springs' claim to curing rheumatism. First came the discovery of traces of lithium in the thermal water. This chemical helped

relieve the suffering of gouty and rheumatic persons. Second, testing of the thermal waters in 1904 by Dr. Robert Boltwood revealed indications of radioactivity in the thermal water. Physicians believed that radioactivity helped stimulate metabolism and gave relief to arthritic and rheumatic persons.<sup>38</sup>

As early as 1909 hydrotherapists recommended a large pool of hot water for exercise for rheumatic persons. The water's buoyancy allowed them to exercise and strengthen weak muscles. Exercises, along with massages to relax and stretch the muscles, helped to relieve stiffness and provide more agility. Most bathhouses in the early 1920s operated hydrotherapy departments. In 1932 the Maurice Bathhouse opened hydrotherapy pool, and later the Fordyce Bathhouse opened a Hubbard Currence therapy tank facility. At the Fordyce Bathhouse a physical therapist conducted 30 minutes of exercises after which the patient spent some time cooling off and resting.<sup>39</sup>

The upper part of the Hubbard Currence tub tank had a lateral hour-glass shape with side levels. This enabled manipulation of upper body joints and muscles in a vertical position. An adjustable plinth beneath the water allowed attendants to manipulate a person in a horizontal position. Two electrically driven turbines, possibly one in the Fordyce, agitated the water in the tub to create a gentle massage. An overhead carrier brought immobile patients to the tub and lowered them into the water. This device could be used for arthritic patients, muscle reeducation for sufferers of infantile paralysis, group application of whirlpool baths, and therapy to the hip, shoulder, or knee joints. This tub operated from December 1936 until April 1942. After that it was used unofficially and without a specifically hired therapist.<sup>40</sup>

The pools and tubs were reserved for the most severe cases of rheumatism and arthritis. (The Maurice pool was often used by young people in perfectly good health.) The usual regimen was a 15- to 30-minute bath, three minutes in a vapor cabinet, and then hot packs applied to particular areas of the body. This procedure continued for

several weeks. Hot Springs physicians maintained that these baths stimulated the body's production of white blood cells and in this way eased the effects of arthritis and rheumatism. In addition, the thermal water reduced the swelling and pain associated with these diseases.<sup>41</sup>

In 1956 the bathhouse managers agreed to create a Hot Springs National Park physical medicine center to concentrate physical therapy and add physical therapy practices prevalent in hospitals. The number of government free baths had declined to the point that it was much more economical to have medical examinations done by private physicians and have the baths distributed among the commercial bathhouses.

The physical medicine center opened in 1958 and took over most of the responsibility for treating arthritis, rheumatism, and other joint diseases. Called the Libbey Memorial Medicine Center, it used whirlpool baths, massage, and water exercise in treating muscle and joint diseases. Several bathhouses continued a limited amount of treatment for joint diseases. The manager of the Maurice Bathhouse closed and reopened the hydrotherapy pool several times.<sup>42</sup>

#### Treatment of Venereal Disease

No truly effective means of controlling syphilis or gonorrhea came before the advent of sulfa drugs in the late 1930s. Large doses of mercury and iodides of potassium often led to serious complications, such as loss of teeth, fissures of the tongue, and hemorrhaging of the bowels. When symptoms (temporarily) disappeared, doctor and patient believed that a cure had occurred. Instead, the diseases merely were dormant or attacking a different part of the body.<sup>43</sup> The thermal waters of Hot Springs, however, gained a reputation in the early 19th century as having the ability to cure venereal disease. An article in the Arkansas Gazette of 1829 claimed that "when the [body's] system has been saturated with mercury which has been imperfectly purged out, they will salivate again after a great lapse of time and carry off the mercury. Old

and fixed venereal taints are also eradicated by their [thermal water] use."<sup>44</sup>

Treatment for syphilis in the 19th century included taking mercury. Sometimes people took mercury orally, and at other times it was rubbed into the skin or injected by needle. People came to Hot Springs to remove mercury from their bodies. Physicians at this time believed that the mercury somehow combined with the toxins of the venereal disease and then needed to be flushed from the body. The physicians believed that the baths at Hot Springs more effectively removed mercury from the body than the conventional means of expelling the chemical. Patients bathed in the hot water until salivation began, which signaled the body's expulsion of the mercury. This process usually lasted from two to four weeks, after which the people left Hot Springs. When the bathhouses on Bathhouse Row became regulated, they were prohibited from bathing a person with an open sore or drainage. Private physicians had to see to the corrections of the active stages of the disease before the baths could be taken.<sup>45</sup>

The major difference between normal venereal disease treatment and the treatment at Hot Springs was that doctors prescribed up to tenfold the usual amount of mercury. Two popular ways of administering mercury at Hot Springs in the 1880s were by rubbing or fumigation. An early procedure for rubbing mercury was that approximately two hours after a thermal bath, a bath attendant arrived and rubbed into the skin one-sixth of an ounce of mercury ointment known as a "paper." The ointment usually was rubbed into the outside of the leg, hip, or thigh, and on the back. This procedure continued for 24 treatments. The patient also took iodide of potassium orally as part of the treatment. The fumigation procedure consisted of sitting in a vapor cabinet with liquid mercury in a container in the cabinet. The hot water gasified the mercury, which formed a vapor that coated the person with a thin film of mercury.<sup>46</sup>



By the 1890s the majority of the people who came to Hot Springs hoped to obtain a cure for some form of venereal disease. They usually stayed for six weeks to three months. A number of patients complained that after leaving Hot Springs their symptoms reoccurred. One Hot Springs doctor suggested that people needed to continue the mercury treatment for 18 months or two years after leaving Hot Springs to obtain a permanent cure.<sup>47</sup>

Toward the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century treatment of venereal diseases changed slightly. Bathhouses employed special attendants, mercury rubbers, to administer the mercury ointment. The patient gave the prescribed mercury to the rubber who administered the ointment with either bare hands, a bath mitt, or a brush; later the rubbers wore gloves. After the application of the mercury ointment, the rubber bandaged that portion of the body to keep the mercury from coming off. The bandage remained until the following day when the patient took a hot bath. Sometimes they wrapped patients in hot blankets and a rubber outer blanket to increase perspiration in order to remove the mercury from the body.<sup>48</sup>

Iodide of potash and iodide of lithium were prescribed for syphilis and gonorrhea sufferers. The two medicines were mixed with water and taken three times a day. Patients received twice the normal dosage because physicians believed that the hot water accelerated the process of expelling medicine from the body. Treatment for gonorrhea was similar to that for syphilis but emphasized diet, rest, and drinking the thermal water.<sup>49</sup>

Treating venereal disease continued to be a major activity for physicians in Hot Springs during the first three decades of the 20th century, and the U.S. Public Health Service-operated Camp Garaday concentrated on treatment and control of these diseases. In the 1940s penicillin and other drugs replaced the use of thermal water as a treatment for venereal diseases. Antibiotics eliminated the need for the patient to expel the chemical from his body. In the final analysis, the thermal water provided only a temporary respite and not a cure from these diseases.

Treatment of Diseases of the Stomach, Heart, Liver, Kidney,  
and Intestines at Hot Springs

From the 1820s people came to Hot Springs seeking relief from diseases of the major body organs. Those suffering from consumption most often found that the thermal waters and vapor baths only aggravated their conditions. Within a few years, people suffering from consumption received warnings that drinking the waters at Hot Springs might result in death. Throughout the 19th century those suffering from lung diseases were discouraged from seeking a cure at Hot Springs--with two exceptions. The Missouri Pacific Railroad encouraged those suffering from "la grippe" to convalesce in Hot Springs for a week or two. Also, drinking the thermal waters reportedly helped one abstain from using tobacco.<sup>50</sup>

Physicians in the early 1860s recommended drinking the thermal waters for people with various stomach ailments. They maintained that the water contained minerals that neutralized the body's natural acidity and promoted healing.<sup>51</sup> Nineteenth century promoters of Hot Springs claimed that the water helped cure any number of liver diseases, including alcoholism. These promoters claimed that bathing in the water helped cleanse the liver of toxic wastes. They also claimed that drinking the thermal water purged the system of alcohol and left one with a distaste for liquor. Some physicians prescribed the thermal water for diseases affecting the heart and brain, and other physicians warned people with heart and brain diseases to avoid the thermal baths.<sup>52</sup>

At the beginning of the 20th century interest developed in treating heart diseases at Hot Springs. Several bathhouses, including the Maurice and Buckstaff, began using the Nauheim bath to treat those with cardiac and vascular diseases. The Nauheim bath consisted of a thermal bath with added chemicals to create a saline solution. Once the patient became immersed in the water, carbon dioxide was pumped through the water, helping to create a condition which drew the blood to the peripheral parts of the body. This alleviated strain on the heart and allowed the heart to contract and rest.<sup>53</sup>

As a further inducement for those with heart disease to come to Hot Springs, an Oertel system of graduated exercise (similar to one used in Bad Nauheim, Germany) was laid out in 1914-1915. This walking and hill-climbing course provided heart patients with an appropriate amount of exercise. The system had four hiking courses laid out with stone markers every 300 feet. A color system of yellow, green, blue, and red marked the courses from comparatively flat to those with a very steep slope. Patients strengthened their hearts by using these various courses on Hot Springs Mountain. The trails eventually fell into disuse, but a few concrete markers can still be found along park hiking trails.<sup>54</sup>

In the 19th and 20th centuries hot water baths were considered beneficial in the treatment of kidney diseases. One specialized bath used in kidney treatments at Hot Springs was the sitz bath. The patient sat in a small bathtub in which the thighs, buttocks, and abdomen were immersed in hot water. The bath lasted from three to 10 minutes. The thermal water dilated the blood vessels and thus increased the blood flow through the kidneys and lower back area. Today, the sitz bath is part of the standard bath regimen.<sup>55</sup>

#### Miscellaneous Diseases Treated at Hot Springs

Physicians also claimed thermal bathing was helpful for diarrhea, dysentery, nervous disorders, eye diseases, Bright's disease, circulatory diseases, hay fever, diabetes, spinal diseases, blood diseases, poisoning, sterility, menstruation problems, hair restoration, tonsillitis, migraine headaches, ringworm, locomotor ataxia, high blood pressure, insomnia, sore throat, cholera, malaria, skin diseases, measles, obesity, and gall bladder problems. In addition, physicians prescribed thermal baths as a general health tonic. Physicians did not recommend the water for cancers or pregnant women after the 10th week. They believed that the warm baths could induce a natural abortion.<sup>56</sup>

Most of these ailments were treated by the standard bath regimen of the time. A few treatments deserve special mention. When cholera broke out in the southern part of this country in 1892, people were advised to travel to Hot Springs because of the purity of the thermal drinking water. Alum Springs became a favorite spot for people to wash their eyes and drink the water for sore throats. Doctors treated malaria by ordering the patient to bath in the warm water and drink large dosages of quinine. They believed the thermal water helped activate the protozoan plasmodium to begin procreating when they would be vulnerable to the quinine. Obesity was treated with baths and diet.<sup>57</sup>

### Medical Equipment and Techniques Used at Hot Springs

Turkish Bath. The Turkish bath lowered the blood pressure and pulse while stimulating the circulatory system; physicians prescribed it for circulatory problems and syphilis. The bather prepared for this by drinking several glasses of water, taking a shower, and then sitting in a chamber of hot air (between 120 and 140 degrees) wrapped in a sheet and a cold turban for not more than 30 minutes. When he started to perspire, the bather left the hot-air chamber and took a warm shower. Then he lay down, was washed with warm water and soap, and had a massage. The bather next took a cold shower, dried off, and rested for 30 to 60 minutes. Only one or two of these baths were allowed a week.<sup>58</sup> At Hot Springs, the Turkish bath took place in a hot dry-air room or cabinet. People took this bath during the last part of the 19th and the first part of the 20th centuries.<sup>59</sup>

Russian Bath. The Russian bath was very similar to the Turkish bath except that instead of a dry-air room, the patient sat in a vapor cabinet for 10 to 30 minutes. This bath proved helpful to those suffering from rheumatism, skin diseases, and respiratory diseases. Heart patients were warned not to take this bath as it might prove too much strain on their hearts. Only one or two of these baths were recommended during a week.<sup>60</sup>

Electric Light Bath. This bath consisted of a vapor cabinet lined inside with light bulbs. (Later a radiator supplied added heat.) The bath attendant kept the temperature from going above 180 degrees Fahrenheit. The bather took a standard bath before entering the cabinet. Only the head and neck protruded outside the cabinet, and the head was covered with a moist, cold towel or cap that was changed every five minutes. The patient received cold water to drink. This treatment was given for only short periods of time.<sup>61</sup>

The cabinet helped relieve the suffering caused by rheumatic affections, gout, syphillis, and nervous disorders and was used in treating obesity. Many bathhouses at Hot Springs offered electric light baths at a slightly higher cost than the standard bath regimen. This treatment was limited to once or twice a week.<sup>62</sup>

Douches. Most of the bathhouses constructed at the beginning of the 20th century contained hydrotherapy departments that offered a variety of douches. The needle spray douche became part of the standard bath regimen. This consisted of a metal cage composed of hollow tubes with outlets the size of needles covering the tubing so the thermal water would strike the bather's skin from four directions simultaneously. The needle spray at temperatures from 96 to 100 degrees Fahrenheit warmed and softened the skin in preparation for other treatments.<sup>63</sup>

Another douche used at Hot Springs was the Scotch douche. This consisted of a nozzle that directed a concentrated stream of hot or cold water at a patient. The stream was often directed to the lower back areas and was alternately hot and cold water for dilating the blood capillaries. This relieved sciatica and rheumatism.<sup>64</sup>

The perineal douche consisted of directing a stream of hot water to a specific portion of the body after the bather was completely relaxed. This douche was used on the eyes, nose, throat, and anal and vaginal areas of the body. In the latter, it was part of the treatment for venereal disease.<sup>65</sup>

### Notes from Chapter 3

1. McDermott, The Western Journals, p. 104n.
2. Jones, "Hot Springs: Ante-Bellum Watering Place," p. 10; Francis J. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 37-38; and Brown, The American Spa, p. 28.
3. Hot Springs National Park, Francis J. Scully Collection, Thermal Water File.
4. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 38-39; and Jones, "Hot Springs, Ante-Bellum Watering Place," pp. 20-21.
5. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 41.
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7. *Ibid.*, p. 40-41.
8. The Hot Springs of Arkansas: America's Baden-Baden (Illustrated): Where It Is; What It Is and How to Get There (St. Louis, Missouri: St. Louis Iron Mountain and Southern Railway Co., 1877), p. 19; George French to Kelley, April 28, 1880, Entry 1, Box 5, RG 79, NA; Benson and Libbey, "History of Hot Springs, National Park," pp. 16-17; E.B. Stevens, "Hot Springs, Arkansas," Transactions of the Thirty-First Annual Meeting of the Ohio State Medical Society Held at the Put-In-Bay, June 20, 21, 22, 1876 31 (1876): 196; and Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 59-60.
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17. Eisele to Secretary of the Interior, Entry 1, Box 28, RG 79, NA; and Eisele, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation, pp. 10-11.
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## CHAPTER 4: THE HISTORY OF HOT SPRINGS FROM THE CIVIL WAR TO THE PRESENT

### HOT SPRINGS DURING THE CIVIL WAR

The South Carolina legislature, on December 20, 1860, passed an ordinance dissolving the union between the state and the United States of America. Soon thereafter, other southern and border states began planning similar conventions. The shelling of Fort Sumter by Confederate forces on April 12, 1861, and its surrender the next day moved events quickly toward Civil War. The Arkansas secession convention on May 6 adopted an ordinance to withdraw their state from the union. On May 10 the convention adopted a proposal to join the Confederate States of America.<sup>1</sup>

The outbreak of the Civil War left Hot Springs with a declining bathing population. After the Confederate forces suffered defeat at Pea Ridge in March 1862, the Union troops advanced toward the Confederate capital of Little Rock. Confederate Governor Henry M. Rector moved his staff and state records to Hot Springs. Union forces did not attack Little Rock and the government returned to the capital city on July 14, 1862.<sup>2</sup>

Many residents of Hot Springs fled to Texas or Louisiana and remained there until the end of the war. In September 1863 Union forces occupied Little Rock. During this period, Hot Springs became the prey of guerrilla bands loosely associated with either Union or Confederate forces. They pillaged and burned the near-deserted town, leaving only a few buildings standing at the end of the Civil War.<sup>3</sup>

## THE HOT SPRINGS COMMISSION

### Conditions Before 1877

After the Civil War an extensive rebuilding of bathhouses and hotels took place at Hot Springs. John Hale returned and rebuilt his bathhouse, and Hiram Whittington again rented out rooms. The year-round population soared to 1,200 inhabitants by 1870, and bathhouses were offering amenities such as iron pipes to carry the hot water from the springs, oilcloth floormats in the bathrooms, and even rugs and mirrors in dressing rooms.<sup>4</sup> Others had iron tubs. Five bathhouses existed in 1871.<sup>5</sup>

By 1873 six bathhouses and 24 hotels and boardinghouses stood near the springs. In 1874 a most dramatic event came when Joseph Reynolds announced his decision to construct a narrow gauge railroad from Malvern to Hot Springs. Completion of the railroad came in 1875 and resulted in the growth of visitation to the springs.<sup>6</sup>

Three entrepreneurs, Samuel W. Fordyce, William Gaines, and Samuel Stitt, financed the construction of the first luxury hotel in the area. The Arlington Hotel opened its doors in 1875. About the same time, the Big Iron Bathhouse, with a sheet-iron exterior and built over Big Iron Springs, was doing a booming business.

After the Civil War a number of bills were introduced in the United States Congress to settle various conflicting land claims at Hot Springs. In May of 1870 Congress passed a bill allowing all claims to land at the Hot Springs Reservation to be settled by the Court of Claims. This resulted in an April 24, 1876, United States Supreme Court ruling that affirmed that the land title of Hot Springs belonged to the United States government. A court-appointed receiver collected rents on all properties at Hot Springs.<sup>7</sup>

## Establishment of the Hot Springs Commission

The 1876 Supreme Court decision resulted in the introduction in the United States Congress of a bill calling for the establishment of a three-member commission to adjudicate all land claims there. This legislation passed, and President Ulysses S. Grant signed the legislation into law on March 3, 1877. President Rutherford B. Hayes appointed Aaron H. Cragin (chairperson), John Coburn, and Marcellus L. Stearns to the Hot Springs Commission. John W. Anderson received an appointment as clerk, and Frederick A. Clark became chief engineer and surveyor.<sup>8</sup>

The commission's tasks included:

First: Straightening and widening old streets; laying out new streets, avenues, alleys, &c., in the entire town of Hot Springs. This work requires careful study and a high order of engineering, as the ground is of peculiar nature.

Second. The hearing of arguments in contesting claims, and the final adjudication in 897 cases, and the preparation of findings in each case. About one-half the cases are simple and undisputed, the main question being on the facts whether the claimant is entitled to the whole or a part of the land claimed. The other cases are more or less complicated and conflicting, two or more persons claiming the same lot, involving disputed questions of fact and law.

Third. The appraisal of each lot awarded.

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

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

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

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

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

Ninth. Preparation of map embodying the results of the whole work to be filed with the Secretary of the Interior, accompanied by the schedule provided by the law.

The commission surveyed and set aside 264.93 acres encompassing the hot springs and Hot Springs Mountain to be a permanent government reservation. Another 1,270 acres became the Hot Springs townsite, with 700 acres awarded to claimants. The townsite consisted of 196 blocks and 50 miles of streets and alleys. The remaining portion of the original four sections of government land, the commission found, consisted of hills and mountains. These lands, for the most part, were wooded and unoccupied. The commission recommended that Congress reserve these areas for public parks. Congress acted on this recommendation in June of 1880 by adding those lands to the permanent reservation.<sup>10</sup>

Along with the work of the commission, another sign of renewed federal interest in the hot springs came in October of 1877 with the arrival of Benjamin F. Kelley, the first resident government superintendent in Hot Springs. He immediately formulated a series of regulations for the protection and use of the hot springs. Kelley's tasks included taking protective measures to preserve the springs for future generations, fixing water leasing prices for the bathhouses and hotels, equitably distributing the thermal water to bathhouses and hotels, evicting squatters from the government reservation, providing inexpensive bathing facilities to all people, and providing for indigent bathers. These tasks provided work for superintendents for years to come.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to the government changes in Hot Springs, the local residents made a number of significant changes in the town's environment. The buildings were generally larger than those three decades earlier. Figures 6-8 show one- and two-story wooden-frame buildings with gabled roofs. Many of the buildings had false fronts, undoubtedly to present a more commercial and businesslike appearance. Figure 9 shows Hot Springs in 1875, looking north. The commercial buildings on the left side of the illustration were built nearly abutting to each other. The bathhouses on



the opposite side of the street had more space between each other. The erosion of the banks around Hot Springs Creek was evident. Cattle waded through the creek. The only access to the bathhouses was over the separate bridges to each of them, and no walkway existed on that east side of the creek. A handful of buildings with mansard roofs appeared throughout the town, not only in bathhouses like the Big Iron, but also in a few residences, giving Hot Springs a more cosmopolitan nature. Along the main street in front of the bathhouses (first known as Valley, and later as Central, Avenue) were intermittent wooden boardwalks and bridges over Hot Springs Creek to the bathhouses and hotels. The figures illustrate the severe erosion and lack of vegetation along both sides of the street. A street railway connected the train station with Bathhouse Row.

One contemporary account complained about the "unsubstantial manner" in which the buildings were constructed, but the author was expecting better structures to be erected as the land claims were settled.<sup>12</sup> The Hot Springs commissioners felt the same way. In their report of November 1877 they recommended settling the land claims as quickly as possible because "as long as disputes exist and titles remain unsettled, the growth of Hot Springs will be retarded, the character of building will be temporary, and the accommodation for visitors . . . limited."<sup>13</sup> For the most part, the commission report was correct, but some effort had gone into constructing the buildings. Also, considering the lack of rail transportation up until that time, bringing more substantial building materials to the area was costly. Thus, the "unsubstantial" architecture of Hot Springs resulted from both political and geographical factors.

A dramatic fire in the spring of 1878 briefly interrupted the work of the commission. The commission received an extension from Congress to complete its tasks. Commissioner John Coburn evaluated the work of the commission as follows:

On the 15th of December the work of the Hot Springs Commission was completed. The bickerings and disputes as to

the claims and titles, which had for more than half a century vexed the people there, were finally ended. Certificates for the right to purchase the lots in the newly-laid-out town had been issued to the proper claimants. The old streets had been straightened and widened, and new ones laid out; the houses, fences, and all obstructions removed from them; a permanent reservation set off, covering the Hot Springs and the mountain, of 265 acres, and the rest of the 2,500 acres laid off into blocks and lots, and appraised, and maps, plats, records, and evidence in support of claims filed in the office of the Secretary of the Interior. The work was one of great magnitude and involving many difficult legal questions arising out of the complications begotten by the contract's lawsuits, deaths, inheritances, trespasses, intrigues, forgeries, perjuries, and murders, covering a lapse of 60 years. The entire reconstruction of a town of 3,500 inhabitants involving disputed claims at every step was no little task, and required the exercise of patient investigations, sound judgment, and careful thought. The most eminent lawyers in Arkansas were engaged in the legal contests covering several months in the trials and arguments of the disputed claims.<sup>14</sup>

#### HOT SPRINGS IN 1878

A reporter from Harper's Weekly traveled to Hot Springs in early 1878 to describe to readers the mountain resort community. He found men and women at the spa, hoping to be cured of skin, blood, and joint diseases. The town had a variety of hotels, boardinghouses, saloons, restaurants, and bathing facilities for visitors. The drugstores, doctors' offices, and saloons stood on the west side of the main street, and the bathhouses stood to the east across Hot Springs Creek by Hot Springs Mountain. Some bathhouses, like the Big Iron Bathhouse, offered the bathers individual waiting rooms and were equipped with speaking tubes to communicate from one room to another. At the other extreme, the bathing facilities for the Corn Hole and Pool of Siloam on Hot Springs Mountain had only rude wood and canvas coverings over the thermal springs. Around these springs a small community of the destitute and infirm gathered, living in tents and huts.<sup>15</sup>

Various activities occurred on the streets of Hot Springs. Hogs freely wandered the streets of the city feeding on refuse. The post office, a

distribution point for letters, magazines, and newspapers, attracted large crowds. Freight wagons hauled supplies to the stores and hotels, and local hunters brought in wild game for meals. The streets were crowded, noisy, and bustling with activity.<sup>16</sup>

Those who disobeyed the law were either fined or incarcerated in the county jail. The jail was a log blockhouse entered by stairs that led to an opening 12 feet above the ground. The prisoners descended into the jail by a ladder that was then retracted by the jailer. For more law-abiding visitors, churches (Episcopal, Methodist, Roman Catholic, and white and black Baptist) served the spiritual needs of the community. The fire in the spring of 1878 destroyed much of this community.<sup>17</sup>

#### HOT SPRINGS IN THE 1880s AND 1890s

A look at Hot Springs after 1878 revealed considerable progress. The 1878 fire left the Arlington Hotel, Little Rector, Rector, Big Iron, and Hale bathhouses on Bathhouse Row untouched. A year later the reservation's administration authorized the construction of a carriage road to the top of Hot Springs Mountain where an observatory was built. Brick commercial buildings throughout the city became more common after 1882 when the Gaines block was constructed south of Bathhouse Row. Because the fire had been so devastating, fireproof construction was becoming a matter of concern. A sidewalk of oak planks 16 feet wide stretched along the west side of Central Avenue in front of the private businesses. Electric streetlights lit the streets at night. The face of the town was changing rapidly, yet much remained to be done. Hot Springs Creek in some places was an open sewer where hogs took the liberty of cooling off during the summer heat. By 1879 the town government passed ordinances stating that hogs were no longer allowed the freedom of the street--and Hot Springs Creek. Similar ordinances regulating horses, mules, cattle, and goats were enacted by 1884 (fig. 10). The rural aspects of Hot Springs' main street began to disappear.<sup>18</sup>

By 1884 large physical changes were underway along Bathhouse Row. The first change was the construction of the Army and Navy Hospital at the southeast corner above Bathhouse Row on the slope of Hot Springs Mountain. In 1882 the Department of the Interior gave 24 acres to the War Department for the construction of this veterans' hospital. The hospital buildings (fig. 11) were brick and wood, with a Gothic verticality that was reinforced by the steep mountain site above Bathhouse Row. The buildings seemed to tower over the relatively diminutive bathhouses and commercial buildings.

Undoubtedly, the most important change to Bathhouse Row was the construction of the Creek Arch in 1884. The "arch" is actually a large vaulted structure through which the runoff waters pass. The Creek Arch eliminated the need for separate bridges across the creek. The arch was covered with earth, and its top provided enough room for the construction of a sidewalk in front of the bathhouses. A few years later a row of lombardy poplars was planted where the Magnolia Promenade now exists.<sup>19</sup> The trees and sidewalks added cleaner lines to the landscape, established appropriate setback for buildings constructed later, and provided a space for planting vegetation to improve the front elevations of the entire row of buildings.

By 1884 visitors found Hot Springs an exciting place. The city was experiencing a building boom, with an equal number of churches and saloons constructed to serve residences and visitors. Many amenities associated with larger communities, such as weekly parades, street cars, electric lights, telephones, and daily newspapers, were now available in this Arkansas spa.<sup>20</sup>

Construction on a number of Central Avenue bathhouses occurred in the 1880s. From north to south were the Arlington Hotel, constructed in the 1870s and rebuilt in 1892-93; the Rector, built before 1883 and rebuilt by 1891; and the Big Iron, built in 1877 and condemned by the city and removed around 1891. South of these buildings stood the brick Superior Bathhouse, constructed sometime between 1887 and 1889. William Nelson,

in the early 1880s, constructed a bathhouse near the site of the Hale Bathhouse, which became known as the "Old Hale." In 1892 this bathhouse was rebuilt using stone, brick, wood, and iron. South of this stood the Independent Bathhouse, which opened for business between 1880 and 1883. The Independent became the first Maurice Bathhouse about 1893. Charles Maurice and Samuel W. Fordyce in the early 1880s built the Palace Bathhouse next to the Independent. Next came the Horseshoe (built 1888), Magnesia (built ca. 1885), Ozark (built 1880), Rammelsberg (built ca. 1893), and Lamar (built ca. 1893).<sup>21</sup>

The Department of the Interior built the first carriage drives and bridle paths on Hot Springs and North mountains and also constructed seats for invalids along the trails in 1885.<sup>22</sup> Both the tendency to stress mild exercise in the medical treatments and the 19th century romantic view of nature were reasons for this additional natural development, although following the course set by great spas of Europe was undoubtedly the primary reason.

In January of 1890 came the opening of the Hotel Eastman, which at the time was heralded as the largest hotel in the United States with 500 guest rooms.<sup>23</sup> By 1890 the numbers of visitors using the Hot Springs baths increased. Even though the spa's business was booming, the bathhouses were falling down around their occupants' ears. A special investigator came to Hot Springs at the request of the secretary of the interior to check into a number of situations at the reservation, including the condition of the bathhouses. That investigator, Thomas H. Musick, noted that

the Big Iron and the Old Hale are no longer fit for use and need to be rebuilt . . . and several of the others will need rebuilding in no very long time. All agree that the vapor from the hot water rots all timber with which it comes in contact in remarkably short time. Therefore rebuilding should be in brick and lower beams at least of iron and lower floors of concrete and marble. No more wooden buildings should be allowed.<sup>24</sup>

Musick also recommended longer leases, so that bathhouse owners could recoup their investments, and he recommended that the department prohibit the economic pooling of financial resources. The typical five-year leases, for instance, discouraged improvements to the properties. The existence of the "pool" of bathhouse owners discouraged competition among the bathhouses because the owners preferred to equalize earnings. For the most part the department followed Musick's recommendations, and the effect of those recommendations on Bathhouse Row's architecture slowly appeared. The Big Iron and Old Hale were condemned and torn down. Bathhouse Row was now ready to assume its 20th century shape.

By 1894 the new Imperial Bathhouse sat on the corner between the pumphouse and the Army and Navy Hospital. This building, with its Moorish horseshoe-shaped windows, followed an architectural tradition that had become established in Hot Springs for some as yet undocumented reason--ties to Spanish architecture. The Eastman Hotel, for example, sported turrets similar to a Spanish medieval castle (fig. 12). Promotional literature for the New Arlington (fig. 13), which opened in 1893, boasted of its Spanish Renaissance architecture, preferring to ignore the Eastman's allusions. The Arlington's Spanish Renaissance style was

admirably adapted to the location and in striking contrast with that of other hotel structures in this city. . . . The two main corners of the building are emphasized by handsomely designed towers, twenty feet square, that extend thirty or forty feet above the roof, making excellent observatories, and adding to the general artistic effect. Special care has been given to the exterior<sup>25</sup> to make it thoroughly artistic in proportion and design.

The Arlington's location, size, and style dominated Bathhouse Row as the northern landmark of the row in what is now Arlington Lawn. Two other bathhouses sported Spanish allusions. The Alhambra Bathhouse (fig. 14) had a Moorish feeling to its horseshoe-shaped window openings and onion dome. The Horseshoe Bathhouse (fig. 15) was named for the shape of its

window openings. The choice of Spanish/Moorish allusions in some of Hot Springs developed out of the late-Victorian preference for the exotic--when bizarre and exotic styles dominated architecture. What remains a mystery is why so many Hot Springs builders chose Spanish characteristics for so many of the major buildings in the vicinity of Bathhouse Row. The entrepreneurs most likely developed a preference for Spanish styles because of the area's possible association with Soto, although this hypothesis about stylistic choices has yet to be proven.<sup>26</sup>

Hotels showed the biggest advancements in construction during the 1890s. The Eastman contained five stories built in "colossal dimensions," with a fancy dining room and even steam heat and electricity for the comfort of its patrons. From the "observatory"--the highest turret--visitors could see "a magnificent cyclorama of mountain and vale and forest streams, which well repays the exertion of the ascent." The fireproof quality of the building was also promoted.<sup>27</sup> The Park Hotel (fig. 16) complex included a 10-acre park and had a "perfectly fireproof bathhouse." The red-brick Arlington had four stories, corner towers, and 300 rooms. The hotel provided three concerts a day for its guests, a large rotunda for gathering, and an enormous dining hall. The smaller hotels boasted brick construction in most instances, but sometimes just comfort and convenience. Even though 15 bathhouses were in operation at the time, literature of the period listed prices of baths but little additional information on amenities. Most of the narrative was devoted to the fine traits of the hotels and the extra services they offered. Following the course set by Saratoga, Hot Springs promoted all of the additional pursuits that visitors could enjoy in conjunction with their baths.<sup>28</sup>

Bathhouse construction also improved. Statutes of 1891 required that "all buildings to be erected on the Reservation shall be on plans first approved by the Secretary of the Interior, and shall be required to be fireproof, as nearly as practicable." The same series of laws prohibited economic pooling, which increased competition among bathhouses.<sup>29</sup> After pooling was prohibited, the bathhouse owners were forced to seek individual characteristics that would bring visitors to their bathhouse.

After the turn of the century the architecture, in particular, reflected this change in the law.

Other physical changes happened to the reservation and affected the overall look. In 1892 the War Department detailed Lieutenant Robert R. Stevens of the 6th Infantry to the Department of the Interior to work on landscape improvements for Hot Springs Reservation. Stevens developed the first master plan for the area. Stevens also oversaw the construction and design of the Grand Central Entrance (figs. 17 and 18). Flanking the entrance were columns topped with bronze eagles and the balustrade leading up to the stone bandstand pavilion at the top, which were finally completed in 1896. The sidewalk in front of Bathhouse Row between Fountain and Reserve avenues was a wide concrete walk, along which visitors could stop at a series of hot-water drinking fountains "which together with the neatly clipped grass, the rare shrubbery and flowers, the trees and comfortable seats, make it not only a distinctive feature of Hot Springs, but a matter of great convenience and pleasure to invalids."<sup>30</sup> The Noble Fountain, now at the entrance to the Grand Promenade, graced the southwest corner of Bathhouse Row (fig. 19). Two exedra fountains flanked the Grand Central Entrance; the small shell fountain had its niche in Stevens Balustrade below the stone pavilion. The Maurice historic spring had a dripping spring where visitors captured the water off a rock green with algae until it became an enclosed cup fountain. The Block Fountain, shortly replaced by the Hoke Smith Fountain, anchored the northern end of Bathhouse Row near the Arlington Hotel.

The superintendent of the reservation was quite pleased with all of Stevens' work and highly praised the landscaping developments in his annual report. He seemed to particularly enjoy the fact that the stone pavilion attracted a "better class of visitors, who find it cool and view the reservation from this somewhat elevated position."<sup>31</sup> The fountains drew literally thousands of people who partook of the waters daily.<sup>32</sup> Stevens' work provided a unifying central feature in the entrance and laid the idea for the linear unity that the promenades later completed.



His work added a formal architectural character to Bathhouse Row. The Army transferred Stevens to Yellowstone National Park in 1895.

Author Stephen Crane visited Hot Springs in 1895 and noted that the main street had a very "cosmopolitan" nature that "undoubtedly typifies the United States better than does any existing thoroughfare, for it resembles the North and the South, the East and the West." To him, the remaining wooden structures in consort with the large commercial blocks and the varied colors from greys to brights was much like seeing a cross-section of American town architecture, but here all assembled in one place (fig. 20). He saw the bathhouses as the

abodes of peculiarly subdued and home-loving millionaires. . . . Crowds swarm in these baths [fig. 21]. A man became a creature of three conditions. He is about to take a bath--he is taking a bath--he has taken a bath. . . . In the quiet and intensely hot interiors of the buildings men involved in enormous bath robes lounge in great rocking chairs. In other rooms, the Negro attendants scramble at the bidding of the bathers. Through the high windows the sunlight enters and pierces the curling masses of vapor which rise slowly in the heavy air.<sup>33</sup>

Visitation to Hot Springs at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries dramatically increased because of several factors. These included the growing popularity of spa resort vacations in both Europe and America, improvement in railroad transportation to the city, increased promotion of the hot springs, and the work of the United States Government in improving the spa.

Transportation improved in 1889 when the railroad changed from narrow to standard gauge, thus permitting passengers to travel to Hot Springs without changing railroad cars in Malvern. In 1893 Colonel Uriah Lott began planning for a second railroad to run between Little Rock and Hot Springs. Lott acquired the right-of-way, but failed to begin construction. A company known as the Little Rock, Hot Springs and Western Railroad formed to complete the second railroad, but ran out of

money with tracks only four miles west of Benton. Samuel Fordyce organized his own railroad company (known as the Little Rock Hot Springs, and Western) and completed the railroad into Hot Springs in 1899.<sup>34</sup>

Thus, Hot Springs underwent enormous changes after the Civil War. In the 1870s board-and-batten and clapboard-sided wooden buildings lined both sides of the town's main street. What little stylistic detailing the buildings possessed was usually Greek Revival in origin. The increase in tourism after the devastating fire of 1878 and resolution of the land title question resulted in more architectural amenities and a greater variety of architectural styles in the hotels and bathhouses to attract more visitors. Queen Anne and Second Empire styles abounded. After 1880 builders more frequently used brick in commercial buildings on the west side of Central Avenue, so they were able to make larger interior spaces. Ornament for these structures most often appeared on the front elevations. Some ornament graced the side elevations of the bathhouses on the east side of the street. Unlike other commercial structures whose sides abutted, the free-standing bathhouses had exposed sides warranting decoration to maintain image.

The town's physical character also changed dramatically. The construction of the Army and Navy Hospital with its gothic, vertical emphasis provided an architectural landmark--visible for miles--at the southeast corner of Bathhouse Row. To the south was the enormous Hotel Eastman. The surrounding buildings diminished the architectural presence of the row of bathhouses; nonetheless the row remained impressive. Along that linear development of Bathhouse Row, fountains at both ends and in the center of the row broke up the flatness of the pavement. The Grand Central Entrance provided a break in setback and divided Bathhouse Row in its center. The bathhouses themselves consisted of a variety of styles, sizes, and materials. At the north end of Bathhouse Row, the large Arlington Hotel anchored the development. Hot Springs had a new image.

## BATHHOUSE ROW FROM 1900 TO 1919

Central Avenue took on a cluttered appearance just after the turn of the century. The street railway cars, originally powered by horses and mules, were replaced with electric trolley cars and accompanying lines above the street in 1893. Telephone lines installed in 1903 also stretched above the street (fig. 22).<sup>35</sup> Across from Bathhouse Row stores sold oriental rugs, brass, jewelry, clothing, and the like. Reservation Superintendent Martin Eisele reported that the bathhouses provided plenty of bathing facilities and that no new bathhouses were needed. Instead, he began to concentrate his efforts on improving facilities and services. For instance, he required all bathhouses to install equipment for sterilizing towels and robes.<sup>36</sup> The array of bathhouses along Central Avenue gave the street a cluttered appearance because of the various architectural styles.

Hot Springs was again struck by fire on February 26, 1905, and the fire again destroyed much of the downtown business district, including 400 buildings on 104 acres of land.<sup>37</sup> Two years later the city ordinances required that all buildings within the fire district have exterior walls of stone, brick, or iron, with stone or concrete footings. In brick construction, every sixth course had to be a header course. Gutters on buildings could no longer be wood, but had to be of fireproof construction; wooden cornices were outlawed on new construction.<sup>38</sup> The building codes affected only those structures within the fire district, and from the descriptions the reservation was left out of that district. The Department of the Interior, however, had been requiring new construction to be fireproof since shortly after Investigator Musick completed his report in 1891. City codes were sometimes followed, although properties on federal lands were not bound by these codes.

The bathhouse managers knew that fireproofing and decay-resistant construction were important to the Department of the Interior, and they used those features as leverage in requesting longer leases. Charles Rix, for instance, requested the longest possible lease on the Imperial Bathhouse site because

the construction of the Imperial Bath House is of the most enduring material for permanency and sanitation being of brick, iron, marble and tile, encaustic tile, slate and nickel trimming and the bathing department had no exposed wood surfaces except the door frames and doors.<sup>39</sup> And our bath tubs are imported solid porcelain ware. . . .

The Hot Springs medical director boasted about the modern, sanitary, and fireproof construction of the New Maurice and the marble tile finishes in some of the other new bathhouses.<sup>40</sup>

In the last decade of the 19th century, government investigators and superintendents criticized the conditions of the bathhouses. Reservation superintendents developed criteria for the bathhouse owners to meet before renewal of their leases. As the bathhouse leases came due along Bathhouse Row, the owners either began planning expansions and updates or closed down operations.

Another fire in September 1913 swept through the business district and wiped out 50 city blocks. The fire destroyed the last of the small wooden-frame buildings that had managed to survive into the 20th century. Because people were still recovering from the previous fire, the cost of available labor and building materials skyrocketed as most of the city's fire district was rebuilt again.

Some of the bathhouse owners on Bathhouse Row used the exorbitantly high cost of materials as an excuse to delay construction of new bathhouses that the Department of the Interior was requiring in their leases. The owners of the old Ozark, for instance, felt that the new tile and enamel that they had installed updated their building enough to keep it in use for at least another year. They also argued that the clientele of the Ozark could not afford the Buckstaff, Imperial, Maurice, and other more expensive bathhouses. Because the Palace was being demolished, they argued, keeping the Ozark in operation for another year was the only sensible approach.<sup>41</sup>

During the first two decades of this century both the federal government and the bathhouse owners began intense studies of European bathing establishments to see how Hot Springs could be improved. In 1906 architect Howard Greenley wrote a "Report on the Bathing Establishments of Europe and the Incorporation of Their Systems of Operation in a Suggested Scheme for the Improvement of the Present Bathing Facilities at Hot Springs Government Reservation, Arkansas, U.S.A." He studied Aix-les-Bains in France and the Imperial Bath at Budapest and noted that in both of those places the baths lacked a "large, ample, architectural scheme." But he saw that the conditions at Hot Springs were perfect for developing a uniform scheme of enormous architectural proportions in a bathing establishment. His recommendations for Hot Springs included redistributing, changing, or removing buildings; improving roads and transportation; drawing up a "unified scheme on architectural lines"; having the United States assume control of all the bathhouses; and preserving Central Avenue as a mall. His comment on the existing conditions at Hot Springs was that "there is nothing except the excellence of the waters of Hot Springs and the purely natural beauty of the mountain surroundings to attract guests or to answer in any adequate manner to their comfort and amusement. From an aesthetic standpoint, conditions are very poor."<sup>42</sup> Greenley's reasons for submitting this plan to the Department remain a mystery. The correspondence does not indicate whether he submitted the plan unsolicited or whether he was paid for it. His submission, however, does indicate the strong interest in European spas and their design.

Greenley's vision for Hot Springs included a division into three functional areas: bathing, habitation, and recreation. The bath hall would be one large building around a court (back to the Roman palaestra). The residential area would include a hotel for 400 guests, with appropriate dining rooms, cafes, and restaurants, and also cottages and pavilions for "private families disposed on picturesque sites and in easy communication with the hotel proper." His recreation area included casinos, concert halls, ballrooms, covered terraces, a men's club and athletic field, gardens with malls surrounding the casinos and hotel, picturesque grottos with fountains, and finally a bottling plant.<sup>43</sup>

Bathhouse owners also looked to Europe for direction in improving their facilities. Bathing had become so popularized in Europe that L'Ecole des Beaux Arts, the premier architectural school in the world, used the design of a "model bathing establishment" as the problem for the 1889 Grand Prix de Rome architectural competition.<sup>44</sup> Colonel Samuel W. Fordyce traveled extensively through Europe and the United States studying bathing facility architecture and equipment so that he could build the most advanced bathhouse on the row.<sup>45</sup> William Curtis, attorney for the owners of the Ozark Bathhouse, collected information on bathhouses and bathing in Bath, England.<sup>46</sup> Hot Springs was confident enough to discard its provincial shell and consider its place in the worldwide bathing industry.

At the same time that the reservation staff and bathhouse owners were looking toward Europe for planning ideas, the bathhouses on the row were becoming outdated in terms of architectural style and technology. Despite the frequent updating and painting required by the Department of the Interior, the buildings decayed--as any wooden-frame structure would when exposed to the warm, humid temperatures required for bathhouses. The steady increase in bathers and the push for upgraded facilities resulted in the final phase of bathhouse construction. The builders experienced some delays in raising the necessary funds for rebuilding because of regional financial problems, but the superintendent was willing to put up with temporary delays as long as he could "see all of these frame bathhouses on which the leases have expired removed from the reservation at the earliest possible date."<sup>47</sup>

The final phase started when the Hale Bathhouse was constructed in 1892-93. Next, leases for the Maurice and the Rammelsburg bathhouses expired in 1911, and the buildings were demolished. The handsome new Maurice was built along Mediterranean lines in January 1912. The Neoclassical Buckstaff opened a month after the Maurice, and the remodeled, ever-exotic Imperial opened in April of that year. The Spanish/Italianate Fordyce opened in 1915 on the site of the old Palace Bathhouse. The Maurice and the Fordyce, the two most opulent

bathhouses, appropriately flanked the Grand Central Entrance. The Hale was modernized and reopened in 1915. The new Superior opened in 1916. The Quapaw opened its doors on the sites of the Horseshoe and Magnesia bathhouses in 1922, and the new Ozark opened the same year. The old Government Free Bathhouse was demolished and replaced by a new structure off Bathhouse Row on Reserve Avenue. The Lamar was completed in 1923.

While this final phase of bathhouse construction was underway, the Missouri Pacific-Iron Mountain Railroad began bigger promotions of Hot Springs. One pamphlet began with quotes from the Bible, moved into a short discussion of classical antiquity and Greco-Roman bathing, and then talked of the wonderful waters that poured out of the "splendidly wooded" mountains where the scene "uplifts the heart" and where "nature is . . . in her most entrancing mood."<sup>48</sup> The pamphlet emphasized the romantic landscape and the government improvements, including protecting spring water from contamination and the landscape improvements. The pamphlet described Bathhouse Row as an array of "pretty" bathhouses

of various architectural styles, some of them quite imposing in their fronts of stucco . . . or cement. They are separated from the street by wide lawns in front of spacious porches. The lawns are decorated with flowers and shrubs. Inside some of them are sumptuously fitted. They are positively luxurious. Some of them remind you of the modern swell hotel. And all are the acme of cleanliness. The tubs are porcelain. The bathrooms are sanitary to the last detail. The lounging rooms are ventilated at different temperatures. There are rest rooms in which people may read. In some places a concert is given to those who have baths, morning and evening. Nothing one could conceivably want after a bath is unobtainable. And you can get any kind of bath that the ingenuity of a man has devised--vapor, Turkish, needle, shower, electric. There are rooms for medical treatment in conjunction with these baths. These are sun-bath rooms with softened lights of different hue. . . . You pass to these rooms over mosaic floors, between marble walls. The furniture is in exquisite taste.<sup>49</sup>

The variety of diversions and services available to the bather in Hot Springs was approaching what was available in ancient Rome or at

contemporary European spas. The new bathhouses attracted thousands of visitors to Hot Springs. Celebrities from the world of sports, entertainment, and politics came to Hot Springs to take the baths. The open gambling attracted big-time gangsters to this resort community.

One historic problem that had been plaguing bathhouse design was incorporating cooling towers into the design. The water was so hot coming out of the earth that it could not be used for bathing without being cooled or mixed with cold water. Originally each bathhouse had its own spring to supply water for bathing. Early bathhouse owners resisted a central collection system because the individual springs had reputations for curing certain ailments. Under this system though, one bathhouse could run out of water at peak times while another could have a surplus.

In 1888, \$31,000 was allotted for the construction of a reservoir and collection system for the springs water, but another bill passed in 1891 authorized the secretary of the interior to build a system "only where such collection is necessary for its proper distribution, and not where by gravity the same can be properly utilized."<sup>50</sup> The pumping system constructed at such great expense was never used. The cooling towers remained on each of the bathhouses. The approval of bathhouse design by the Department of the Interior was still required, however, which left the superintendent some power over the design. In the remodeling and extension of the Imperial Bathhouse, for instance, the tank for holding the hot spring water was changed after the departmental review so that in the final design it was included in one building "of pleasing architectural appearance . . . and . . . the general scheme of design of the exterior of the old building will be carried out in the alterations and extension."<sup>51</sup>

The department also imposed a "skyline requirement," although its exact meaning remains somewhat elusive at this writing. The owners of the Ozark wrote to the new director of the National Park Service (NPS) in 1916 concerning this issue. They pointed out that the Buckstaff, Maurice, Imperial, and Hale bathhouses had their iron storage tanks



approved "as has been the custom the last thirty years," and they wondered how they were supposed to cool water when the department refused to let them build a cooling tower with the "skyline requirement."<sup>52</sup>

The final phase of bathhouse construction was well underway in 1916 when architects George Mann and Eugene John Stern of Little Rock were awarded \$10,000 to prepare an overall plan for the development of Bathhouse Row, along the lines of what Greenley proposed to prepare in 1906. Their report was submitted to the secretary of the interior on March 1, 1918, complete with a series of watercolor renderings of the development that were masterpieces in themselves.

Mann and Stern had a strong sense of what they felt was appropriate design for Bathhouse Row. They had designed the Fordyce Bathhouse and done some remodeling work for the Maurice by the time they received the commission to do a master architectural plan. They saw Central Avenue as the most important street in Hot Springs, with the best businesses and best bathhouses in the city. Noting the geographic limitations posed by the site, they recommended following the linear development. At the southwest corner of Bathhouse Row, where the painted brick superintendent's office humbly sat, they saw a large neoclassical building similar in scale and design to the Buckstaff Bathhouse but housing a new free bathhouse, a clinic, and reservation offices.<sup>53</sup> Walls with small gateways would connect the buildings at the south end of Bathhouse Row, creating visual continuity. To Mann and Stern the pavilion at the top of the Stevens balustrade was "useless," and they recommended its replacement with a massive Crystal Palace-type conservatory with five buildings and a central palm house dominating the landscape. The conservatory was to be the connecting link between a concert garden, which they noted was the most popular feature of European spas, and an upper garden. Appropriate statuary and fountains would be provided. They designed comfort stations for Bathhouse Row and the upper garden area and specified marble wainscoting and partitions and tile floors. They wanted to replace the

drinking fountains along the row with drinking pavilions. Their utopian plan even included a "working home for the indigent who came to seek the cure in Hot Springs as well as for the resident poor."<sup>54</sup>

The cost estimate that Mann and Stern submitted with their recommendations was \$2,000,000. The plans, and particularly the handsome renderings that accompanied the narrative, were an immediate hit in Hot Springs. Superintendent Donald Libbey displayed the original plans for residents and visiting conventioners at the Hotel Eastman and then at the Arlington.<sup>55</sup> Despite the enthusiastically positive reactions to the plan, the \$2,000,000 appropriation for construction of the grand scheme was not forthcoming. World War I escalated the costs of material and caused labor shortages. NPS Director Stephen T. Mather agreed with those who felt that the new Government Free Bathhouse and clinic should be elsewhere than Bathhouse Row. Nothing in Mann and Stern's magnificent plan was built except the two comfort stations on Bathhouse Row; the materials, however, were scaled down to less expensive ones.

#### BATHHOUSE ROW 1920-1945

The Hot Springs Reservation was set aside for public use as a park on June 16, 1880. In 1916 the law establishing the National Park Service placed the administration of the Hot Springs Reservation under the new agency. Congress in 1921 began a debate on whether or not to change the name of Hot Springs Reservation to Hot Springs National Park. Representative James Robert Mann of Illinois argued that the term national park meant a place of unparalleled natural beauty and that Hot Springs did not fall in that category. Representative Chester William Taylor of Arkansas countered by arguing that the present designation for the hot springs as a reservation was inappropriate. Taylor believed that most people thought a reservation was a place occupied by "uncivilized" Indians and this title did not reflect the true nature of the spa facilities available at Hot Springs. Congress passed the name change as a stipulation added to an appropriation bill.<sup>56</sup> On March 4, 1921, Hot Springs Reservation became redesignated as Hot Springs National Park.

The change in management from supervision by the Department of the Interior to supervision by the National Park Service of that department actually was quite profound (fig. 23). The formal, urban development at Hot Springs Reservation was placed under an agency whose priorities were preserving for the most part natural and scenic values and which was committed to an organic development based on studying the "aesthetic value of park lands." In the reservation's earlier days, no underlying philosophy existed to guide the development of the area. Robert Stevens' contributions, for instance, were based on his Victorian sense of appropriateness and his Army background rather than on departmental philosophy. Hot Springs' placement under the National Park Service caused some dilemmas, yet staff members rose to the challenge of designing an urban park. Mather took a strong hand in the development of Bathhouse Row. He reviewed plans for new construction and oversaw and criticized the 1918 Mann and Stern plan for Bathhouse Row. He understood the unique aspect of Hot Springs--the area's historical use of the resource rather than its preservation. He passed his enthusiasm on to his staff.

The new designation brought about additional promotion and increased visitation to the new park. In 1922 the Department of the Interior began an experiment in managing this unique park. By mutual agreement, the superintendent for Hot Springs National Park was detailed from the Public Health Service. This experiment continued until 1936 when Thomas J. Allen became the first superintendent selected from the National Park Service.<sup>57</sup>

In 1923 another event changed the face of Bathhouse Row. The second Arlington Hotel burned to the ground (fig. 24). McClure, Stewart, and Mullgardt of St. Louis had designed the twin-towered structure in 1891. Built on the site of the first Arlington--which had been condemned and demolished<sup>58</sup>--the second Arlington contributed a feeling of Spanish-inspired elegance to the north end of Bathhouse Row. After the hotel burned on April 5, 1923, and the hotel owner's reservation lease expired in 1932, the National Park Service turned the vacant lot into a landscaped park.<sup>59</sup>

The third Arlington Hotel, designed by Mann and Stern in 1925, occupied a new site directly northwest of the original location. Erected in a "Y" intersection at the corner of Central Avenue and Fountain Street (fig. 25), the new Arlington dominated the central business district. The building's huge size, Spanish-Colonial Revival style, and placement at the terminus of the town's most important vista made the building a key Hot Springs landmark.

The onset of the Great Depression in 1929 resulted in a dramatic increase in national unemployment and social upheaval, with the full impacts occurring in 1933 and 1934. The bathhouse owners found it increasingly difficult to make enough profit to justify remodeling and rehabilitation projects. Visitation to the park increased, but fewer people took the baths. One notable exception was the increased demand for use of the Government Free Bathhouse by people displaced by the depression. Meanwhile, the National Park Service used funds from various New Deal programs to develop recreational and natural aspects of the park.<sup>60</sup>

Other changes occurred in the 1930s. The Army and Navy facility on the mountain above Bathhouse Row needed expansion because of the large number of World War I veterans who could benefit from treatments offered at Hot Springs. The new veterans' hospital completed in 1933 dwarfed the buildings on Bathhouse Row but complemented the size of the Eastman Hotel directly south of it. This structure also had a few Spanish elements in its design (fig. 26). Now Bathhouse Row was tucked down in between the Arlington to the north, the Army and Navy Hospital on the east, and the Eastman Hotel to the south.

The National Park Service itself had undergone quite an evolution by 1930. The first official policy statement resulted in the formation of the Landscape Division in the San Francisco Field Office. The head of the office was a landscape architect named Thomas C. Vint who had attended the University of California. Vint had been brought into the Park Service by Daniel Hull, and he had considerable experience in working with architects of the caliber of Gilbert Stanley Underwood (designer of

Bryce Lodge and the Ahwahnee Hotel at Yosemite) and Herbert Maier (designer of the rustic Yellowstone museums).<sup>61</sup>

Although Vint's forte was working in large natural areas, he understood the subtleties required for developing Hot Springs and assigned architect Charles Peterson to the task. On a trip to the park in April 1930, Peterson said that he agreed with Vint's earlier assessment that the park be developed along formal lines, but that the Mann and Stern plans were unworkable. Two of the sites that Mann and Stern had recommended for construction, for instance, were already occupied by other structures. Peterson disapproved of their overall design as "absolutely ridiculous" and felt that "buildings of this style [Beaux Arts classicism] are phenomena peculiar to a passing school of design and are seldom seen anywhere except on paper." What he wanted, he said, was \$2,000, a good topographic map of the area, and the "unhurried consideration of a good park planner."<sup>62</sup>

Vint granted Peterson his wish, and Peterson's involvement in Hot Springs deepened. A year later Vint prepared a memorandum for the director of the National Park Service summarizing his views on development at Hot Springs:

The spring area as it now stands is an entirely artificial development and on account of the large use of the water it would be impractical to consider the restoration of the springs to approximately their natural condition as we would do according to the usual National Park practice. Special conditions . . . make it necessary for use to consider an artificial, rather than a natural theme for its development. . . . Both of these developments [Bathhouse Row and the Army and Navy Hospital] have rather monumental types of buildings, the architecture of which will dominate this particular area. It is logical therefore that we provide a formal development for this particular section of the park. . . . Another feature pointed out to Mr. [Arno] Cammerer [then Assistant NPS Director] was the possibility of providing a wide promenade along the rear of Bathhouse Row.<sup>63</sup>

Vint also pointed out that considerable study would have to be done regarding cleaning up the rear elevations of the bathhouses prior to building a promenade and removing the foundations of the old Arlington and improving that area.

Director Horace Albright approved Vint's ideas. He wrote to Dr. George Collins, superintendent of Hot Springs National Park, that the Park Service intended to build the promenade and use the site of the Imperial as the walkway's south entrance. Albright recommended that Collins not renew the Imperial's 30-year lease, but instead offer a 10-year lease with the option to cancel after five years.<sup>64</sup>

Another of Vint's projects was to work on getting funds for a unified collection and distribution system. The system had been proposed for years, but was always thwarted by the bathhouse owners who wanted to prevent mixing the waters so they could promote the special traits of their bathhouses' waters. Vint and Frank Kittredge, NPS chief engineer, worked out an estimate of \$143,000, which Congress appropriated.<sup>65</sup>

The Landscape Division worked hard on some of these planning and development problems, which had plagued Hot Springs for years. Apparently its efforts were not enough to satisfy Superintendent Thomas Allen. He complained to the director, and the senior assistant director responded that Hot Springs was not being treated on an equal basis with other parks in terms of engineering and landscape architecture. Allen was warned that funding was so meager that they might not even be able to continue financing the planning and construction divisions, let alone have any large amounts of money for major construction.<sup>66</sup>

Peterson's work at Hot Springs continued. In 1933 he summarized the progress: The additional work on the Army and Navy Hospital was nearly completed, the Imperial was finally scheduled for demolition, and money for the promenade had been programmed. Now the biggest point of the general improvement program for Hot Springs that needed work was replacing the administration building. Peterson recommended that

a two story building done in appropriate style and material set back against the LaMar bathhouse and planned to fit into the design for the Promenade be constructed from Public Works funds. A rough estimate of \$50,000 was made for this structure.<sup>67</sup> The total may have to be modified when plans are available.

Peterson wanted to design a building that fit the difficult site in a suitable way. He believed the building should retain the same setback as the bathhouses on the row but should appropriately finish off the corner. He wanted a solid structure with an architectural connection to the promenade. Peterson's first design for the two-story building featured a modern structure with a flat roof. His second design was a Spanish-Colonial Revival structure with an impressive baroque entrance, wrought-iron balconies, and a tiled hip roof. Superintendent Allen quickly rejected both designs, stating that they had no connection at all with the surrounding architecture.<sup>68</sup>

Allen continued opposing Peterson's designs, and he strongly voiced his particular dislike of the Spanish design. Finally Tom Vint, then chief of the Branch of Plans and Design, tried to silence Allen by reminding him that the use of a Spanish motif was the idea of the director of the National Park Service and that the design staff believed Peterson's building was a good one for the site. Vint tried explaining to Allen that the building served as a terminus for Bathhouse Row and at the same time was part of the architectural scheme for the entrance to the promenade.<sup>69</sup>

Allen continued blasting Peterson's use of Spanish-Colonial design and virtually denied that such buildings existed in Hot Springs. In his eyes, the only ones interested in that type of design were NPS staff members and certain members of the Fine Arts Commission who had approval over the drawings. Peterson responded that the Arlington, the Army and Navy Hospital, the Quapaw, and the Fordyce all had strong Spanish character. Peterson also recalled the existence of a planning commission that made a concerted effort to have all major new buildings designed in a Spanish style.<sup>70</sup>

In the end, Charles Peterson won the argument. Under protest, Tom Allen approved the drawings. He personally opened the sealed bids for construction of the two-story building on March 2, 1935.<sup>71</sup> The southwest corner of Bathhouse Row was then completed. Although the new administration building was small, the imposing entrance with its finely carved stonework commanded attention and created a visual tie between the Army and Navy Hospital to the east and the Arlington Hotel at the northern vista of Bathhouse Row (fig. 28).

By 1936 travel to the area had grown, with many people enjoying the recently developed recreational facilities. As the danger of war in Europe increased, wealthy American spa habitues decided to remain in the United States. Some of these people chose to go to Hot Springs. The visitation to the bathhouses increased, and it seemed a new era of prosperity had dawned for Bathhouse Row.<sup>72</sup>

Major town and Park Service planning ideas had now reached the stage of implementation. The town, for instance, removed the tracks for the street railway in front of Bathhouse Row in 1938.<sup>73</sup> Local newspapers began boasting about the \$1.5 million the federal government would be spending at the park during the following two years. The two biggest projects the park planned to undertake were the construction of the promenade and the installation of a central water-cooling/disbursing system.<sup>74</sup>

Those two projects started immediately. During 1938, a hydraulic engineer began studying how to cool the hot spring water while keeping it out of contact with the air so that any properties the water possessed would not be lost. The newspaper again heralded this improvement because the "unsightly cooling towers from the back of bathhouse Row could finally be removed." That same year, a small building of unknown use behind the Superior was demolished, and the Imperial Bathhouse was torn down to begin development of the Grand Promenade.



The bathhouses, too, underwent changes and improvements in the late 1930s. The Maurice Bathhouse, ever on the forefront of providing greater amenities to its bathers, continued to operate the rooftop garden originally opened in 1915. Stucco enclosures were built around the Fordyce cooling tanks to improve their appearance. The Hale's interior was rebuilt during the early spring, and the exterior was scheduled for remodeling during the summer. Other unidentified improvements were completed at the Lamar and Buckstaff.<sup>75</sup>

Bathhouse operations continued along smoothly, and the series of regulations governing their operations expanded. Bath hall temperatures were required to be between 95 and 100 degrees, pack rooms between 100 and 105 degrees, cooling rooms between 80 and 88 degrees; if a second cooling room existed, it was to be 10 degrees cooler than the first. This type of warmth combined with high humidity, of course, created problems with the architecture--particularly the rusting of exposed metal. The bathhouse managers did have relatively high maintenance standards, which were enforced by the Department of the Interior. Buildings had to be kept clean, sanitary, and well maintained. Fire extinguishers were required. Minor exterior changes affecting the architectural appearance or safety of the structure, minor rearrangement of the interiors, and improvements on the grounds could be completed by informal agreement with and approval by the superintendent.<sup>76</sup>

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and the subsequent entry of the United States into World War II brought further dramatic changes to Hot Springs National Park. Many doctors and bathhouse employees either voluntarily joined or were drafted into the military services. In addition, employment in nearby defense industries lured employees away from the bathhouses. A number of items used in the bathing procedures, such as the bath mitt and thermometer, became difficult to obtain. Also, laundry and other services became hard to obtain because of wartime rationing.<sup>77</sup>

The military took over the enormous Eastman Hotel across the street from the Army and Navy Hospital in 1942 because the hospital, now a decade old, was not nearly large enough to hold the wounded and sick coming in. The military constructed a passageway over Reserve Avenue to connect the two facilities. In 1946, after the war, the Eastman was demolished when the federal government no longer needed it.

Despite wartime problems, visitation and use of the bathhouses increased during the war years. In 1944 the Army began redeploying returning overseas soldiers; officials inspected hotels in 20 cities before selecting Hot Springs as a redistribution center for returning soldiers.<sup>78</sup>

In August of 1944, under the command of Colonel John P. Wheeler, the Army took over most of the hotels in Hot Springs for the redistribution program. The first soldier arrived on September 1 of that year. The soldiers returning from overseas received a 21-day furlough before reporting to the redistribution station. Those servicemen from the west-central states reported to Hot Springs. The soldiers spent 14 days updating their military records, receiving physical examinations, and obtaining physical and dental treatment. These activities left time for the soldiers to enjoy the baths at a reduced rate and other recreational activities. The Army planned to reassign 2,500 officers, enlisted men, army nurses, and WAACs a month to Hot Springs for processing out of the service.<sup>79</sup>

While in Hot Springs, the Army conducted various ceremonies on Arlington Lawn to present medals and mark patriotic occasions. Various entertainers and dignitaries visited the city to meet and entertain the GIs. The redistribution center officially closed down in December 1945 after processing more than 32,000 returning soldiers.<sup>80</sup>

## BATHHOUSE ROW AFTER WORLD WAR II

The hotels reconverted to civilian use and opened in early 1946 to large crowds of visitors. In that year, people took 649,270 tub baths, which established a new record for the bathhouses. This proved to be the apogee of the bathing industry. Modern antibiotics developed during the war diminished the use of the thermal waters for medical purposes. Also, changes in American society prevented many people from taking the long, leisurely vacations that characterized 19th century spa life, and the automobile allowed Americans to visit more places on a single vacation. During the post-war years visitation to the park increased, but visitation to the bathhouses declined after 1946.<sup>81</sup>

In March 1949 the National Park Service was finally able to let a contract for constructing the central cooling system.<sup>82</sup> The promenade, on the other hand, had to wait until 1956 for its finishing touches. A gravel path along the promenade axis was constructed during the 1930s, but lack of funding stopped further development. The promenade was finally completed in 1958, and the Noble Fountain was moved from its location in front of the visitor center to a new location at the entrance to the promenade. Previously, it had been moved about 36 feet from its original location on the corner of Central and Reserve avenues.<sup>83</sup>

Yet the completion of the promenade came too late. Bathhouse Row's carefully planned architectural scheme had been completed, but society's needs had changed in the interim. Bathing reached a peak following World War II, but then began a slow, downward slide from which the industry never recovered. The bathhouses became anachronisms-- post-Victorian buildings which housed post-Victorian functions.

Americans began participating more in various recreational activities and moved away from the social promenading of the spas. Spas that survived this period emphasized a total program of diet, exercise, and bathing. Exercise and diet were not adequately addressed by the bathhouse operators in Hot Springs. Bathing practices in Hot Springs became

identified with an older generation, and few young people took the full course of 21 baths. Younger people took single baths, but showed little interest in taking a series of baths. By 1979 only 96,000 baths were given on Bathhouse Row.<sup>84</sup>

The economics of this labor-intensive industry began to force the bathhouses to close down. The Fordyce Bathhouse closed in 1962, and the Maurice Bathhouse closed in 1974. Then in an 11-year time span--starting in 1974--the Superior, Hale, Ozark, Quapaw, and Lamar shut their doors. In 1986, only the Buckstaff remained open on Bathhouse Row.

#### Notes for Chapter 4

1. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 47; and Samuel Eliot Morison, The Oxford History of the American People (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 607-608.
2. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 47; and Brown, The American Spa, p. 15.
3. Ibid.; Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 47-48; and Work Projects Administration, Arkansas, p. 159.
4. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 46-49.
5. Cron, "The Hot Springs of the Ouachita," p. 164.
6. Brown, The American Spa, p. 22; Cron, "The Hot Springs of the Ouachita," pp. 134-135; and Mary D. Hudgins, "Days of the 'Diamond Jo'," Arkansas Gazette, 29 July 1934, Magazine Section, pp. 1, 13.
7. A further discussion of the complex issue of land claims can be found in Scully Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park; Cron, "The Hot Springs of the Ouachita," and Benson and Libbey, "History of Hot Springs National Park." Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park; pp. 84-85; and Cron, "The Hot Springs of the Ouachita," pp. 113-136.
8. Clark died in 1877 before completion of the commission's work. Hot Springs Reservation Commission, Report of the Commission Appointed under the Provisions of Act of Congress of March 3, 1877, Regarding the Hot Springs Reservation in the State of Arkansas (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1878), pp. 3-4, 7.
9. Hot Springs Reservation Commission, Report of the Commission 1878, p. 5.
10. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park; pp. 93-94; Norsworthy, "Hot Springs, Arkansas," pp. 34-35; Marcellus L. Stearns and John Coburn to Carl Schurz, 16 July 1877, Entry 1, Box 3, Record Group 79, Records of the National Park Service, National Archives (hereafter referred to as RG 79, NA).
11. Additional information on the various activities of federal management of Hot Springs will be found in later sections of this report. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 109; Benjamin F. Kelley, Report of the Superintendent of the "Hot Springs Reservation," in the State of Arkansas, for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1878 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1878), pp. 1-2; and Kelley to Schurz, 24 January 1879, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA.

12. A. Van Cleef, The Hot Springs of Arkansas, 1878 (Golden, Colorado: Outbooks Reprint, 1981), pp. 7-8.
13. Hot Springs Reservation Commission, Report of the Commission 1877, p. 7.
14. A more in-depth discussion of the 1878 fire can be found later in this report. "The Hot Springs Dispute Settled," The New York Times, 4 January 1880, p. 6.
15. Van Cleef, The Hot Springs of Arkansas, pp. 3-5, 8-10.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 12.
18. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 149-154.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 109.
20. "Arkansas's Hot Springs," The New York Times, 13 January 1884, p. 4.
21. For additional data, see Diane Rhodes, Historic Grounds and Structures: An Interim Report on Bathhouse Row, Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas (Denver, Colorado: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1985) and the architectural discussion in this report. Diane Rhodes, Historic Grounds and Structures: An Interim Report on Bathhouse Row, Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas (Denver, Colorado: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1985), pp. 16-23, 54-56.
22. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 114.
23. Hempstead, A Pictorial History of Arkansas, p. 1,156.
24. Thomas H. Musick, Investigation of Hot Springs Affairs: Report to the Secretary of the Interior (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1890), pp. 25-26.
25. Hot Springs, Arkansas: Its Hotels, Baths, Resorts and Beautiful Scenery Illustrated (St. Louis: Press of the Woodward and Tierman Printing Company, 1892), p. 32.
26. The authors uncovered no evidence of a planning commission or other work group promoting Spanish architecture.
27. Ye Hot Springs, Ark., Picture Book (St. Louis: Press of the Woodward and Tierman Printing Company, 1894), pp. 2-3.

28. Ibid., pp. 1-5.
29. "Preliminary Edition of Manual for Bathhouse Managers," no date, from file entitled "Administrative History" in the Restoration Special Collections of Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas. Quoted on page 6 and 26 Statute 842 and Section 4 of that statute of March 3, 1891.
30. William J. Little, Report of the Superintendent of Hot Springs Reservation to the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1896 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1896), p. 10.
31. Ibid., pp. 9-13.
32. William J. Little, Report of the Superintendent of Hot Springs Reservation, June 30, 1897 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1897), p. 16.
33. Brown, The American Spa, pp. 36-37.
34. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 171.
35. Ibid., p. 170.
36. Cron, "The Hot Springs of the Ouachita," p. 238.
37. Ibid.
38. Digest of City Ordinances: City of Hot Springs, April 1, 1907, n.p.
39. Charles Rix to the Secretary of the Interior, September 18, 1909, Entry 6, Box 339, RG 79, NA.
40. "Report of the Medical Director, August 3, 1912" in Report on the Hot Springs Reservations, Hot Springs, Arkansas (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1912), p. 241.
41. William Curtis to Secretary of the Interior, January 14, 1914, Entry 6, Box 341, RG 79, NA.
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43. Ibid., pp. 13-15.
44. Ibid., pp. 6-7.
45. "The Fordyce Bath House at Arkansas Hot Springs," (n.p.: n.p., ca. 1915), no pagination.

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47. William Parks to Secretary of the Interior, September 29, 1915, Entry 6, Box 341, RG 79, NA.
48. William Marion Reedy, The Hot Springs of Arkansas: The Nation's Fashionable Playground; Nature's Greatest Sanitarium (n.p.: The Passenger Traffic Department, Missouri Pacific-Iron Mountain, 1914), p. 6.
49. Ibid., pp. 26-27.
50. Cron, "The Hot Springs of the Ouachita," pp. 220-264.
51. "General Description of the Remodeling and Extension of the Imperial Bathhouse," May 1911, Entry 6, Box 339, RG 79, NA.
52. Sorrells and Latta to Stephen T. Mather, no date, ca. 1916, Entry 6, Box 341, RG 79, NA.
53. Mann and Stern Architects, Recommendations for Improving U.S. Reservation, Hot Springs, Arkansas (Little Rock, Arkansas: Mann and Stern, Architects, March 1, 1918), pp. 1-6.
54. Ibid., pp. 6-15.
55. Libbey to director of the National Park Service, May 9, 1918, on file in D-22, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas.
56. Norsworthy, pp. 42-43.
57. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 110-111.
58. Louis Mullgardt appeared in the San Francisco Bay area shortly after the construction of the Arlington Hotel in Hot Springs. He remained there for the rest of his productive career and designed a number of major commercial and residential structures. He is considered a "California" architect because so much of his work was built there, including the Court of the Ages at the Panama-Pacific Exposition in 1915 and the M.H. de Young Memorial Museum in 1916. See David Gebhard, et al., A Guide to the Architecture in San Francisco & Northern California (Santa Barbara, California: Peregrine Smith, 1973).
59. 46 Stat. 1109, February 14, 1931.
60. Rhodes, Historic Grounds and Structures, pp. 138-129.
61. William Tweed, Laura E. Soulliere, and Henry G. Law, National Park Service Rustic Architecture: 1916-1942 (San Francisco: National Park Service, 1977), pp. 48-51.



62. Peterson to Vint, April 1930, Entry 6, Box 322, RG 79, NA.
63. Vint to Director of the National Park Service, May 13, 1931, Entry 6, Box 322, RG 79, NA.
64. Albright to Collins, October 3, 1931, Entry 6, Box 339, RG 79, NA.
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67. Charles E. Peterson, memo on Hot Springs National Park Planning Problems, July 28, 1933, file D-18, Hot Springs National Park.
68. Peterson to Allen, May 22, 1934, file D-34, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas, drawings of Hot Springs Administrative Building dated June 12, 1934, on file at the National Park Service, Denver Service Center, Denver, Colorado; and Allen to Peterson, June 29, 1934, file D-34, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas.
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70. Allen to Peterson, September 11, 1934, file D-34, Hot Springs National Park; Hot Springs, Arkansas; and Peterson to Allen, September 14, 1934, file D-34, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas.
71. Allen to Director, January 25, 1935, file D-34, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas; and Memo from Allen, March 2, 1935, file D-34, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas.
72. Rhodes, Historic Grounds and Structures, p. 130.
73. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 261.
74. "U.S. to Spend \$1,500,000 on National Park in Next Two Years," uncataloged newspaper clipped from the Sentinel-Record, February, 1937 (no further date or page information), Scrapbook in Special Collections at Hot Springs National Park Library, Hot Springs, Arkansas.
75. "Many National Park Improvements were Begun During . . . (rest of title not attached to clipping), Sentinel-Record, February, 1938, p. 8, on file in uncataloged newspaper clippings, Hot Springs National Park Library, Hot Springs, Arkansas.

76. Manual for Bathhouse Managers, part III Operations, chapter 22, p. 1, in Administrative History Notebook, Special Collections, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas.
77. Unidentified newspaper clippings, Hot Springs National Park, 1940-1944, Background Data File, Rhodes Collection, Box 4.
78. "Hot Springs One of Five Cities Selected for Army Program After Inspection of Hotels in 30 States," Hot Springs National Park Newspaper Clippings 1936 to 1945 Scrapbook in Special Collections, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas.
79. News release from Hot Springs National Park for September 1, 1944, K34 News Media Publicity File 1938-1956, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas.
80. Unidentified newspaper clippings, Hot Springs National Park, Newspaper Clippings, 1936 to 1945 Scrapbook in Special Collections, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas.
81. Rhodes, Historic Grounds and Structures, p. 130.
82. Tom Boles to director of National Park Service, May 27, 1949, memorandum, in Hot Springs National Park 1940-1949 Background Data File, Rhodes Collection, Box 4.
83. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 133.
84. Randy Ellis, "Problems for Bathhouses Matter of Image: There's the Rub," Arkansas Gazette, (Little Rock), 25 February 1980, sec. B. p. 1.

## CHAPTER 5: THE HOT SPRINGS SPA INDUSTRY AND BATHHOUSE ROW

The spa industry flourished in Hot Springs from the 19th century until the mid-20th century and then declined. The reasons for this rise and decline are many and complex. By examining individual components of the spa industry, a clearer picture emerges of the reasons behind this decline. The next two chapters will examine in depth the various components of the spa industry in Hot Springs.

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE THERMAL WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM AND CREEK ARCH

#### Early Thermal Water Distribution Systems of Pools and Troughs

The first thermal water users chose to bathe in natural pools in Hot Springs Creek. These pools provided a place where the subterranean hot water and cooler mountain water mingled to provide suitable bathing temperatures. By the 1830s bathhouse operators either placed their buildings over a thermal spring or diverted water from the springs through a series of wooden flumes to their buildings. They constructed flumes for hot and cold water. The cold water helped lower the temperature of the thermal water to a suitable bathing temperature.<sup>1</sup>

In his report published in 1860 geologist David Dale Owens described the thermal distribution system in the following manner:

Here, at the Hot Springs of Arkansas, there is a most abundant supply of water at scalding temperature; several of the springs ranging at the fountain-head as high as 148° of Fahrenheit's thermometer, the waters of which, after being conducted in open troughs down the hillside to the reservoirs above the bathhouses, and standing some time, are just as hot as the skin can bear, and the waste water conducted under the adjoining vapor bathhouses, send up a steam, through the latticed floor, of a temperature so hot that few can endure it.<sup>2</sup>

Along with his report Owens had sketched the thermal system at Hot Springs. At the northern end of his map, near the present-day Arlington Lawn, the pavilion stood over a spring. South of this stood the Rector and Hale Bathhouse, and next was the Rector-Hale-Clayton Bathhouse. These bathhouses received water from a northern group of springs. The Rector-Hale-Clayton Bathhouse along with the Clayton Bathhouse, kitchen, and a second Clayton Bathhouse obtained water from a middle group of springs. On the map's southern portion, the Warren Bathhouse and Old Hale Bathhouse obtained water from springs that surrounded them.<sup>3</sup>

#### Development of the Thermal Water Distribution Systems in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries

By 1875, aboveground pipes carried spring water to reservoirs and bathhouses. Some of these pipes carried the water more than 350 yards to the bathhouses. In 1877 the Hot Springs Commission began to plan for the future development of the thermal water system. The next year the government began supplying water to the Palace and Rockafellow's bathhouses. In the case of the Rockafellow Bathhouse, Superintendent Benjamin Kelley allowed the operator to enclose the spring and lay pipes to the bathhouse.<sup>4</sup>

In 1879 Superintendent Kelley authorized the use of a gravity thermal water system for the Arlington Hotel and Hale Bathhouse. The following year Kelley granted permission for a water distribution system to the Ozark and Rammelsberg bathhouses. Superintendent Kelley, on March 23, 1880, wrote to Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz that the increased number of bathers at Hot Springs depleted the existing reservoirs to an alarmingly low level between the bathing hours of 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. He recommended that the government construct two new covered reservoirs to hold the large amount of hot water that flowed into Hot Spring Creek during the evening and nighttime hours. Kelley requested that the two reservoirs be 10 by 30 feet, with the upper of the

two reservoirs being 3 feet deep and the lower one being 6 feet deep. Superintendent Kelley selected a site between the Big Iron and Old Hale bathhouses for one of the reservoirs.<sup>5</sup>

George French, a civil engineer, recommended to Superintendent Kelley that the new reservoir be 5 feet deep and measure 40 by 20 feet. He wanted the reservoir to be brick and covered by an arch with glass slabs for inside lining. Kelley accepted these suggestions, and late in 1880 the first of the two proposed reservoirs was completed near the Big Iron Springs. The new reservoir primarily used the water from the Big Iron Springs and held an estimated 30,000 gallons. This brick and cement-covered reservoir supplied the needs of six bathhouses. The water temperature inside the reservoir stood at a constant 157°. This new reservoir cost \$3,034.86.<sup>6</sup>

The next step in improvement of the overall water distribution system on the reservation came as work on the cold water system. The citizens of Hot Springs requested that Kelley permit them to construct a reservoir for cold water storage and lay pipes from near Gulpha Creek to the town across the Hot Springs Reservation. Also, the bathhouse operators planned to use the cold water in a ratio of two to one to bring down the thermal water temperatures for bathing. A cold water pipe was to be constructed along Fountain Street then turn at Hot Springs Creek to the bathhouses. Superintendent Kelley granted permission for this work to occur on reservation land, and work on the city's cold water system continued for the next several years.<sup>7</sup>

In 1881 Superintendent Kelley set about constructing a second reservoir near Egg Springs above the Arlington Hotel (now the Arlington Lawn). This reservoir measured 15 by 30 by 5 feet deep. With a growing demand for hot water by existing and newly constructed bathhouses, both government reservoirs soon became inadequate. The major springs were also covered during the late 1870s and early 1880s to protect them from pollution. Bathhouse owners and reservation staff carried out these projects starting around 1877.<sup>8</sup>

Captain Thomas H. Handbury of the Corps of Engineers arrived in Hot Springs in 1882 to inspect the reservation and make recommendations on improvements. He found the existing collection and distribution system for the thermal waters primitive and inefficient. Handbury, however, did not make any proposals until the precise location and needs of the Army and Navy Hospital could be ascertained.<sup>9</sup>

After 1883 bathhouses without their own springs were furnished hot water from the central pumping station or government reservoir (Superior). Plans for the Army and Navy Hospital and expanding the free bathing facilities required even greater amounts of available thermal water.<sup>10</sup>

In 1884 Hot Springs Superintendent Samuel Hamblen developed a proposal for improving the collection and distribution of the hot water. He suggested that all the thermal water be channeled to one reservoir at the lowest level of the reservation. This water would be pumped to another reservoir on the mountainside and distributed to the various bathhouses by gravity. Hamblen estimated the lower reservoir should hold 250,000 gallons and the upper reservoir should contain 5,000,000 gallons. He estimated the cost of the project at \$31,016, not including the engine house and boilers. Superintendent Hamblen sent diagrams of the proposed water distribution machinery to the Department of the Interior to bolster his arguments. In 1885 Hamblen again argued the economic merits of his proposal and suggested that the individual bathhouses pay a portion of the cost for his proposed water distribution system.<sup>11</sup>

Before action was taken on this proposal, a new superintendent, Charles Field, took over the reservation. He laid a 12-inch cast-iron water main alongside the creek arch. Three- and 4-inch pipes connected this main to some of the lower springs. The main collected 300,000 gallons of water a day, which was discharged back into Hot Springs Creek because of the lack of adequate storage facilities.<sup>12</sup>

On October 2, 1888, Congress appropriated \$31,000 for developing an economical collection and distribution system for hot water at Hot Springs

Reservation. The appropriation authorized funding for planning and contracting work for collecting, impounding, and pumping the hot water. In December 1888, Superintendent Field requested that the secretary of war temporarily detail Captain Thomas W. Symons to Hot Springs to prepare a plan and specifications for new reservoirs. Secretary of War William C. Endicott refused permission. On March 1, 1889, Secretary of the Interior William F. Vilas requested Secretary of the Navy Benjamin F. Tracy to detail Post Assistant Engineer George W. Baird to the Hot Springs Reservation. Tracy granted permission for the reassignment in April 1889.<sup>13</sup>

Secretary of the Interior Vilas instructed Baird to make an examination of the existing water collection and distribution system at Hot Springs and formulate a plan for improving the system. The detailed plans and specifications for work on the reservation were to be readily understandable by any contractor. On August 3, 1889, Baird submitted his report, which envisioned all spring water channeled into one reservoir. The report concluded that the sinking of Egg Springs would soon force the abandonment of the reservoir there. Baird estimated that Field's 12-inch main carried approximately 58 percent of the spring flow. He recommended the construction of pipelines from the northern and middle groups of springs on the mountainside that would empty into Field's main water pipe on the south side of the Independent Bathhouse. Water in the main water pipe would drain into a reservoir to be constructed at the corner of Central and Reserve avenues. Baird designed the reservoir to hold 15 hours of water flow from the springs. He planned to locate the 264,000-gallon reservoir away from the sewer. The reservoir would be constructed with brick walls, faced with portland cement; a check valve in the overflow pipe and a pump house would be constructed next to the reservoir to distribute the water. Baird's first plans called for the distribution system to extend beyond the reservation boundaries. The secretary of the interior deemed this inappropriate, and Baird modified the plans to keep the distribution pipes within the reservation boundaries. This time the secretary approved.<sup>14</sup>

The Department of the Interior advertised for proposals on the project and opened bids on April 30, 1890. The Sheehan and Dunn Company received the contract for the excavation, masonry, and other miscellaneous work. The Blake Manufacturing Company obtained the contract for supplying the engines and boilers for the pump house on September 9 of that year. Navy Chief Engineer A.S. Greene became the construction supervisor for the project.<sup>15</sup>

Opposition to the proposed work soon formed among the bathhouse owners. Henry M. Rector, part owner of the Rector Bathhouse and Grand Central Hotel, wrote Secretary of the Interior John W. Noble objecting to the work. Rector opposed any change to the existing gravity distribution system, arguing that piping the water from the springs to the reservoir and then pumping it to the individual bathhouses would diminish its medicinal qualities. Rector believed that the pumping scheme would result in the bathhouse owners being charged for the maintenance and repair of the pumps. He also argued that a shut down at the pump house would incapacitate all bathhouse operations, whereas now no single accident could totally disrupt all bathing activities. Supporters of the project, including John Laughran, mayor of Hot Springs, wrote to Noble.<sup>16</sup>

Despite the opposition by the bathhouse owners and their adherents, work on the storage reservoir and water distribution system continued into 1891. Chief Engineer Greene suggested that the boilers in the pump house be modified so that cold and hot water could be pumped to locations within the reservation. Superintendent Frank Thompson took no action on this request. Meanwhile, Congress received petitions from bathers at Hot Springs requesting that work on the project cease. On March 3, 1891, Congress backed the the secretary of the interior, but he chose not to pump water from the springs to the bathhouses where it was feasible to achieve the same result by means of gravity flow from the springs.<sup>17</sup>

Completion of the construction work on the water collection and distribution system, along with the pump house, occurred on June 8,



1891. Superintendent Thompson received, however, instructions from Washington to operate only the reservoir and not the pumping equipment. The pumps remained inactive and required annual servicing to prevent deterioration. In 1897 Superintendent Martin A. Eisele requested permission from the secretary of the interior to dismantle the pumping machinery, sell it, and renovate the pump house into office space. He received permission, dismantled the pumping equipment, and placed it in the south portion of the pump house. Full renovation of the pump house into office space and selling the machinery occurred in 1905.<sup>18</sup>

The bathhouse operators' victory in preventing the operations of the pumping station contributed to a major problem for the Hot Springs Reservation superintendent. Many of the individual piping systems between the springs, the cooling towers, and the bathhouses were poorly maintained, and their leaking created problems in keeping up the appearance of the reservation. The elimination of the various piping systems and cooling towers became a continuing project for reservation officials.<sup>19</sup>

In his 1891 report Superintendent Thompson complained: "There is not a suitable and respectable hot water drinking fountain on the permanent reservation. There ought to be 6 or 8 handsome modern fountains put up in Bath House Park for public use. They could be fed from the hot water springs on the mountain side."<sup>20</sup>

The superintendent received permission to erect four fountains, and Captain Robert R. Stevens supervised their design and construction. Six hot water fountains eventually were erected as part of this project. These first fountains were the triangular or Block Fountain, Hoke Smith Fountain, John W. Noble Fountain, a shell fountain at the foot of the grand stairway, and two exedra fountains by the main reservation entrance. Most of these fountains were in operation in 1897.<sup>21</sup>

In 1899 Superintendent William J. Little wrote to the secretary of the interior asking permission to renovate the covering for the springs at the

Big Iron Bathhouse site. He also wanted to enlarge a small reservoir there to capture additional hot water. He estimated the project at \$1,393.50. Little received permission for these projects on July 22, and work began on August 7 to improve spring protection and enlarge the reservoir. The new reservoir held 26,109 gallons of hot water, with the overflow directed down the main pipeline to the reservoir by the pump house. Work was completed at the end of October and cost \$1,497.50.<sup>22</sup>

Superintendent Eisele, using the information gathered by geologist Walter Harvey Weed, in 1902 began erecting stone monuments over the various springs. He also set about locating and mapping the active water lines in the reservation. The map completed under his direction shows one reservoir on the mountainside above the Arlington Hotel (now Arlington Lawn), the large reservoir behind the pump house (now park headquarters), and two tanks and a reservoir behind the Superior Bathhouse. The Lamar, Rammelsberg, Ozark, Magnesia, Horseshoe, Palace, Maurice, Hale, and Government Free bathhouses each had one tank behind or to one side of their bathing facilities. The Arlington Bathhouse had two tanks and the Imperial Bathhouse had three tanks behind them.

Superintendent Eisele believed that these water storage facilities would soon prove inadequate to meet increasing demands. He recommended construction of a new reservoir either on the northern end of the reservation or on Hot Springs Mountain.<sup>23</sup> The secretary of the interior instructed superintendent Eisele to provide him with specific suggestions and recommendations for increasing the hot water storage at Hot Springs.<sup>24</sup> Superintendent Eisele described his proposal as follows:

Our plan in brief is to build another reservoir along-side of the present one constructed in 1899 [at Big Iron Springs] by tying on an exterior wall at ends and side and using the present exterior wall of this reservoir as a wall upon which we will lay our girders and spring small arches for the coverings of the addition. The floor level will be the same as the one now in use except for 20 feet at the north end will be 10 feet deep instead of 5 feet for the balance. A partition will be extended across at this 20 foot line virtually making a separate compartment of that end. We do this in order to utilize the 80

feet at 5 foot depth for the flow of the Big Iron Spring which at its elevation will fill this reservoir to this depth, and when full will overflow through a connecting pipe with reservoir number 2 on Superior Site which is approximately 60 feet from it and on the same level. These two reservoirs will be on the level required to flow water by gravity to bath houses on Bath House Row. The three springs at the north end are at a lower level than the Big Iron and therefore, our compartment at their end of the reservoir must be deeper in order to obtain the full amount of water these springs supply, and this supply can be reserved for pumping when necessary. This will give us a storage capacity of 91,000 gallons as against 43,000 at present. Openings will be made in the center wall which will allow both reservoirs to fill at the same time. This will apparently constitute two reservoirs when in reality it will in effect be only one.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to this work, Eisele recommended lengthening and replastering the old reservoir on the mountainside. He intended to use any remaining funds to enlarge a deep storage cistern near the Big Iron Springs.<sup>26</sup>

The work on the Big Iron Springs surface and deep water storage neared completion by late 1903. Superintendent Eisele wrote the secretary of the interior early in 1904 that he wished to modify his earlier proposal for the water storage. He now wanted to increase the capacity of the deep storage reservoir at Big Iron Springs and construct two small reservoirs, one behind the free bathhouse and one between the Palace and Horseshoe bathhouses. He estimated the cost of this work at nearly \$6,000. The secretary of the interior approved these changes and the work was completed in May 1904.<sup>27</sup>

The next work occurred in 1908 when Superintendent W. Scott Smith had two cooling tanks for thermal water constructed on the reservation. These two tanks supplied all the reservation cold water needs for "official residence and grounds, the office building, the free bath house, the government barns, and for watering the lawns, shrubbery, and flower beds."<sup>28</sup> This action freed the reservation from depending on city-supplied cold water. All reservation water came from the hot springs.

During the next several years only minor repairs occurred on the existing water distribution system. In 1914, during construction of the Fordyce Bathhouse, a concrete reservoir was built under the bathhouse's basement. This reservoir connected with the water main leading to the large corner reservoir by the pump house.<sup>29</sup>

Minor repairs and rehabilitation of the water distribution system were done during the 1920s. Various superintendents requested the building of a new central reservoir to accommodate the growing demand for thermal water by the bathhouses. They argued that during peak bathing periods some of the bathhouses ran out of water. In March 1929 several bathhouses found themselves without water for an hour or two in the afternoon. That spring NPS Engineer Frank A. Kittredge and Chief Landscape Architect Thomas C. Vint traveled to Hot Springs to gather information for estimating the cost of a new hot water collection and distribution system. They estimated \$143,550, and Congress appropriated this amount on May 14, 1930.<sup>30</sup>

Design plans for the new system called for cleaning and rehabilitating all spring covers, constructing two new reservoirs, renovating the existing reservoirs, and constructing a new 12-inch main and pumping system. Engineers located the larger reservoir (400,000 gallons) in a gully on the mountainside above the Superior Bathhouse. They built the second reservoir (100,000 gallons) higher up on the mountain. A centrifugal pump system, to move the hot water from the reservoirs to the bathhouses, was to be installed along a new main in the creek arch. The National Park Service completed design plans on November 1, 1930. Wickes Engineering and Construction Company of Des Moines, Iowa, proved the successful bidder on the project; they began work on January 1, 1931, and completed it in November of 1931.<sup>31</sup>

Another use of water was for display springs. Planning began in 1931 for a display spring. In 1932 the park staff combined two springs to create a display spring behind the Maurice Bathhouse next to the stairway of the main entrance. The park placed a fountain in front of

the administrative building in 1936. Sometime during this period the two exedra fountains were removed and a quartz fountain with large crystals in sand around a bronze core was erected in front of the Maurice Bathhouse. By 1939 the Stevens Fountain may have been removed or rendered useless because of the work on the promenade. A "dolphin and fish" fountain occupied a circular space at the north end of the promenade. The "fish" fountain, probably two dolphins playing, was pewter. The pewter was soft and difficult to repair. In 1969 it was removed by park maintenance crews.<sup>32</sup>

In 1936 the park staff began to plan for the removal of all cooling tanks behind the bathhouses. In 1938 Superintendent Donald S. Libbey argued that the existing cooling tanks were unsanitary and aesthetically displeasing and recommended that a central water cooling system replace them. World War II delayed action on this project until 1946. The National Park Service contracted with the Edward B. Mooney Construction Company to drill a test well in Whittington Park to determine if a cold water source existed for the development of a water cooling system. The testing proved the cooling system development feasible, and in the next several years NPS engineers designed a suitable cooling system.<sup>33</sup>

On March 11, 1949, the William Peterson Company began construction on a 100,000-gallon hot water reservoir and central cooling system. Plans called for the new reservoir to be next to the 400,000-gallon reservoir on the west slope of Hot Springs Mountain. The water cooling system worked by circulating the thermal water from the new reservoir through subterranean pipes in the Arlington Lawn where pipes filled with cold spring water and Hot Springs Creek water coiled around the hot water pipes. The heat exchange from this operation cooled the thermal water to 90 degrees, and the water then flowed to the 400,000-gallon reservoir and from there to the bathhouses. At the bathhouses, hot thermal waters and cooled water mixed to create baths of 100 degrees. The total cost of the project approached \$140,000, with completion in early 1950.<sup>34</sup>

During the next several years, park officials persuaded bathhouse owners to remove the obsolete cooling towers from behind their establishments. In 1962 construction began on an air-cooled heat exchange plant to increase the available cooled thermal water for the bathhouses; this work ended on December 17. Huge fans cooled the hot thermal water in pipes, and a new 100,000-gallon reservoir south of the old 400,000-gallon reservoir added to the park's water storage capacity. The air cooling system as a supplement to the water cooling system failed to adequately cool the hot water on the hottest days, especially after a reservoir nearby was demolished in order to renovate the thermal water collection system in 1975. The reservoir served to dissipate heat prior to entering the heat exchanger, its incidental role not understood at the time. This situation was alleviated when bathhouses conserved water for economic reasons and then discontinued all use of water when they gradually went out of business. In 1984 planning began on rehabilitating the thermal water distribution system. The installation of new distribution lines has been recently completed.<sup>35</sup>

Other changes that occurred during this period include the installation, abandonment, or relocation of several fountains. In the early 1950s the park staff opened a new fountain near the administration building for people wishing to carry away bottles of the water. The staff relocated the Noble Fountain to the south end of the promenade in 1957 and removed the quartz fountain by the Maurice Bathhouse in the early 1980s. In 1983 a naturalistic cascade was constructed at the north end of the promenade. Here, hot water cascades gently over a tufa bluff down into a trough by Arlington Lawn.<sup>36</sup>

#### Development of Creek Arch

Early travelers found Hot Springs Creek a place for bathing and fishing. The development of Bathhouse Row and of the surrounding community changed the character of this mountain stream. By the 1870s the creek was an open sewer for the bathhouses. Pigs wallowed in the shallows,

and only a few footbridges provided access across the stream.<sup>37</sup> A visitor to the hot springs in early 1878 commented: "The water of Hot Springs Creek, which derives much of its volume from the overflow of the springs, and is the common sewer of the town, carrying off refuse of all kinds, are quite hot, and, like those of the springs, perfectly limpid."<sup>38</sup>

In 1877 the Hot Springs Commission recognized the unhealthiness of the creek and recommended that the government construct a covering over the creek.<sup>39</sup> In 1882 Captain Thomas H. Handbury traveled to Hot Springs to study how best to improve the creek. He estimated that at time of flood the creek ran at 3,000 cubic feet per second. Handbury proposed a design to provide for these emergencies. His plan was

to straighten somewhat its [Hot Springs Creek] tortuous course and confine it between parallel masonry walls. From near the head of the gorge to a point opposite the Arlington Hotel, the bed of the stream is to have a fall of one foot to eighty (1 on 80). The walls are to be eight (8) feet high and seventeen (17) feet apart. From the foot of each wall to the point midway between the two the bed falls one foot. From the point above mentioned to the lower line of the reservation, the slope of the bottom is 1 on 120 and the walls twenty (20) feet apart, otherwise the conditions are the same. The foot of each wall I have placed a little more than a foot below the general level of the present bed of the creek. This is to insure that its foundation be upon bed rock. Should this not be found at this depth at all points the foundation must be carried further down. In all cases it should rest upon bed rock. The walls should be three (3) feet thick, built of granite, cut and laid in courses and backed with concrete. The cement used in making the mortar and concrete should be of a good standard quality. A good quality of granite can be found along the line of the Hot Springs Railway, and can be obtained at reasonable cost. So far as I have yet been able to learn this is the only stone suitable for building these walls that can be found in the neighborhood.<sup>40</sup>

Captain Handbury planned to install a 6-inch pipe along the mountainside wall of the channel to collect hot water. He planned to pump this water into a reservoir for use on the reservation. Two 12-inch pipes placed behind each wall would handle the sewage from the bathhouses and from

businesses across the street. Dressed granite and hydraulic cement mortar would form the arch walls, with each wall being 3 feet thick by 8 feet high. Wrought-iron beams at 6-foot intervals and 13-inch-thick brick arches would cover the creek.<sup>41</sup>

Congress approved covering the creek in 1882. In March 1883 the secretary of the interior awarded a contract to Asa P. Robinson for the work on Hot Springs Creek. Robinson defaulted on the contract in April of that year, and another contract was signed with George H. Bardwell on May 8, 1883. The secretary of the interior appointed Captain Handbury to act as general supervisor of construction. That same month Handbury resigned the position because of interference on construction work from Superintendent Samuel Hamblen. Captain Handbury's resignation was not accepted until August when Hamblen became the general supervisor for the project. Construction plans changed to allow for Hot Springs sandstone to be substituted for the specified granite and a masonry arch instead of I-beams.<sup>42</sup>

The work on vaulting the creek continued into 1884. A visitor to Hot Springs wrote the following:

The work of vaulting over the creek upsets the main street terribly, and makes the whole place look out of trim, but a few months more will see it finished, (with the aid of an appropriation) and then there will be a fine wide street running through the heart of the city.<sup>43</sup>

As the work continued, Department of the Interior officials directed that sewer line installation be omitted from the project and the covered creek act as a sewer. Hot Springs city officials and citizens protested this decision and strongly urged that the sewer line be restored as part of the project. The Department of the Interior refused, and in 1886 the city and a few of the bathhouse owners constructed a sewer line next to the covered arch. Bardwell only completed 252 feet of the 12-inch pipe planned for hot water collection before going bankrupt. A government



committee found that Bardwell and Hamblen had acted in an unprofessional manner. Charles W. Field replaced Hamblen as superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation. Another contractor, W.P. Aldrich, completed the pipe line in 1886 under Field's direction. Also in 1886 a portion of the original Creek Arch wall proved defective and the secretary of the interior ordered the contractor to rebuild the wall in an appropriate manner. This work was not finished until the first months of 1887. Some ground leveling continued into 1888. The arch ran from the junction of Whittington and Park avenues to Malvern Avenue. It stood 17 feet wide and 10 feet high at the crown and cost \$136,744.78.<sup>44</sup>

Many complaints about the quality of construction of Creek Arch resulted in Secretary of the Interior Hoke Smith's dispatching William P. Couper to inspect the work. Couper described the arch as 4,000 feet long, 20 feet wide at its base, and 15 feet high--all covered with 10 to 15 feet of earth and with manholes for access at regular intervals. He spent two hours inspecting various portions of the arch. He found the lower part of the arch constructed with cut stone and the remainder of cut stone fixed in place by cement. Couper discovered eight or 10 places where the stone did not reach bedrock, and in five of those places the arch showed signs of settling. Near the Old Hale Bathhouse he found a 4- to 5-foot crack in the wall. The repairs, Couper estimated, would cost around \$500, but he believed the arch to be fundamentally sound.<sup>45</sup>

A few months later Superintendent Little reported that the cracks had enlarged because of heavy rains that increased erosion under those portions of the wall not on bedrock. Little expressed fear that a collapse of the arch wall during a heavy rain would result in a flood of the business district of Hot Springs. Department of the Interior officials authorized an expenditure of \$500 for the necessary repair work. The repair work, completed in 1896, cost \$248.97.<sup>46</sup>

Two years later Superintendent Little remarked that Creek Arch remained in good repair until "rains did considerable damage to the creek arch by washing the earth from under the foundation walls where the walls had

not been on solid rock. This damage has occurred at points where the arch passes under the street of the city as well as along the reservation front."<sup>47</sup> The superintendent obtained funds to make the necessary repairs, but every few years flooding undermined the arch wall, requiring repairs to avoid collapse of the structure.<sup>48</sup>

In 1901 Superintendent Eisele walked through the entire arch to inspect it. He found the repair work on the arch in good condition, but discovered some sewage discharging into the creek. He informed city officials of the matter and they corrected it.<sup>49</sup>

Superintendent Eisele wrote to the secretary of the interior in 1904 supporting House Resolution 9294, which called for the extension of the creek arch 2,000 linear feet beyond the Malvern Avenue terminus. He believed that the existing arch terminus created an unfavorable impression on visitors and was unsanitary. Eventually, the arch was extended.<sup>50</sup> A large sewer line was also placed in the arch during this period.

Beginning in 1913, park officials recommended that collection and distribution hot water pipes be placed inside Creek Arch. They argued that this action would end the necessity of digging up the grounds along Bathhouse Row whenever a leak developed in the thermal system. The construction of the new water distribution system in 1931 resulted in the implementation of this proposal. A 12-inch insulated pipe was hung on the arch wall to carry water from the springs to the reservoir. In addition, the construction crew cleaned all debris and boulders from the water channel to increase the space in the arch in times of flood. Maintenance work continues on and in the arch to the present.<sup>51</sup>

## ECONOMICS OF THE BATHING INDUSTRY

### Economics of the Baths

The only expense to first bathers at Hot Springs was the outfitting required to get to the hot springs and camp there while they took the baths. The first commercial developments consisted of cabins and sheds rented out to seasonal visitors for lodging. Stores followed shortly, to supply the needs of the bathers. In 1830 Asa Thompson charged one dollar for a series of baths in a wooden tub at his bathhouse.<sup>52</sup>

The bathhouse operators continued to charge whatever price they wished for the next 47 years. This changed dramatically with the arrival of the Hot Springs Commission in 1877. The commissioners proposed the following regulations concerning the thermal water:

He [Hot Springs Reservation superintendent] should be required to lease the water at a low rate by the year. The rates of rent should be fixed at a certain sum for a bath. The object is to give the bather a cheap bath and healthy bath of Hot Water fresh from the Springs. To lease the water at a low rate to the owner of a bathing establishment is going but half way to no purpose, if he is allowed to put a high price upon the bath itself. The whole effect of this Government in making the Reservation is to furnish cheap baths to the people, and not to enrich the owners or lessees of bathhouses.

The charges at the best bathhouses here are fifty cents per bath. This rate is too high. The best baths should not cost over twenty to twenty-five cents each, and a condition should be put into the leases that they should not cost more than this sum.<sup>53</sup>

Secretary of the Interior Schurz ordered Superintendent Kelley to fix water rents but did not specify the cost to be charged by the bathhouses per bath. Schurz further instructed Kelley to base all water rents on the number of baths taken in a particular bathhouse and average daily consumption of water. The bathhouse owners agreed they should pay a royalty to the government, which they requested be based solely on the

funding required to maintain the reservation. They objected to paying a water rent based on consumption of thermal water. Despite this protest, by 1879 Superintendent Kelley had established water rates ranging from \$40 to \$100 a year on the bathhouses, hotels, restaurants, and stores.<sup>54</sup>

In November of 1880 the bathhouse owners formed an economic pool known as the Hot Springs Bath House Association. This pool fixed rates for the 21-course baths. The pool received all money collected for bathing, and every six months the pool distributed the money to the individual bathhouses based on the number of tubs in each. The stated purpose of the pool was to stop the evil of drumming--bathhouse owners employing people to solicit customers for their particular bathhouse. In reality, this pool set up a monopoly among the small group of men who owned the bathhouses. Several of the bathhouse owners held substantial shares in bathhouses other than their own. For example, Albert B. Gaines held interests in seven bathhouses and the Arlington Hotel in 1888.<sup>55</sup>

The price agreed on for a 21-course of baths was

H.M. Rector's Bath House . . . . .	\$10.00
Rammelsberg Bath House . . . . .	10.00
Big Iron J.R. Wells & Co. Bath House . . . . .	8.00
Old Hale Nelson & Brown Bath House . . . . .	10.00
Ozark G.G. Latta Bath House . . . . .	10.00
C.N. Rockafellow Bath House . . . . .	7.50
Hot Springs Messrs Tobin Bath House . . . . .	6.00
Grand Central J. Griffith Bath House . . . . .	4.00 <sup>56</sup>

The fees for the new Palace, the new Rector's Bathhouse, and the Independent were not set because they were unfinished at the time. The association originally planned to set individual bath fees at the different bathhouses, ranging from \$.25 to \$.75. They, however, finally agreed to establish fees at between \$.15 and \$.50 per bath. The bathhouses sold tickets for one, seven, 10, and 21 baths, and the tickets could not be redeemed for money. An auditor selected by the association received all funds on Monday and on Tuesday checked the total of receipts against the number of baths given at each bathhouse.<sup>57</sup>

The owners of the Independent soon withdrew from the pool and set their rates at below those of the combination. Two of the pooling bathhouses then cut their rates to below those of the Independent to force that bathhouse to rejoin the pool. Also, various acts of vandalism began occurring at the Independent Bathhouse. Finally, the owners of the Independent sold out to the pool at a loss of \$7,000 on their original investment.<sup>58</sup>

In 1881 Secretary of the Interior Samuel J. Kirkwood issued an order stipulating that no bathhouse could charge more than \$.30 per bath. A petition from the citizens of Hot Springs to the new Secretary of the Interior Henry M. Teller in 1882 complained that these prices were unfair to both rich and poor. The rich could not obtain better accommodations, and the poor must spend \$.30 for a bath. Within the next few years the government established a water charge of \$15 a year per tub, with each bathhouse limited to a maximum of 40 tubs. Bath prices varied over the years within the framework established by the Hot Springs Bath House Association and the government.<sup>59</sup>

By 1889 the Rockafellow Bathhouse and Hot Springs Bathhouse had withdrawn from the association, but the other nine bathhouses remained in the organization. The association members again tried to force the outside bathhouses back into line by cutting costs and argued that the organization prevented drumming. They further contended that the association provided the most efficient and inexpensive bathhouse operation for the public. Those in disagreement argued that the association fixed bath prices and provided a monopoly for a few bathhouse owners. The association continued to operate until the secretary of the interior issued an order on January 14, 1898, that it be dissolved. The bathhouse owners who continued to work together in the Hot Springs Bath House Association no longer set bath rates.<sup>60</sup>

The bathhouses increased their bathing rates slightly in 1893, but continued the tradition of having the Christmas-to-July rates higher than the July-to-December rates. During the summer and fall months the

bathhouses received less visitation and their owners took this opportunity to paint and refurbish the facilities. During a year's time the bathhouses bathed an average of six people per tub per day, earning a profit of \$63 a month for each tub.<sup>61</sup>

The Arlington, Park, and Eastman hotels in Hot Springs joined to form the Southwest Investment Company on May 15, 1895. The purpose of this holding company included managing the hotels and setting the rates for lodging and bathing at Hot Springs. The hotel owners argued that this provided the only means to prevent one or more of them from going bankrupt. Secretary of the Interior Cornelius N. Bliss determined that the activities of the Southwestern Investment Company were an illegal pooling agreement and ordered the company dissolved on June 15, 1897.<sup>62</sup>

Secretary of the Interior Bliss further directed the reservation to remove all restrictions on minimum pricing for baths. This resulted in little change to the bathing price structure, with a single bath costing from \$.25 to \$.50 and a course of 21 baths costing \$3 to \$10. One bathhouse (the Lamar) took the opportunity to raise prices, and two bathhouses (the Rammelsberg and Rockafellow) lowered prices.<sup>63</sup>

By the late 1910s the cost of bathing rose to between \$7 and \$12 for a course of 21 baths. Also, the bather paid a fee of \$3 per course to the bath attendant. The cost of bathing gradually increased over the next decades. The bathhouses proved profitable to their stockholders and declared yearly dividends.<sup>64</sup>

The economic situation for the bathhouses changed dramatically with the onset of the Great Depression in 1929. The bathhouse owners appealed to the superintendent of Hot Springs National Park and to the director of the National Park Service to reduce the water rates from \$80 per tub to \$60. The government had raised the water rates from \$60 to \$80 in 1919. The bathhouses paid the higher rates until the Great Depression caused a decline in the number of people bathing. The government agreed to provide relief for the bathhouse owners by reducing tub fees. The

number of baths taken gradually increased during the rest of the 1930s.<sup>65</sup>

The increased business at the bathhouses continued until 1946. That year represented a peak for the bathing industry. In 1946, bathers purchased more than 1.2 million bath tickets for multiple baths on Bathhouse Row. This number declined in the next two decades, and by 1964 bathers purchased only 400,000 baths. A slight increase occurred in the number of single bath tickets purchased, but this did not offset the dramatic overall economic decline. Bathing costs continued to increase over the years. The bathhouses, caught between rising costs and declining demand, gradually went out of business from the 1960s until the 1980s. Today only one bathhouse remains open on Bathhouse Row.<sup>66</sup>

### The Plight of the Poor

Impoverished individuals came to the hot springs shortly after their discovery by European explorers. While the wealthier spa patrons paid for private baths, the poor patrons gathered around thermal pools and bathed together. Since these pools lacked privacy, it became customary for the women to bath in the morning and men in the afternoon. In 1875 Charles Leland of New York paid for the erection of a wooden building over the largest pool that served the poor.<sup>67</sup>

By 1877, 300 to 400 indigent people occupied shanties and tents around three thermal pools known as Ral Hole, Corn Hole, and Mud Hole on Hot Springs Mountain. Superintendent Benjamin F. Kelley arrived in Hot Springs in October 1877. He posted notices that all temporary structures within the reservation grounds would be removed within 30 days. Many of the poor could not leave because of their health, and Kelley appealed to the people of Hot Springs to take care of them. The superintendent next ordered construction of two structures over bathing pools on the south side of Hot Springs Mountain for use by the poor. Charitable donations from wealthier bathers paid for these two facilities for the poor.<sup>68</sup>

One writer commented on one bathing spot that "the so called Ral Hole, . . . is a bathing place for a few needy and syphilitic people, but principally it is the headquarters of a great number of thieves, tramps, jail-birds, ruffians, deadbeats and roughs."<sup>69</sup> Superintendent Kelley took decided action on September 25, 1878, when he ordered the building over Ral Hole torn down and burned. This action roused the rough elements to threaten to burn portions of the town. Superintendent Kelley responded by requesting a detachment of United States infantry from Little Rock to camp on the reservation and protect public property. Company E of the 13th Infantry, under the command of Henry Clay Pratt, arrived on December 10, 1878, to maintain order in Hot Springs.<sup>70</sup>

Despite these harsh measures, the government sympathized with the plight of the poor. In 1877 the Hot Springs Commission recommended that a free bathing program for the poor be established by law. Superintendent Kelley requested funds from the secretary of the interior for such a program. Congress passed legislation on December 16, 1878, directing the superintendent to provide and maintain a certain number of baths for the indigent.<sup>71</sup>

Superintendent Kelley leased the Mud Hole pool to Deputy United States Marshal James L. Barnes at Hot Springs under the following conditions:

Mr. Barnes was to construct a suitable building for bath room and reception rooms, also a bridge across the creek to give access to it. The labor and material to be furnished at his expense and he was also to bear the expense of warming and lighting the building, and keeping it in order for bathers. All classes were allowed to bathe under the following regulations. From seven till nine o'clock free to females. From nine to eleven a.m. females pay. From eleven till four o'clock p.m. males pay. From this hour till nine p.m. males free. This last arrangement enabled the indigent, who followed various employments to obtain baths after work for the day was concluded.

The lessee constructed the building and bridge and improved the pool. He was required to bathe all who applied; those unable to pay free; those able to pay, but preferring for some reason to bathe here paid the sum of five to fifteen cents per



bath. This sum went to meet the expenses of the pool and to reimburse the lessee for his outlay. A list of all bathers was kept, and if any peculiar case was presented, a record of it was made and the result of bathing. This was done at the suggestion of physicians for the benefit of similar cases in the future. The number bathing here is very large. . . .<sup>72</sup>

In 1880 Congress passed legislation that provided that money from the sale of public lots in Hot Springs be held in a special fund for the maintenance of the free baths. Attendance at the free bathhouse continued to grow during the next several years. In 1884 Superintendent Hamblen enlarged the old pool and constructed a new pool measuring 20 feet square and 6 feet deep, requiring blasting of the mountainside rock. During the remodeling work, the local newspaper printed a story that the blasting work caused Mud Hole to dry up, but this proved erroneous.<sup>73</sup>

Demand for free bathhouse facilities continued to increase. In 1887 Superintendent Charles Field requested Congress to allocate \$6,000 for constructing a new facility for the poor. The old facility had four small rooms with a dressing room and pool for each sex. Superintendent Field found this structure in poor condition and unsuitable for bathing in severe weather.<sup>74</sup>

Congress allocated money for the project, and work began on the new bathing facility in 1890. Superintendent Frank Thompson reported the following in 1891:

The new brick bath house erected on the site of the old wooden structure was accepted and received from the contractor on February 18, 1891, and opened to the public for free baths on the 23d day of the same month. The size of the new building is about 45 by 60 feet. The main portion, 45 by 35 feet, contains the office and waiting rooms, dressing rooms, etc., in the first story, while the second story is designed for use of the manager. At the rear of the dressing rooms is located the bathing department, consisting of a long, low, one-story addition, 20 by 53 feet, containing two rooms, with a bathing pool in each. The men's pool-room is much larger of the two, for the reason that about four times as many men bathe here as do women.<sup>75</sup>

In 1893 Superintendent William Little found the bathhouse for the poor in need of minor repairs. He stated that the large number of bathers prevented the poor from obtaining a sufficient bath to cure their ailments. The reason for the large volume of bathers, Little believed, was because people came to the free bathhouse to avoid paying for thermal water baths. He intended to take action against those applying for permission to use the free bathhouse who were not truly indigent.<sup>76</sup>

Little required each applicant at the free bathhouse to respond in writing to a series of questions. He evaluated these responses to determine if the person was indigent. If the person was found needy, a ticket for 21 baths would be issued. This procedure brought strong protest to the secretary of the interior; some people complained that this barred many deserving people from the baths because they had too much pride to claim to be paupers. Despite these restrictions, the number of those seeking baths here continued to increase.<sup>77</sup>

The crowds at the free bathhouse caused a number of health problems and complaints about the sanitary conditions there. Superintendent Little countered these complaints by establishing a procedure by which the bathhouse opened at 6:00 a.m. and remained opened until 12:30 p.m. Then the attendants drained the pools, ventilated the rooms, refilled the pools, and reopened at 2:00 p.m. While the pools were in use, a constant stream of water ran through them. The bathhouse remained opened until 6 p.m. when it closed and the pools were drained and the building cleaned, scrubbed, and disinfected. On Wednesdays from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. the bathhouse closed and visitors took tours of the building.<sup>78</sup>

In 1898 the second story of the free bathhouse was refitted to serve as a free dispensary. Doctors from the Army and Navy Hospital examined patients and prescribed for them free of charge. At first, the operation lacked sufficient medicine, but the superintendent hoped to raise funds from public contributions to pay for additional medicine. The dispensary remained open for two years until reassignments at the Army and Navy Hospital left the dispensary without a doctor.<sup>79</sup>

In 1900 construction began on a separate pool for black men. The large demand for the free bathhouse and its poor condition led the secretary of the interior to request Congress to appropriate funding for a new bathhouse. Congress approved an appropriation in 1902 of \$25,000 for remodeling and enlarging the free bathhouse. The original bathhouse remained as an administration office. Construction of the two wings to the building began in 1903. Superintendent Eisele ordered a temporary wooden bathhouse placed over the thermal pools for the poor to bathe in during construction. The new additions contained bathtubs recessed into the floor to facilitate getting in and out of the tubs. In addition, cooling rooms and dressing rooms with private lockers were constructed, along with separate facilities for black and white patrons. The new facilities opened to serve the public in January 1904.<sup>80</sup>

The materials used in the bathhouse construction were of poor quality, and the bathhouse required constant maintenance to keep it operating. To increase bathing facilities, Superintendent W. Scott Smith ordered the removal of 32 individual tubs and their replacement by 10 pools in 1907. Twenty-four tubs remained to serve the needs of individual cases.<sup>81</sup>

An inspection of the Hot Springs Reservation in 1910 revealed the following conditions in the free bathhouse:

It is in bad repair, dingy and uninviting looking, the walls are cracking, the plaster has fallen in places, it is overcrowded--for the indigent have not been slow to take advantage of the paternal goodness of the Government. They troop in by scores, both sexes and all colors, afflicted with all kinds of diseases. Some days there are eight hundred taking the baths, and to accommodate such numbers, it was thought necessary to introduce pools to supplement the overworked bath tubs. The dressing and cooling rooms are foul, infested with vermin and crowded with a horde of people, black and white, some with open ulcers. The attendants are ignorant of their duties, some are illiterate. The atmosphere is indescribable. Filthy rags with pus from syphilitic ulcers, are found on the floors. No criticism attaches to the management. No one could do better under the present system. The building is too small for the purpose, and is not properly arranged.<sup>82</sup>

Congress passed legislation defining the qualifications of indigent and providing fines for those falsely taking a pauper's oath. Those caught violating the law could be fined up to \$25 and placed in jail for 30 days. The purpose of this law was to discourage all but the truly needy from using the free bathhouse.<sup>83</sup>

To improve the quality of care at the free bathhouse, a medical director took over its supervision in 1911. A report two years later criticized the treatment that the poor had received at the free bathhouse. The report found most of the poor diagnosed their own afflictions without benefit of a doctor. Thus the thermal water proved of little help in relieving more than the symptoms of their diseases. In April 1916 a free clinic to serve the poor was opened on the second floor of the bathhouse.<sup>84</sup>

In 1918 planning began for the construction of a new free bathhouse. Actual construction did not begin until after World War I, with the official ground-breaking ceremony taking place on January 31, 1920. Hot Springs officials donated a block of land off the reservation for the new free bathhouse. The bathhouse opened to the public in March 1922, and the old government bathhouse was demolished during the latter half of that year.<sup>85</sup>

During the depression, the use of the free bathhouse and government clinic continued to grow. In 1936 Congress increased the penalties for falsely swearing a pauper's oath. Little change occurred in the indigent bathing program for the next several decades. Like the rest of the bathing industry at Hot Springs, the use of the free bathhouse declined dramatically after World War II.<sup>86</sup>

In 1951 Superintendent Donald Libbey proposed that the individual bathhouses carry out the indigent bathing program and that the free bathhouse be turned into an underwater therapy facility. The bathhouses would be reimbursed for the cost of the baths taken by the poor. Implementation of this plan occurred in 1957. The poor applied at park headquarters for the free bathing program, and upon approval a

physician examined the applicant to determine if the thermal water would prove helpful. If baths were prescribed, the person was assigned to a bathhouse participating in the program for a prescribed number of baths. The bathhouse then kept account of the number of baths taken and turned these figures over to park authorities for reimbursement. This program continues to the present.<sup>87</sup>

## MINORITIES AND THE BATHING INDUSTRY

### Blacks

Like the poor, minorities faced various obstacles in bathing. The contribution of the blacks to the bathing industry is a complex story. They provided the main source of labor for the industry; they also attempted over the years, with varying degrees of success, to obtain thermal baths. Before the Civil War, a few of the bathhouses offered bathing services to blacks. The first documentation that shows that blacks worked as bathhouse attendants is dated after the Civil War; however, this practice may extend back to the antebellum period.<sup>88</sup>

A visitor to Hot Springs in 1877 found black women doing laundry for the bathhouses and hotels and black men serving as bath attendants, selling souvenirs to bathers, and working at various other jobs around the bathhouses. When the bathhouses faced financial difficulties, the blacks suffered the most because bathhouse owners forced them to take wage cuts to keep the bathhouses profitable.<sup>89</sup>

Blacks, working as attendants, received fees from the bathers for their work. By 1881 the reservation superintendent issued regulations stipulating that the bath attendant fees be a maximum of \$1 a week. In 1889 the bathhouses began collecting these fees and giving the bath attendants fixed salaries of \$10 a week. Those bathhouses that gave more than 10 baths a week per attendant received additional revenue from this policy. The resulting demoralization of the black attendants resulted in the bathhouses discontinuing this practice after two months.<sup>90</sup>

Black bath patrons during this time could bathe in the various bathhouses at times when whites were not using them. The one exception to this rule was the free government bathhouse, which permitted black and white bath patrons during the evening. The Independent Bathhouse opened as an exclusive black bathhouse on March 1, 1890. This operation proved short-lived; by September 1891 blacks complained that they could not purchase bath tickets in any of the bathhouses. Many blacks refused to go to the government bathhouse because they had to perjure themselves by signing a pauper's oath to obtain baths there. A few of the bathhouses served blacks if they came at sunrise or late in the afternoon after regular business hours. The blacks remained excluded from prime bathing times until the Crystal Bathhouse opened at the beginning of the 20th century to serve their needs.<sup>91</sup>

Bathhouse owners exploited black workers, charged them for any breakage of bathhouse equipment, and even ordered them to vote for specific candidates in local elections. The reservation superintendent issued a variety of rules and regulations to prevent the worst of these abuses. Church pastors in 1891 requested that the bathhouses close on Sunday to allow the attendants a day of rest. This did not take place for many decades.<sup>92</sup>

In 1903 Superintendent Eisele described the working conditions for the bath attendants in the following manner:

All bath house attendants bathe their persons every day. When they report for duty in the morning they disrobe and put on a bathing suit of white duck trousers and a thin gauze undershirt; their duties require them to work in a temperature of from 95 to 100 degrees and as a natural consequence their suits become saturated with perspiration in a short time, which detracts from their personal appearance. Being a hazardous business and destructive of health, white men shun this work and it follows that the negro is the natural bath attendant. So far as their work is concerned it compares favorably with other laborers of this grade of intelligence.<sup>93</sup>

Bathing conditions for the blacks changed for the better in 1901 when Superintendent Eisele ordered the construction of a separate bathing pool for blacks at the Government Free Bathhouse. The pool was completed on September 4, 1901. The exclusively black Crystal Bathhouse, built in the early 1900s, faced a number of financial difficulties in the late 1910s. On January 1, 1912, the Black Knights of Pythias received the lease for the bathhouse. Also, the Alhambra Bathhouse began providing baths exclusively for blacks, although this bathhouse never proved a financial success. Later, this facility changed to a white bathhouse. The Supreme Woodmen of the Union of the USA, a black organization, received government permission to operate a hospital and bathhouse for blacks in 1920. The completed black hospital and bathhouse opened in 1922, and it remained opened until November 30, 1935. This institution lost money the last few years it operated. Park superintendents disapproved various applications to reopen this bathhouse because they believed the remaining Knights of Pythias bathhouse provided adequate service to black bathers.<sup>94</sup>

The traditional role of blacks as bath attendants was challenged in 1911 when the Buckstaff Bathhouse requested permission to hire white attendants. Manager George E. Hogaboom of the Buckstaff Bathhouse wrote: "We believe that the white attendant position will not only give us a higher standard of intelligence, but will improve the service in many other ways."<sup>95</sup>

Hot Springs Reservation officials approved the change, and by 1913 the Buckstaff advertised as having a completely white staff. The Maurice Bathhouse hired one white attendant, and seven black attendants walked out on strike rather than work with a white. The Maurice Bathhouse management replaced the striking attendants rather than release the white employee. Despite these incidents, the professions of bath attendant and mercury rubber remained mainly black professions. By 1944 the Buckstaff remained the only bathhouse with white attendants. Today there is a mix. Actually the male bath attendants all happen to be black; all the women are white. But that is just coincidence.<sup>96</sup>

Even though the superintendents of Hot Springs Reservation and later Hot Springs National Park approved integration of the bath attendant profession, they actively promoted segregation of the bathhouses. In July 1926 Superintendent Joseph Bolton wrote to the manager of the Ozark Bathhouse that blacks bathing in white bathhouses should not be permitted. In 1945 Superintendent John W. Emmert promoted enlarging the Knights of Pythias bathhouse, arguing that black bathers could request use of white bathhouses if the Pythian bathhouse became too crowded. The Government Free Bathhouse continued to serve both black and white patrons in separate facilities and at different times.<sup>97</sup>

In 1947 the National Baptist Church applied for permission to operate a 10-tub bathhouse for blacks. This request received approval, and they opened a second bathhouse that catered exclusively to blacks. The National Baptist Church used the same building as the Supreme Woodmen of the Union, which accounted for the term "sanitarium" on the terra cotta of the building. It was a hotel bathhouse, as was the Pythian.

Changing attitudes toward segregation and a growing civil rights movement gradually made it impossible for the white bathhouses to not offer their services to blacks. By 1963 blacks could obtain bath tickets for any bathhouse, and in the next few years the bathhouses became fully integrated.<sup>98</sup>

### Other Minority Groups

Other minority groups traveled to Hot Springs. The largest group was women. The first women to arrive were wives of settlers or the daughters of planters coming to take the water. Women soon owned or managed boarding houses near the hot springs. By the 1830s women came on their own to bathe in the thermal waters. The predominately male community set various bathing times for men and women at the popular bathing locations. The women usually were left with the less desirable times for bathing. By the mid-19th century the bathhouses



contained separate facilities for men and women, the main difference being that the women's facilities were smaller. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries the bathhouses gradually offered more services and medical treatment to women.<sup>99</sup>

Other minority groups that came to visit or settle in the Hot Springs area were Jews, Hungarians, Italians, and Germans. A Jewish congregation existed in Hot Springs as early as 1881. Various hotels and boarding houses in the 20th century offered kosher food to customers. Various European ethnic groups established restaurants that featured foods from their native countries. These people came here for a variety of reasons--including the spa atmosphere that reminded them of spas in their own countries. All contributed to the rich social and cultural heritage of Hot Springs.<sup>100</sup>

## Notes from Chapter 5

1. Bryan, "Report on the Hot Water Supply," p. 2.
2. David Dale Owens, Second Report of a Geological Reconnaissance of the Middle and Southern Counties of Arkansas. Made during the Years of 1859 and 1860 (Philadelphia: C. Sherman & Son, Printers, 1860), pp. 21-22.
3. Ibid., Plate VIII.
4. W.J. Peittau to Alonzo Bell, March 23, 1878, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA; John Coburn to Carl Schurz, July 16, 1877, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA; Kelley to Schurz, June 21, 1878, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA; and Martin Eisele to Ethan A. Hitchcock, February 15, 1901, Entry 1, Box 26, RG 79, NA.
5. Kelley to Schurz, March 23, 1880, Entry 1, Box 5, RG 79, NA; Eisele to Hitchcock, February 15, 1901, Entry 1, Box 26, RG 79, NA; Greaves to Kelley, May 25, 1880, Entry 1, Box 5, RG 79, NA; and George French to Kelley, April 28, 1880, Entry 1, Box 5, RG 79, NA.
6. French to Kelley, June 11, 1880, Entry 1, Box 5, RG 79, NA; and Amos Hadley to Schurz, January 27, 1881, Entry 1, Box 6, RG 79, NA.
7. Latta to Kelley and Schurz, July 18, 1880, Entry 1, Box 5, RG 79, NA; Kelley to Bell, July 24, 1880, Entry 1, Box 5, RG 79, NA; and William Nelson to Bell, October 4, 1880, Entry 1, Box 5, RG 79, NA.
8. Samuel Hamblen to Kelley, March 15, 1881, Entry 1, Box 5, RG 79, NA; and Kelley to Samuel J. Kirkwood, Secretary of the Interior, November 21, 1881, Entry 1, Box 6, RG 79, NA.
9. Handbury to Henry M. Teller, Secretary of the Interior, September 18, 1882, Entry 1, Box 7, RG 79, NA.
10. Eisele to Hitchcock, February 15, 1901, Entry 1, Box 26, RG 79, NA; and Hamblen to Teller, May 28, 1884, Entry 1, Box 9, RG 79, NA.
11. Thomas H. Musick to Secretary of the Interior, no date, Entry 1, Box 14, RG 79, NA; Hamblen to Lucius Q.C. Lamar, Secretary of the Interior, April 11, 1885, Entry 1, Box 9, RG 79, NA; and Charles W. Field, Report of the Superintendent of Hot Springs Reservation, to the Secretary of the Interior, 1885. (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1885), p. 4.
12. Frederick W. Cron, Mineral Waters at Hot Springs, Arkansas (n.p.:n.p., 1939), p. 4.
13. Musick to Secretary of the Interior, n.d., Entry 1, Box 14, RG 79, NA; and Frank M. Thompson, Report of the Superintendent of Hot

Springs Reservation to the Secretary of Interior, 1891 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1891), p. 21.

14. Cron, Mineral Waters, p. 3; Thompson, Report of the Superintendent of Hot Springs Reservation to the Secretary of Interior, 1891, p. 21; Musick to Secretary of Interior, n.d., Entry 1, Box 14, RG 79, NA; and Baird to Secretary of Interior, August 3, 1889, Entry 1, Box 14, RG 79, NA.

15. Cron, Mineral Waters, p. 3; and Musick to Secretary of Interior, n.d., Entry 1, Box 14, RG 79, NA.

16. Rector to Noble, August 11, 1890, Entry 1, Box 12, RG 79, NA; Thomas H. Musick, p. 24; and Laughran to Noble, April 25, 1890, Entry 1, Box 12, RG 79, NA.

17. Greene to Thompson, September 17, 1890, Entry 1, Box 12, RG 79, NA; Petitioners to Noble, February 24, 1891, Entry 1, Box 13, RG 79, NA; and Cron, Mineral Waters, p. 3.

18. Cron, Mineral Waters, p. 3; William Little, Report of the Superintendent of Hot Springs Reservation to the Secretary of Interior, 1893 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1893), p. 5; Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 120-121; and William Little, Report of the Superintendent of Hot Springs Reservation to the Secretary of Interior, 1898 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1898), p. 9.

19. Thompson, Report of the Superintendent, p. 24 and U.S. Congress, House, Report of the Secretary of the Interior, 1892, House Exec. Doc. 12, 52d Cong., 2d sess., 1893, p. 89.

20. Thompson, Report of the Superintendent, 1891, p. 23.

21. More detailed information on these fountains can be found in Rhodes, Historic Grounds and Structures. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 117-118; Little, Report of the Superintendent, 1895, p. 7; and Little, Report of the Superintendent of Hot Springs Reservation to the Secretary of Interior, 1897 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1897), p. 14.

22. Little to Secretary of Interior, July 14, 1899, Entry 1, Box 24, RG 79, NA; Little to Secretary of Interior, August 7, 1899, Entry 1, Box 24, RG 79, NA; Little to Secretary of Interior, September 18, 1899, Entry 1, Box 24, RG 79, NA; Little to Secretary of Interior, October 30, 1899, Entry 1, Box 24, RG 79, NA; Martin A. Eisele, Report of the Superintendent of Hot Springs Reservation, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1900), p. 18; and Harry H. Meyers, Report on the Hot Springs Reservation, Hot Springs, Arkansas (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1909), p. 5.

23. Eisele to Secretary of Interior, January 25, 1902, Entry 1, Box 26, RG 79, NA; and Martin A. Eisele, Report of the Superintendent of the

Hot Springs Reservation to the Secretary of the Interior, 1903 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1903), p. 11.

24. Eisele to Secretary of the Interior, August 13, 1903, Entry 1, Box 28, RG 79, NA.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. For additional detail on reservoir work, see Rhodes, Historic Ground and Structures. Eisele to Secretary of the Interior, November 5, 1903, Entry 1, Box 28, RG 79, NA; Eisele to Secretary of Interior, February 4, 1904, Entry 1, Box 29, RG 79, NA; Eisele to Secretary of the Interior, April 1, 1904, Entry 1, Box 29, RG 79, NA; Eisele to Secretary of the Interior, April 16, 1904, Entry 1, Box 29, RG 79, NA; Eisele to Secretary of the Interior, May 2, 1904, Entry 1, Box 29, RG 79, NA; and Martin A. Eisele, Report of Superintendent of Hot Springs Reservation (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1904), pp. 336-337.

28. W. Scott Smith, Report of Superintendent of Hot Springs Reservation (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1908), p. 6.

29. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 121; Rhodes; Historic Grounds and Structures, pp. 103-104, 120.

30. Hamilton, "Report on Construction," RG 79, NA; Cron, Mineral Waters at Hot Springs, p. 3; and Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 121.

31. Hamilton, "Report on Construction," RG 79, NA; Cron, Mineral Waters at Hot Springs, p. 3; and Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 121-122.

32. The description of the crystal fountain refers to its pouring in a sand mold. The crystals were embedded in tamped sand with the bases extending into cavities. Bronze was poured into the cavities and after lengthy cooling the sand was scratched away from the bronze and the protruding crystals. The fountain consisted of bronze and crystal. Rhodes, Historic Grounds and Structures, pp. 186-192.

33. Ralph W. Emerson to Thomas Vint, November 6, 1936, Rhodes Collection, Box 4, Background Data 1935-1939 File; Donald S. Libbey, "Annual Report for Hot Springs National Park for 1938," Rhodes Collection, Box 4, Background Data 1935-1939 File, p. 24; Preston P. Patraw, "Annual Report for Hot Springs National Park for 1939," Rhodes Collection, Box 4, Background Data 1935-1939 File, pp. 18-19; "First Work on Proposed Cooling System Started," April 2, 1946, uncataloged newspaper clippings in Special Collections, Hot Springs National Park; Thomas Boles, "Preliminary Annual Report Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas," Rhodes Collection, Box 4, Background Data 1935-1939 File; and Thomas Boles, "Annual Report for Hot Springs National Park For the

Year Ended June 30, 1948," Rhodes Collection, Box 4, Background Data 1935-1939 File, p. 2.

34. Thomas Boles to Director of the National Park Service, May 27, 1949, Rhodes Collection, Box 4, Background Data 1940-1949 File; "Government to Construct Central Cooling System" 1949, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas, K34 News, Media, and Publicity File; and Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 122.

35. Donald S. Libbey, "Preliminary Annual Report for 1951-1952 Fiscal Year," June 16, 1952, Rhodes Collection, Box 4, Background Data 1950-Present File, n.p.; H. Raymond Gregg, "Preliminary Annual Report for 1961-1962 Fiscal Year," June 15, 1962, Rhodes Collection, Box 4, Background Data 1950-Present File, n.d.; and Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 123.

36. A naturalistic cascade was constructed in 1983. The term "display spring" is not understood, and after fighting a losing battle, the former display spring is called the "open springs" and the display on the Tufa Terrace is called the "cascade." The term "cascade" comes from plans over several decades for a formal structure at this site. Lack of water prevented construction of this enormous display despite a high level of interest. In the 1970s planners realized the water should be used for display rather than being wasted in the overflow of the central reservoir. Rhodes, Historic Grounds and Structures, pp. 232, 254.

37. Brown, The American Spa, p. 36.

38. Van Cleef, The Hot Springs of Arkansas, 1878, p. 12.

39. Coburn and Stearns to Schurz, July 16, 1877, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA.

40. Handbury to Secretary of Interior, September 18, 1882, Entry 1, Box 7, RG 79, NA.

41. Ibid.; and "Specifications for Work to be done on the Hot Springs Creek, Hot Springs, Arkansas," no date, Entry 1, Box 7, RG 79, NA.

42. Handbury to Secretary of Interior, May 28, 1883, Entry 1, Box 8, RG 79, NA; Handbury to Secretary of Interior, June 22, 1883; Handbury to Henry M. Teller, July 5, 1883, Entry 1, Box 8, RG 79, NA; and Hamblen to M.L. Joslyn, August 6, 1883, Entry 1, Box 8, RG 79, NA.

43. "Arkansas's Hot Springs," The New York Times, 13 January 1884, p. 4.

44. Congressional hearings revealed that blasting in the rock at bottom of the culvert affected the flow of the springs. Because of this, the digging out of the bottom was discontinued. The spring at the Government Free Bathhouse most affected by blasting had a reduction in flow. The cure for that, ironically, was more blasting and deepening of

the pool. Samuel Hamblen, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation, Made to the Secretary of the Interior, for the Year Ending June 30, 1884 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1884), p. 4; Hamblen to Joslyn, December 22, 1883, Entry 1, Box 8, RG 79, NA; Charles Field, Report of the Hot Springs Reservation (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1885), p. 3; Charles Field, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation, Made to the Secretary of the Interior, 1886 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1886), p. 3; and Martin A. Eisele, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1901), p. 26.

45. Couper to Smith, December 26, 1895, Rhodes Collection, Box 1, Background Data Prehistory-1890 File.

46. Little, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation to the Secretary of the Interior, 1895 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1895), p. 8; and William J. Little, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation to the Secretary of the Interior, 1896 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1896), p. 9.

47. Little, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation to the Secretary of the Interior, 1898 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1898), p. 8.

48. Ibid.; and Little, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation to the Secretary of the Interior, 1899 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1899), p. 10.

49. Eisele, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation, 1901, p. 26.

50. Eisele to Secretary of the Interior, January 18, 1904, Entry 1, Box 29, RG 79, NA; and Harry H. Myers, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation, Hot Springs, Arkansas, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1913), pp. 15-16.

51. Cron, Mineral Waters, p. 4.

52. "Impasse on Central Avenue," Unidentified magazine clipping, Rhodes Collection, Box 3, Bathhouse Row General File, p. 52.

53. John Coburn to Carl Schurz, July 16, 1877, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA.

54. The Arlington Hotel paid \$100 water rent per year. The Grand Central paid \$75 a year. The Sumpter House and French's Hotel paid \$60 a year. The Parker Hotel paid \$50 and all restaurants and stores paid \$40 a year. "Instructions to the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation of Arkansas," 21 September 1877, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA; W.J. Peittau to Alonzo Bell, March 23, 1878, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA; and Kelley to Schurz, January 24, 1879, Entry 1, Box 5, RG 79, NA.

55. The practice of drumming will be discussed in this report. In 1880, Henry M. Rector was the major owner of Rector's Bathhouse and the uncompleted Rector's New Bathhouse. Harry Rammelsberg was the major owner of the Rammelsberg. J.R. Wells and Company held the major shares of the Big Iron Bathhouse. Charles Brown and William Nelson held major interests in the Old Hale Bathhouse. George J. Latta held the major share in the Ozark Bathhouse. Charles N. Rockafellow owned the major interest in Rockafellow's Bathhouse. W.H. Tobin controlled a majority share of the Hot Springs Bathhouse. James Griffith controlled the Grand Central Bathhouse. Samuel W. Fordyce held the major shares in uncompleted New Palace Bathhouse, and M. McKeogh and George H. Holmes held major shares in the uncompleted Independent Bathhouse. A listing of bathhouse owners from 1888 until 1891 can be found in appendix A. "Memorandum Hot Springs Affairs," n.d., Entry 1, Box 12, RG 79, NA; and Amos Hadley to Schurz, January 27, 1881, Entry 1, Box 6, RG 79, NA.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.; and Hadley to Schurz, January 27, 1881, Entry 1, Box 6, RG 79, NA.

58. Ibid.; and Charles Maurice to Edward Renaud, May 26, 1881, Entry 1, Box 6, RG 79, NA.

59. Petition of the People of Hot Springs to Henry M. Teller, 1882, Entry 1, Box 7, RG 79, NA; and "A Hot-Water Combine," The Chicago Tribune, 25 March 1888, Entry 1, Box 11, RG 79, NA.

60. A ticket for 21 baths in 1889 cost as follows: Lamar, \$7; Rammelsburg \$3; Ozark, \$3; Magnesia, \$7; Horseshoe, \$3.50; Palace, \$3.75; Independent, \$3; Old Hale, \$2; and Big Iron, \$2. Ibid.; Robert Proctor to Frank M. Thompson, August 26, 1889, Entry 1, Box 11, RG 79, NA; James L. Barns to Thompson, August 28, 1889, Entry 1, Box 11, RG 79, NA; Albert B. Gaines to Thompson, August 24, 1889, Entry 1, Box 11, RG 79, NA; Charles W. Field to Secretary of the Interior, February 5, 1889, Entry 1, Box 11, RG 79, NA; Thompson to Secretary of Interior, July 24, 1889, Entry 1, Box 11, RG 79, NA; and William Little to Secretary of Interior, April 22, 1898, Entry 1, Box 22, RG 79, NA.

61. Little to Secretary of the Interior, December 18, 1893, Entry 1, Box 15, RG 79, NA; and "Estimate in Reference to Bathing Facilities at Hot Springs, Arkansas," ca. 1891, Entry 1, Box 14, RG 79, NA.

62. S.S. Wilson to Hoke Smith, August 29, 1894, Entry 1, Box 17, RG 79, NA; George W. Parker to D.R. Francis, December 2, 1896, Entry 1, Box 19, RG 79, NA; Adolphus Busch to David R. Francis, January 13, 1897, Entry 1, Box 21, RG 79, NA; and "Agreement to Dissolve the Southwestern Investment Company," June 15, 1897, Entry 1, Box 20, RG 79, NA.

63. William J. Little to Secretary of Interior, August 30, 1897, Entry 1, Box 21, RG 79, NA.
64. Hot Springs, Arkansas: The World's Greatest Health and Pleasure Resort (n.p.:n.p., ca. 1917), p. 4.
65. Omer Wilson to Horace Albright, October 27, 1932, Entry 6, Box 336, RG 79, NA; and Thomas J. Allen, Jr., to Director, National Park Service, November 10, 1932, Entry 6, Box 336, RG 79, NA.
66. EBS Management Consultants Incorporated, General Business Study for Hot Springs Bath House Association (New York: EBS Management Consultants Incorporated, 1965), p. A-1.
67. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 59.
68. Kelley to Secretary of the Interior, October 22, 1877, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA; Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 113, 125; Kelley, Report of the Superintendent, 1878, p. 1; and John B. Clark to Carl Schurz, June 12, 1879, Entry 1, Box 5, RG 79, NA.
69. F. Hartman to Schurz, October 1, 1878, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA.
70. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 113; R.F. Linde to Secretary of the Interior, October 9, 1878, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA; Kelley to Schurz, September 28, 1878, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA; Kelley to Schurz, October 9, 1878, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA; Kelley to Schurz, December 30, 1878, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA; and Brown, The American Spa, p. 38.
71. Coburn and Stearns to Schurz, July 16, 1877, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA; Kelley to Schurz, August 15, 1878, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA; and Hot Springs National Park, Bathhouse Operations Manual (Hot Springs, Arkansas: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1979), p. E-1.
72. Samuel Hamblen to Henry M. Teller, June 27, 1883, Entry 1, Box 8, RG 79, NA.
73. Brown, The American Spa, pp. 38-39; Hamblen to Teller, March 14, 1883, Entry 1, Box 8, RG 79, NA; Hamblen to Teller, February 8, 1883, Entry 1, Box 8, RG 79, NA; Hamblen to M.L. Joslyn, March 10, 1884, Entry 1, Box 9, RG 79, NA; "The Celebrated Mud Hole Left Without Water," The Daily Sentinel (Hot Springs, Arkansas), 3 March 1884, Entry 1, Box 9, RG 79, NA; and Hamblen, Report of the Superintendent, 1884, p. 4.
74. Brown, The American Spa, p. 39.



75. Thompson, Report of the Superintendent, 1891, p. 20.
76. Little, Report of the Superintendent 1893, p. 4.
77. Little, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation to the Secretary of the Interior, 1894, p. 5; and O. Pearson to Tom Johnson, August 21, 1893, Entry 1, Box 6, RG 79, NA.
78. "Notes on the Present Bath Houses," The Hot Springs Medical Journal 1 (July 15, 1892), p. 137; Hot Springs, Arkansas: Its Hotels, Baths, Resorts, and Beautiful Scenery Illustrated, p. 46; and Little, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation, 1895, p. 4.
79. Little, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation, 1898, p. 8; and J. George Wright to Secretary of the Interior, June 17, 1901, Entry 1, Box 26, RG 79, NA.
80. Martin A. Eisele, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation 1905, p. 12; Martin A. Eisele, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation 1903, p. 17; Martin A. Eisele, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation, 1904, pp. 329-330; and J. George Wright to Secretary of the Interior, June 20, 1903, Entry 1, Box 28, RG 79, NA.
81. Smith, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation, p. 8.
82. Major General R.W. O'Reilly (Ret.) to Secretary of the Interior, June 3, 1910, Entry 6, Box 322, RG 79, NA.
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84. Harry H. Meyers, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1912), p. 9; Reid Hunt and Edward Hunt to the Surgeon General of the United States, July 11, 1913, Entry 1, Box 333, RG 79, NA; and Department of the Interior, Annual Report of the Superintendent of National Parks to the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1916 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1916), p. 20.
85. Department of the Interior, Report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1923 and the Travel Season, 1923 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1923), p. 74.
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87. Hot Springs National Park, Bathhouse Operations Manual, pp. E-1, E-2.
88. Jones, "Hot Springs: Ante-Bellum Watering Place," 14:27; and "Going to Hot Springs," The Arkansas Gazette, 7 August 1872, p. 4.
89. Van Cleef, The Hot Springs of Arkansas, 1878, pp. 9, 11.
90. George Latta to Secretary of the Interior, September 2, 1881, Entry 1, Box 6, RG 79, NA. Frank M. Thompson to Secretary of the Interior, September 12, 1889, Entry 1, Box 8, RG 79, NA; and Cron, "The Hot Springs of the Ouachita," p. 205.
91. McKeogh to Field, September 1, 1885, Entry 1, Box 10, RG 79, NA; George Latta and Albert B. Gaines to Secretary of the Interior, March 17, 1890, Entry 1, Box 12, RG 79, NA; Alonzo W. Stone to John Q. Lynch, October 2, 1891, Entry 1, Box 14, RG 79, NA; A.G. Holland to John W. Noble, September 29, 1891, Entry 1, Box 14, RG 79, NA; Thomas H. Musick to Secretary of the Interior, December 26, 1891, Entry 1, Box 14, RG 79, NA; Bather to John W. Noble, June 7, 1891, Entry 1, Box 13, RG 79, NA; J.H. Gaunt to Secretary of the Interior, January 6, 1890, Entry 1, Box 12, RG 79, NA; and William A. White to Secretary of the Interior, June 29, 1905, Entry 1, Box 31, RG 79, NA.
92. Musick to Secretary of the Interior, December 11, 1891, Entry 1, Box 14, RG 79, NA; James L. Barnes to John W. Noble, October 9, 1891, Entry 1, Box 14, RG 79, NA; Frank M. Thompson to Secretary of the Interior, February 7, 1892, Entry 1, Box 15, RG 79, NA; and Pastors of Hot Springs to John W. Noble, Secretary of the Interior, June 6, 1891, Entry 1, Box 13, RG 79, NA.
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95. Hogaboom to Henry M. Hallock, October 3, 1911, Rhodes Collection, Box 2, Buckstaff Bathhouse File.
96. Cutter, Cutters Official Guide to Hot Springs, Arkansas, p. 29; "Strike: Maurice Bath Attendants Walked Out Sunday," Unidentified newspaper clipping, on file at Garland County Historical Society and Hot Springs, Arkansas, Bathhouse File; and George E. Hogaboom, The Buckstaff Baths (n.p.:n.p., 1944), p. 1.

97. Director National Park Service to Secretary of the Interior, May 12, 1947, Entry 7, Box 1226, RG 79, NA; Donald S. Libbey to Director of National Park Service, November 6, 1945, Entry 7, Box 1222, RG 79, NA; and Bolton to Emmert, April 29, 1944, Entry 7, Box 1222, RG 79, NA.

98. H. Raymond Gregg to Director of the National Park Service, June 2, 1960, Rhodes Collection, Background Data 1950-Present File, Box 4; Hot Springs Bath House Association to Superintendent Hot Springs National Park, September 25, 1952, Lamar Collection, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas; and Norsworthy, "Hot Springs, Arkansas," p. 92.

99. Further discussion of the medical aspect of hot springs can be found in that section of this report. Also, women played a part in the criminal, social, and recreational activities that took place at Hot Springs, and that will be covered later in this report.

100. H. Moscovitz to W.P. Wald, n.d., Entry 1, Box 6, RG 79, NA; "Balfour Hotel and Dining Room," The Hot Springs Visitor's Bulletin: Your Guide to Everything 13 (May 12, 1934): 1; "Knickerbocker Hotel and Dining Room," The Hot Springs Visitor's Bulletin: Your Guide to Everything 13 (May 12, 1934): 2; and "Miller's Hotel Dining Room," The Hot Springs Visitor's Bulletin: Your Guide to Everything 13 (May 12, 1934): 3.



CHAPTER 6: PROMOTIONAL AND ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES,  
DISASTERS, SOCIAL LIFE, AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES  
OF THE HOT SPRINGS SPA INDUSTRY

TRANSPORTATION AND THE OPENING OF HOT SPRINGS TO THE WORLD

The first visitors to Hot Springs came by river transportation and then by trail. In 1831 the United States Congress funded a route from St. Louis into the Arkansas Territory. A trail from Hot Springs connected with this road at Malvern. Within a few years, the trail was widened to permit stagecoach traffic.<sup>1</sup>

This bone-jarring journey remained the quickest way for invalids to travel to Hot Springs until the opening of the narrow-gauge railroad in 1875 at a cost of \$300,000. This event made access to the thermal waters much easier. Passengers changed trains at Malvern because the trains coming into that station all used standard-gauge tracks. The train made one stop on the 26-mile trip to Hot Springs, and there the passengers helped the crew load fuel. On October 17, 1889, work was completed that changed the track to standard gauge. In 1902 the Choctaw-Oklahoma-Gulf Railroad began construction of a railroad line from Benton, Arkansas, to Hot Springs. Through a series of railroad mergers, the Malvern to Hot Springs line became part of the Missouri-Pacific and the Benton to Hot Springs line became part of the Rock Island Railroad system. Passenger services continued into the 1950s and then sporadically until all passenger operations ended in 1964.<sup>2</sup>

The decline of the railroad passenger service resulted from the popularity of the private automobile. Few people owned their own automobiles at the beginning of the 20th century, with only 140,300 cars registered in the United States in 1907. Ford Model T production began in 1908, and 19 years later more than 22 million cars, mainly privately owned, traversed the country. Trains still carried large numbers of vacationers to Hot Springs from the 1920s until the 1940s, but the automobile changed

American vacation habits. People began spending less time in one location and traveling to more places. The long leisurely spa vacation became passe. Also, the bathhouses failed to accommodate the parking needs of the automobile. This all contributed to the decline of the Hot Springs spa industry.<sup>3</sup>

### PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The first promotional activity for the thermal spring waters came from those people who had visited the springs and found relief there for various ailments. This type of promotion, along with the report of exploration parties and articles in Little Rock's Arkansas Gazette, resulted in the hot springs being set aside for the benefit of all the people of the United States in 1832. By the 1860s promotional publications extolled the medicinal virtues of the hot springs.<sup>4</sup>

In 1873 Charles Cutter came from New York City to Hot Springs to take the healing waters for a chronic sinus condition. Not only did he recover, but he moved his family to Hot Springs and began gathering material for a Guide to Hot Springs. Cutter published his first guide in 1874 and continued to issue updated versions on an annual basis until 1912 when he died. His son continued to publish the guide for the next few years. These guides promoted the virtues of the hot springs across the nation.<sup>5</sup>

In 1875 the T.B. Mills and Company, a real estate firm of Little Rock, Arkansas, sponsored a tour of Arkansas for nearly 100 newspaper correspondents. The real estate firm hoped this visit would stimulate interest in the state when the correspondents wrote of their experiences for their readers. The delegation gathered in St. Louis where a special train took them to various towns and communities in Arkansas including Hot Springs. At Hot Springs the reporters received a complimentary bath followed by a banquet and a ball held in their honor. They wrote articles ranging from praise to criticism, but no doubt encouraged some people to come to the resort.<sup>6</sup>

Also, the railroad management vigorously promoted the resort community. In 1877 the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railroad published a promotional pamphlet entitled The Hot Springs of Arkansas, America's Baden-Baden and reissued it for the next several years.<sup>7</sup> In 1878 St. Louis supporters of the railroad published a book entitled A Tour of St. Louis or The Inside Life of A Great City, which contained a chapter on Hot Springs.<sup>8</sup> The authors claimed that the people of Hot Springs were major purchasers of Saint Louis goods and services. In addition, they found a great number of Louisianians spent a portion of the year at Hot Springs taking the baths.<sup>9</sup>

Not only the railroads but also the Hot Springs Commission in 1878 glowingly praised the virtues of the thermal waters and the city. Resident doctors hired people to pass out circulars around the country that proclaimed that medicinal benefits of the thermal waters at Hot Springs for all diseases. By 1881 the St. Louis, Iron Mountain, & Southern Railroad claimed that Hot Springs compared favorably to the great European spas. Government agents echoed these sentiments as they claimed Hot Springs equivalent to any European spa.<sup>10</sup>

The next two decades contained similar promotional activity. A new avenue for promoting Hot Springs opened with the planning of the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893 in Chicago, Illinois. In 1892 Superintendent Frank Thompson received a request to ship a sample of the thermal water to Chicago for people to drink and bathe in. Thompson believed that benefits from the thermal water came from the natural heat and that shipping the water to Chicago would result in loss of all medical value, and this objection ended the scheme. Arkansas World's Fair Association, however, pressed to have some of the thermal water for an exhibit at its fair. John D. Adams, president of the Arkansas World's Fair Association, believed that a fountain displaying Hot Springs water would encourage people from around the world to travel to Hot Springs for medical cures. He received permission for this exhibit, and a Mrs. P.H. Ellsworth designed a display fountain with concealed electric lights that played on the cascading waters and gave the exhibit a pleasing appearance. The

exhibit was installed in the 30-foot by 30-foot rotunda of the Arkansas building on the fairgrounds. The fountain was made of Hot Springs quartz crystals and could be viewed from either floor of the building. It served as a focal point for the six other Arkansas exhibit rooms and effectively promoted the spa image that Hot Springs town officials hoped to cultivate. Specially designed tank cars brought the thermal water from Hot Springs to Chicago.<sup>11</sup>

Hot Springs promoters not only advocated the use of the waters, but wrote of the fresh mountain air and recreational activities in that city. Writers boasted that the altitude at Hot Springs kept it safe from the ravages of such diseases as malaria and other lowland plagues. This promotional effort suffered a setback when a smallpox outbreak occurred in Hot Springs in 1895.<sup>12</sup>

After this setback promoters doubled their efforts to convince the public of the virtues of the Hot Springs waters. Superintendents of the Hot Springs Reservation lavished praise on the healing powers of the water. Superintendent Martin A. Eisele commented in his annual report for fiscal year 1903 that:

This remarkable record [on the increased visitation to the reservation] must be taken as an endorsement and flattering testimony to the potency of the waters and their almost miraculous influence in the cure of the various diseases which afflict mankind. It is convincing proof that some mysterious agent is imparted to the water by the hand of the Deity for the relief of suffering humanity. The great problem that confronts the scientific world as to how best to overcome disease and pain and restore health and vigor is here solved by the wisdom of nature. The wisest philosophers and most learned and scientific men of our age bow in mute silence in the presence of these wonderful waters. It is Health, the spirit of all real happiness, who has pronounced her magic influence and proclaimed her sovereignty over the waters; they are God's special providence for the healing of the nations, the "Bethesda" or "Pool of Siloam" of modern times, and according to traditional lore are famed "Fountains of Youth" for which Ponce de Leon and DeSoto searched in vain.<sup>13</sup>



Such praise from the reservation superintendent gave reason for promoters to claim that the United States government fully supported the bathing activities at Hot Springs. An exhibit by the Department of the Interior at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis contained a crystal grotto and cascades of hot water that represented the hot springs of Arkansas. Attendants at the exhibit distributed postcards showing the hot springs and the crystal grotto exhibit along with a government brochure describing Hot Springs. Also, 50 colored, stereopticon views of national parks, Hot Springs included, were shown in a darkened room at 2:00 p.m. daily. Government promotion of the hot springs contributed to the increasing visitation.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile, railroads (such as the Rock Island system) continued to have pamphlets written that described the recreational and cultural life of the spa. These publications emphasized the mild climate and first-rate hotels available to the tourist and described with equal enthusiasm the social and medical aspects of the spa industry. These publications also provided rudimentary guides to the city.<sup>15</sup>

By the beginning of the 20th century, the individual bathhouses produced pamphlets promoting their facilities. The Buckstaff Bathhouse, Fordyce Bathhouse, and Maurice Bathhouse each claimed to have superior facilities and to follow bathing traditions dating back to ancient Greece and Rome. William G. Maurice showed the most imaginative promotional scheme when he hired Elbert Hubbard to design the Roycroft Den and produce a small pamphlet entitled A Little Journey to the Maurice Baths, which praised the virtues of the thermal waters and the Maurice Bathhouse. In addition, each bathhouse carried a slogan on its letterhead that extolled the virtues of that particular bathhouse.<sup>16</sup>

By the early 20th century promoters not only described the delightful mountain atmosphere, fashionable social life, and varied recreational activities at Hot Springs, but also claimed that the newly discovered radioactivity in the thermal water had helped effect the miraculous cures over the years. The outbreak of World War I in Europe led promoters to

encourage American tourists to stay home and take their baths at Hot Springs. These appeals seemed to work because more people came to take the baths in Hot Springs.<sup>17</sup>

During and after World War I promotional literature emphasized the involvement of the United States government in the bathing industry. Typical of the prose for this type of literature is the following comment: "The United States government in 1832 realizing that in these wonderful thermal springs the Almighty had offered his greatest gift to humanity, by special act of congress set them aside as a sanitarium for all the people for all time."<sup>18</sup>

By 1918 the National Park Service was promoting Hot Springs as being the first national park, continuing to publicize the area as both spa resort and natural park. This publicity campaign continued to the present, through newspaper, magazine, radio, and later television releases. Indirectly, the park was promoted through enthusiastic annual reports submitted by the superintendents of Hot Springs National Park. For example, in 1919 Superintendent William Parks wrote the following:

Concluding, the report states that if there has heretofore existed to the slightest degree any pessimistic views as to the future of Hot Springs as the world's greatest health-pleasure resort, these must have been entirely dispelled during the past few years. Every year substantial gains in patronage is shown, and the improved local conditions, together with the system of exploiting all national parks with descriptive literature sent broadcast<sup>19</sup> over the country, have materially increased the patronage.

During the 1930s and later, individual bathhouses sought to cultivate customers by sending out such promotional material as Christmas greetings to clients. The names of individual bathers filled the pages of The Hot Springs' Visitors Bulletin, with a little personal background information as to their hometown and length of stay. A local newspaper published letters from those who had received relief from their suffering at Hot Springs.<sup>20</sup>

Railroad companies continued to print promotional posters and pamphlets that encouraged people to visit Hot Springs for health and recreation. Special trains made regular runs to the community from various midwestern cities. The "Hot Springs Special" ran between St. Louis and Hot Springs, and the "Hot Springs Limited" traveled from Chicago to Hot Springs.<sup>21</sup>

In 1945 the Army Redistribution Center developed a 24-page booklet describing Bathhouse Row and other spots of interest around Hot Springs. Each returning veteran received a brochure upon arrival at the redistribution center. The Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce hoped that these brochures would encourage people from around the nation to visit Hot Springs.<sup>22</sup>

After 1946 the bathhouses and the Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce continued to promote Bathhouse Row, but even their most determined efforts could not stem the declining interest in spa vacations. By 1959 bathhouse owners and managers began to realize that many of the townspeople had never taken a bath in their establishments. They hoped to bring local people into the bathhouses by creating a "Bath Week" once a year. The owners provided a special price and publicized to lure local people back to Bathhouse Row. Bathhouse owners also funded several studies to determine how best to revive the spa industry. Despite these efforts, attendance at the bathhouses continued to decline, resulting in the closure of most of the bathhouses.<sup>23</sup>

#### ILLEGAL PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The competition between doctors at Hot Springs for patients became so fierce that some physicians hired agents to pass out circulars to lure prospective patients into their offices. The practice of soliciting for patients resulted in a number of abuses. At Hot Springs, this particular soliciting practice became known as "drumming."<sup>24</sup>

The problem of drumming became so pervasive that bathhouse owners formed the Hot Springs Bathhouse Association in 1882, in part to combat this evil. Albert Gaines of the association wrote the following to Superintendent Frank Thompson:

The [Hot Springs Bath House] Association was formed . . . with the sole object of putting a stop to, or at least, curtailing the evils flowing from a nefarious system of 'drumming', which was carried on by men with[out] decency or conscience, and who practiced every character of deception misrepresentation and fraud to secure their victims, who, when thus secured were then taken to a doctor [,] bath house, and drug<sup>25</sup> store, and sold at each place like cattle for so much per head.

The association required all profits from the participating bathhouses to be divided in an agreed-upon manner among all. It was hoped that this would discourage competition between bathhouses for customers and thus stop the employment of drummers. This organization only temporarily halted the drumming.

Not only did these drummers work for bathhouses, but they acted as agents for doctors, drugstores, boardinghouses, and hotels. The agent would board a train and begin a conversation with a patient going to Hot Springs. When he found out the patient's doctor, he would say that that particular doctor was a drunk, had left town, or was incompetent. Once the patient was persuaded not to go to his legitimate doctor, the drummer would direct the patient to his "doctor." The drummers got up to 50 percent of the doctor's fees. The same sales pitch, with slight variations and a more genteel manner, would be carried out for a particular bathhouse, hotel, boardinghouse, or drugstore.<sup>26</sup>

Bathhouse owners and managers avoided paying the drummers by taking the agent's fee out of the wages of black attendants and mercury rubbers. This assessment usually amounted to one-third of their salaries. Superintendents of Hot Springs Reservation considered this a form of blackmail against the bathhouse attendants. In 1891 the

superintendent formulated the leases and agreements between the government and the bathhouses in such a manner as to forbid this practice by bathhouse owners.<sup>27</sup>

By 1892 a number of measures against the drummers were enacted by various groups. The Garland County Medical Examining Board licensed physicians and held hearings on those accused of drumming practices. The Hot Springs City Council passed an ordinance requiring drummers for boardinghouses, bathhouses, drugstores, and doctors to obtain licenses for \$25 every three months. The fine for violation was \$25 a day. Doctors employing drummers had to place their names on file with the city. The Arkansas state legislature considered a bill, which did not pass, that required the revocation of a doctor's license if he employed drummers.<sup>28</sup>

Despite these actions, the use of drummers by the bathhouses continued to increase. Drummers obtained bath tickets from the various bathhouses at a discounted price and sold them for whatever the market would pay. Various superintendents of Hot Springs Reservation issued a variety of rules to prevent the bathhouses from indulging in this practice. By 1897 the Hot Springs Reservation rules and regulations prohibited drummers from loitering around the bathhouses, forbade selling bathhouse tickets other than through the bathhouse offices, and prohibited charging drummer's fees to attendants. The penalty for violation of these rules included shutting off thermal water to that particular bathhouse.<sup>29</sup>

Despite all these measures, illegal promotion of the bathhouses continued. In 1897 and 1898 Superintendent Little wrote to the secretary of the interior concerning his frustration in stopping the practice of drumming. Little believed that drumming was a minor problem until the secretary of the interior ordered the dissolution of the Hot Springs Bathhouse Association in January 1898. The result was that most of the bathhouse owners began employing drummers to increase their business. Superintendent Little thought that most of the bathhouses operating on Bathhouse Row employed drummers, and he gathered sworn affidavits

against the Ozark, Magnesia, Palace, Lamar, Imperial, Maurice, Hale, Rammelsberg, Horseshoe, Superior, and Rector to that effect.<sup>30</sup>

On April 18, 1899, the Hot Springs City Council passed an ordinance prohibiting drumming for bathhouses and doctors as a public nuisance. Violation of the law was punishable by a fine not to exceed \$100. Still, drumming practices in Hot Springs flourished. In 1902 the businessmen of Hot Springs formed an association for the purpose of ending drumming. A major blow to drumming came in 1903 with the establishment of the Federal Registration Board, which consisted of five reputable physicians. A written examination was given to any physician wishing to prescribe hydrotherapy in Hot Springs. Those who passed the examination had their names placed on a list of approved physicians. Those failing the examination were banned from prescribing hydrotherapy in Hot Springs.<sup>31</sup>

The newly created board certified 94 physicians and rejected 25. Those who were rejected took the matter to the courts, which ruled that only the secretary of the interior could make rules and regulations governing Hot Springs Reservation. The United States Congress acted quickly to pass legislation conferring the right of the medical commissioners to evaluate physicians at Hot Springs, and the secretary of the interior appointed a board of commissioners on October 31, 1904. By January 1905 the board had released a list of registered physicians, and again the rejected physicians took the matter to the courts. This time the courts ruled in favor of the government. The board of commissioners proved an effective weapon against nonqualified physicians.<sup>32</sup>

By November 1905 Hot Springs Reservation officials successfully prosecuted nonregistered physicians for violating the rules and regulations of the reservation. The drummers found a way to circumvent the new rules by encouraging victims to buy bath tickets before visiting a physician. In this way, the bathers could truthfully say that they were not under the care of any physician. Also, the drummers continued to board trains for Hot Springs to encourage visitors to go to specific hotels or boardinghouses. The vigilant efforts of the reservation

superintendent, the Garland County Medical Society, and the Visitors' Protection League, however, continued to reduce the number of drummers operating around Hot Springs.<sup>33</sup>

On October 15, 1909, two officers of the government began boarding each train bound for Hot Springs to prevent the drummers from harassing passengers on their way to Hot Springs. The officers made the following announcement on the train:

The public is notified that the waters of the hot springs are owned and controlled by the United States Government, and it is a violation of the law for any person to drum or solicit patronage on the trains in this State for hotels, boardinghouses, bathhouses, or doctors. No one will be permitted to bathe who stops at a hotel or boardinghouse which drums, or employs inside men to drum or solicit for doctors.

The baths are open to everyone without a doctor; you are requested not to take the advice of any hotel man or inside man as to whether you should employ a doctor; but should you employ one be sure that he is one registered by the Government and permitted to prescribe the baths. If you treat with a nonregistered doctor or one not authorized to prescribe the baths, the baths will be denied to you; and if you bathe or attempt to bathe while treating with a nonregistered doctor, you lay yourself liable to a severe penalty. A list of registered physicians can be found in every bathhouse, posted on "bath-house row," and at the superintendent's office.<sup>34</sup>

By 1912 government representatives distributed leaflets containing the warning about drumming on the trains, a list of registered physicians, and a list of government-approved hotels and boardinghouses. Drumming continued to remain a problem, however, with a grand jury indicting more than 20 physicians, druggists, and hotel men on drumming charges in 1916. This action struck a mortal blow against drumming. Drumming continued for several more years, but in a greatly diminished form.<sup>35</sup>

## OTHER CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES

A number of other illicit activities besides drumming have occurred over the years at Hot Springs. Reports of gambling at Hot Springs date back to 1849. By the 1860s visitors found games of faro, roulette, monte, and keno played in the saloons and hotels. Gambling houses operated openly during the next several decades, with professional gamblers waiting to remove cash from unsuspecting visitors. These gambling houses provided the scene for many violent acts during this time--knifings and shootings occurred on a regular basis.<sup>36</sup>

Gambling houses and bordellos were operating in Hot Springs by the last decade of the 19th century. The city placed fines on both of these operations, but this did little to hinder their operations. Promotional literature warned tourists not to indulge in games of chance in Hot Springs because the games were rigged in favor of the house.<sup>37</sup>

In 1905 members of the clergy petitioned the government to take action against the various illegal activities in Hot Springs. They wrote the following:

Whereas, there is in Hot Springs a state of moral degradation in the form of gambling, wide openness and general sporting, to the extent of twenty-seven regular gambling houses from which fines are regularly collected by the city authorities; six pool rooms, two race tracks; non-Sunday observance, and from 300 to 1500 scarlet women and in consequence of which lawlessness and disregard for the name of our fair city, there is very little protection for the visitor against the ravages of such demoralizing influences.<sup>38</sup>

The reservation superintendent worked diligently to keep gambling from invading the grounds of the reservation, but could do little to stop the various illicit activities in the town of Hot Springs.

Gambling in Hot Springs usually took place behind the doors of private clubs where visitors became members for a minimal fee. Several of the



clubs operated across the street from Bathhouse Row on Central Avenue. A series of robberies and gambling swindles became so obnoxious to city officials that city police conducted a series of raids on the gambling houses in 1913. This measure only temporarily halted gambling activities.<sup>39</sup>

City officials fired all Hot Springs police officers in 1920 when revelations surfaced that the officers had permitted gambling, bookmaking, and pickpocketing activities. Similar charges in 1936 resulted in the indictment of several high-ranking police officials and Mayor Leo P. McLaughlin on charges of blackmailing the gambling operations for money and votes. The prosecutor failed to prove these allegations, however, and McLaughlin remained in office.<sup>40</sup>

Returning World War II veterans, led by Sidney McMath, began a campaign in 1946 to clean up Hot Springs. This effort resulted in McLaughlin being brought to trial, although he was never convicted. After this crusade against crime ended, gambling remained in Hot Springs, but the slot machines, roulette wheels, and card tables were less openly displayed. Arkansas gubernatorial candidate Winthrop Rockefeller in 1963 challenged Arkansas Governor Orval E. Faubus to stop the open gambling in Hot Springs. In 1964 Governor Faubus ordered all illegal gambling operations in Hot Springs to stop. Shortly after the election of Faubus, gambling again flourished openly in Hot Springs. In 1966, Rockefeller again ran for the governorship of Arkansas. Faubus chose not to run, and Rockefeller defeated the Democratic candidate Jim Johnson. The next year Rockefeller used the state police to launch a series of raids aimed at closing down the gambling operation in Hot Springs. These raids continued into 1969 and effectively ended open gambling in the spa resort. Efforts continue to legalize gambling other than betting on horse racing, but with little success.<sup>41</sup>

## NATURAL AND MAN-MADE DISASTERS

Hot Springs has faced a number of adversities over the years and has overcome all of them. During the 19th century city promoters claimed that Hot Springs was a very healthy spot, free from the fevers and diseases of lowland areas of the South. These claims remained unchallenged until a smallpox epidemic broke out in Hot Springs in April 1895. The epidemic ended in May, after several deaths, leaving Hot Springs' reputation as a healthy town tarnished for the next several years.<sup>42</sup>

Another recurring problem has been destruction caused by fires. The first major fire broke out on March 5, 1878. This fire started in a shanty in back of a restaurant in the early morning hours. The small volunteer fire department, which had been in existence for more than 10 years, could not keep up with the fire as it ravaged through most of the small wooden-frame buildings of the downtown business district. City hall burned, along with most of the town's early records. The fire destroyed more than 150 buildings, including all of the structures on the east side of Hot Springs Creek south of the Hale Bathhouse. Saved was the luxurious Arlington Hotel. Hot Springs Commissioners on the scene believed that the fire damage exceeded \$300,000 and left more than 1,500 people homeless.<sup>43</sup>

The next great fire broke out early in the morning of February 26, 1905. The fire began in the Grand Central Hotel and destroyed more than 40 city blocks. No damage occurred on Bathhouse Row, but more than 2,000 citizens were left homeless. Devastating fires raged through Hot Springs in 1913 and 1914. These fires destroyed large sections of the town, but did not damage Bathhouse Row. On April 5, 1923, a fire swept through the Arlington Hotel, burning the structures. The rest of the buildings on Bathhouse Row were not harmed.<sup>44</sup>

Besides disease and fire, Hot Springs has faced a series of natural disasters over the years. The most persistent of these has been the

recurrent flooding along Central Avenue. On September 1, 1880, heavy rains began falling on the city at 11:00 p.m. The rains transformed Central Avenue into a river some 50 yards wide. The basements of the bathhouses suffered heavy damage from the waters. Ten years later, on September 22, 1890, a similar storm flooded Central Avenue to a depth of 3 feet and caused damaged to the basements of the bathhouses.<sup>45</sup>

The next major flood occurred in January 1907, with most damage confined to the mountain roads, trails, and Whittington Park. Three years later on June 23-24, 1910, a deluge flooded Central Avenue to a depth of 2 feet. This flood showed that the drainage provided by the creek arch was inadequate to handle these severe storms. On May 13, 1923, rain began falling on Hot Springs. The rains continued into May 14 and Central Avenue became a raging river. The floodwaters carried away more than 100 automobiles and broke through the display windows and into stores on Central Avenue. A fire broke out during the storm and destroyed one city block. The floodwater hampered fire-fighting efforts. Communications and utilities were shut down for some 18 hours. The floodwater ripped up portions of the asphalt street along Central Avenue, and the total flood damage amounted to more than \$2 million.<sup>46</sup>

The next major storm occurred early in the morning of February 15, 1956. In five hours, 5½ inches of rain came down, again flooding Central Avenue and causing considerable damage to the stores. The bathhouse basements flooded and Superintendent Donald Libbey ordered the water supply to the bathhouses shut off for several days to prevent contamination of the thermal reservoirs. Since that incident, minor flooding has occurred on Central Avenue periodically over the years.<sup>47</sup>

#### SOCIAL LIFE IN HOT SPRINGS

The first social activities in Hot Springs were informal dances and gatherings among those coming to take the waters. By the 1830s bars provided the social life focus for visitors. Within the next decade billiard

parlors opened in Hot Springs. Holidays and personal days of celebration, such as weddings, provided the main social events during the antebellum period. These were occasions for barbecues and balls. In 1856 a traveling theatrical group put on a performance in Hot Springs. Three years later a small theater was built and a stock company arrived to put on shows for the season.<sup>48</sup> The resumption of social life after the Civil War began slowly and steadily increased. Visitors began coming to Hot Springs all year around, with February and March being periods of heavy visitation. Originally, people came to Hot Springs in the warm months of May, June, July, and August because the lodging available was suitable only for warm weather.<sup>49</sup>

In March 1881 the Woman's Christian National Library Association organized to establish a library and reading room for visitors to Hot Springs. A room in the Rector Bathhouse became the first Hot Springs library. The next year construction was completed on an opera house. This elegant facility served for operas and for a variety of theatrical performances, including plays, concerts, and lectures. On nights of a particularly special performance, the men dressed in tuxedos and the women wore formal gowns. Receptions were held to honor the theatrical performers.<sup>50</sup>

During the late 19th century large and elegant hotels were constructed in Hot Springs. In 1882 the Avenue-Majestic Hotel opened, followed by the Eastman and Park hotels in 1890 and the rebuilt Arlington Hotel in 1893. These offered the amenities of first-class hotels and contained elaborate dining, dancing, and other facilities. Various other hotels and boardinghouses served the needs of people of all means and social rank.<sup>51</sup>

Various sporting events took place in Hot Springs in the 19th and 20th centuries to entertain the various people of different social strata who came to Hot Springs. Baseball exhibition games, horse racing, boxing matches, and cock fighting provided entertainment for visitors. The hotels were targeted and various social groups and managers worked diligently to attract conventions to Hot Springs.<sup>52</sup>

Not only did hotel owners work toward attracting a specific clientele, but individual bathhouses did likewise. The Ozark Bathhouse managers, when asked to upgrade their facilities by the government in the early 20th century, responded with the following comment:

The Department [of the Interior] must realize that the Ozark has for 30 years catered to the often spoken of cheaper class of people and it would be financial suicide for the house to open at a rate out of reach in proportion to the other advanced rates now existing to its old clientele. If the Department does not realize this point we respectfully ask that <sup>53</sup>it bear it in mind in any further decision relating to our rates.

In 1920 the Fordyce and Buckstaff bathhouses tried to improve their social atmosphere by having musicians play concerts during bathing hours. Superintendent William Parks approved the request, adding that musicians had been employed by the bathhouses a number of years before, but the bathers had objected and the bathhouses had stopped this practice. National Park Service Director Stephen Mather also approved the request, with the stipulation that only quality music could be played. This meant no jazz would be allowed. He further required all music for a given week be approved in advance by the superintendent of Hot Springs Reservation. The music allowed consisted of light classical music and popular tunes.<sup>54</sup>

During the 1920s and 1930s the season of most visitation ran from January through April. The bathhouses sought to keep customers entertained by providing gymnasiums, writing rooms, and game rooms. Gradually, the bathhouses dropped these amenities to save costs as the bathing public declined after World War II.

### RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The first recreation activities around the hot springs consisted of hunting, fishing, hiking, and horseback riding. These remained the

principal source of recreation until the 1870s when Ellis Woolman constructed an 80-foot wooden tower on Hot Springs Mountain. People hired a burro for the trip up to the tower. Superintendent Kelley had a carriage road up to the tower constructed in 1879. The top observation deck included a telescope (reached by a series of steps and platforms) from which people could see up to 30 miles away. In 1906, a 165-foot steel observation tower replaced the deteriorated wooden tower. This new tower included a small elevator, which people could take for a fee. It remained in operation until 1971 when it was found unsafe and was removed. The current observation tower was erected in 1982.<sup>55</sup>

Thirty miles away from Hot Springs stood Crystal Mountain. People traveled here on horseback and gathered quartz crystals, agates, pyrites, and other stones. In 1877 an enterprising jeweler set up a lapidary shop there to work the rough stones into jewelry for the visitors. These rocks and others, including novaculite Indian artifacts, were brought to Hot Springs and sold to tourists.<sup>56</sup>

In 1884, to accommodate the demand for recreational facilities, Superintendent Hamblen extended 3½ miles of drives on Hot Springs and North Mountain. The next year Superintendent Field recommended that trails and seats be constructed for visitors to enjoy the beauty of the mountains. In 1897 Superintendent Little had several horseback and carriage trails constructed because these activities proved to be popular pastimes for tourists. During the next several decades, reservation superintendents constructed a variety of trails and shelters for visitor use.<sup>57</sup>

In 1883 Henry M. Rector asked Secretary of the Interior Henry Teller to approve construction of an inclined railroad on the Hot Springs Reservation as a tourist attraction. Teller did not approve the proposal. Five years later a bill granting the state of Arkansas and the West Mountain Inclined Railway and Improvement Company a right-of-way over West Mountain was introduced in the United States Senate. The Senate took no action on the legislation. The bill was reintroduced several other

times over the years. One of these proposals called for this railroad to take people to a casino to be constructed on top of West Mountain. The bill passed in 1893, with the provision for a casino changed to one calling for a hotel. The backers of this proposal failed to gain enough financial support to begin the project, and another bill in 1896 extended the time allowed to complete the railway and hotel for another three years. The supporters again failed to gain enough financial support and the project failed.<sup>58</sup>

To satisfy the demand for recreation, several amusement park areas opened in Hot Springs. By 1890 the Whittington Amusement Park and McLeod's Amusement Park (better known as "Happy Hollow") served the visitor public. The Whittington area contained a baseball park, bicycle track, bandstand, summer theater, and merry-go-round. During the spring and summer months, concerts and exhibition baseball games were played here. Nearby, Government Park contained tennis and croquet courts and later a playground. By 1940 Whittington Park also contained a dance pavilion, boxing arena, and roller-skating rink. The Cotton State League used the area for spring baseball training in the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>59</sup>

McLeod's Amusement Park featured a small zoo, shooting gallery, souvenir shop, and photographic studio. Norman McLeod operated this park until 1908 when he sold his interest to Dave Anselberg. The photographic shop specialized in novelty photographs. Tourists posed with a number of props, including burros, painted flats, and bathtubs. McLeod made these photographs into postcard prints that visitors could send back home to friends and relatives. This amusement complex operated until 1948.<sup>60</sup>

In addition to the amusement parks, the city boasted two unique attractions--an ostrich farm and an alligator farm. In 1900 Thomas A. Cockburn brought more than 300 ostriches to Hot Springs and kept them at a 27-acre farm on Whittington Avenue. Tourists came to see the ostriches. Cockburn laid out a small race track for the birds to race around, drawing racing sulkies. In addition, the birds pulled small

carriages in which women and youngsters rode. The ostrich farm operated until 1953.<sup>61</sup> In 1902, H.L. Campbell transported 50 alligators to Hot Springs and opened an alligator farm. He built pools to exhibit the alligators. Tourists purchased alligator handbags, suitcases, and teeth. He even sold baby alligators as pets. The alligator farm operates to the present.<sup>62</sup>

Besides the novelty diversions, visitors participated in a variety of other recreational activities. Samuel H. Stitt organized the Hot Springs Golf Club in 1897. Golf became a popular pastime for visitors and natives alike. The original golf course was nine holes; later several 18-hole courses were built around Hot Springs. Also bowling and archery became popular participatory sports.<sup>63</sup>

For those interested in watching sporting activities, baseball, boxing, and wrestling matches occurred on a regular basis at Hot Springs. Horse racing, however, proved to be the most popular spectator sport. Horse racing at Hot Springs dates back to near the time of the Civil War. By the 1890s horse racing occurred from the end of January until the end of March. In 1904 William McGuigan opened a race track known as Essex Park. That same year construction work began on the Oaklawn track that opened in 1905. Various local groups have objected to betting at the race tracks and have succeeded in closing down the race tracks for short periods of time throughout the years. Today horse racing remains an important recreational sport in Hot Springs.<sup>64</sup>

The completion of the Rempel Dam in 1924 created Lake Catherine, and the completion of the Carpenter Dam created Lake Hamilton in 1932. These new lakes increased interest in water sports such as boating and fishing in the Hot Springs area. These lakes provided areas for sight-seeing. In addition to the lakes, visitors traveled to Hell's Half Acre and various scenic mountain springs. Hell's Half Acre is an unusual ground formation 4 miles from Hot Springs where no vegetation grows.<sup>65</sup>



For visitors wishing to shop for unique gifts and bargains, Hot Springs has a pottery factory and a series of auction houses. Some of these auction houses operated from the early part of the 20th century. Auctions are held in the morning and evening. Visitors purchased a variety of merchandise of varying quality from these shops. Most of these establishments operate across the street from Bathhouse Row.<sup>66</sup>

Over the years a broad spectrum of recreational activities have been available to visitors to Hot Springs. Each has played a role in the lifestyle of this spa. Recreational activities here have changed to reflect the interests of the American public.

#### CELEBRITIES AT HOT SPRINGS

Listing celebrities in the social, political, sports, entertainment, scientific, and intellectual spheres who have visited Hot Springs would prove an exhausting task. Instead a few examples should suffice to illustrate Hot Springs' broad appeal. One of the first celebrities known to have taken the baths (in 1833) was Sam Houston from Texas. After the Civil War, former Union (William Tecumseh Sherman) and Confederate (Pierre Gustave Tontant Beauregard) officers traveled to the spa. Major 19th century political figures, such as William Jennings Bryan and James Gillespie Blaine, came to Hot Springs. Financier Jay Gould and industrialist Andrew Carnegie visited briefly in Hot Springs. Boxers John L. Sullivan and Jim Corbett came to train in Hot Springs, as did other athletes after them. Social reformer Jane Addams, writer Stephen Crane, and outlaw Frank James visited the area.<sup>67</sup>

More celebrities traveled to Hot Springs in the early 20th century. Carrie Nation and Billy Sunday evangelized and preached social reform there. Theodore Roosevelt visited Hot Springs twice, first in 1904 and second in 1910 when he availed himself of a thermal bath. Another famous Roosevelt, Franklin Delano, visited Arkansas in 1936 and took a tour of the Fordyce Bathhouse. Prior to this trip, his wife, Eleanor

Roosevelt, journeyed to Hot Springs in 1928 for the formal notification ceremony of Joseph T. Robinson who had been selected by Alfred Smith as his Democratic vice presidential candidate. Also on hand was the nation's first woman governor--Nellie Tayloe Ross of Wyoming.<sup>68</sup>

In the 20th century Hot Springs proved attractive to prominent athletes. Boxers Jack Dempsey, Jess Willard, and Primo Carnera used the baths as part of their overall training program. Baseball greats Denton "Cy" T. Young, George Herman "Babe" Ruth, Joe DiMaggio, and Stan Musial were just a few of the baseball players who took the thermal baths before spring training. Many other athletic luminaries and major league teams, from such cities as Chicago, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Boston, came to train and take the baths at Hot Springs.<sup>69</sup>

A number of entertainers came to Hot Springs to take the baths or perform there. Singer Kate Smith, actor George Raft, and comedian Ben Turpin came during the twenties and thirties. Later, television stars Dick Van Dyke, George Gobel, and Robert Guillaume, to name but a few, visited Hot Springs. Also the infamous--such as gangsters Al Capone and Lucky Luciano--traveled to Hot Springs to enjoy the baths. This catalog of celebrities that visited Hot Springs gives some indication of the broad appeal that the thermal baths have had over the years.<sup>70</sup>

## Notes from Chapter 6

1. For additional details on the development of transportation, see that section of the report which discusses the general development of the Hot Springs bathing industry. Brown, The American Spa, pp. 17-18; and Benson and Libbey, "History of Hot Springs National Park," p. 21.
2. Ibid., pp. 21-22; Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 170-171; Norsworthy, "Hot Springs, Arkansas," p. 9; and Brown, The American Spa, p. 25.
3. F. Eugene Melder, "The 'Tin Lizzie's' Golden Anniversary," in The American Culture: Approaches to the Study of the United States, ed. Hennig Cohen (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1968), pp. 210-211.
4. Norsworthy, "Hot Springs, Arkansas," p. 3.
5. Brown, The American Spa, p. 75; and Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 58.
6. Ibid., pp. 52-56.
7. Ibid., p. 57.
8. Buel and Dacus, A Tour of St. Louis, p. 351.
9. Ibid.
10. The Hot Springs of Arkansas: America's Baden-Baden, pp. 6-7.
11. Thompson to Secretary of the Interior, July 9, 1892, Entry 1, Box 16, RG 79, NA; Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 173; John Laughran to Hoke Smith, March 16, 1893, Entry 1, Box 15, RG 79, NA; Samuel W. Fordyce to Hoke Smith, May 31, 1893, Entry 1, Box 15, RG 79, NA; Frank Thompson to Secretary of the Interior, March 29, 1893, Entry 1, Box 15, RG 79, NA; and Henry Davenport Northrop, The World's Fair as Seen in One Hundred Days (Chicago: The Standard Publishing Co., 1893), pp. 426-427.
12. Business Men's League of Hot Springs, Arkansas, Hot Springs, Arkansas. Owned by the United States Government: The World's Greatest Sanitarium and All-Year-Round Health and Pleasure Resort, p. 4; and S.H. Stitt to Hoke Smith, January 23, 1896, Entry 1, Box 21, RG 79, NA.
13. Martin A. Eisele, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation 1903, p. 3.

14. "Great Work," Hot Springs Daily News, 3 August 1904, p. 1.
15. Paul Cushing, Hot Springs, Arkansas: An Impressionist Sketch by Paul Cushing (Chicago: Rock Island System, 1903), pp. 28-29, 40-45.
16. Buckstaff Baths Hot Springs, Arkansas, 1912 (Indianapolis, Indiana: Catalog Service Corporation, 1912), p. 1; Come to Hot Springs -- 'The Nation's Health Resort' -- and Bathe at the Fordyce Baths! (Hot Springs, Arkansas: Fordyce Bathhouse, ca. 1915), pp. 13-16; The Maurice Baths (Memphis, Tennessee, S.C. Toof Co., n.d.), n.p.; and Elbert Hubbard A Little Journey to the Maurice Baths (East Aurora, New York: The Roycrofters, 1913), pp. 3-23.
17. Born on June 19, 1869, Elbert Hubbard gained renown for his clever and satirical writings in the early part of the 20th century. He became a popular author, lecturer, and philosopher. Hubbard died in the sinking of the Lusitania on May 7, 1915. Reedy, pp. 6-11; "Chicago Physician on Hot Springs," Sentinel Record, 24 October 1914, Newspaper Transcript, Scully Collection, Thermal Water Files; and William R. Bathurst, "Why Not Try Our Home Spas?," The Journal of the Arkansas Medical Society, 9 (November, 1914): 144-145.
18. Business Men's League of Hot Springs, Hot Springs, Arkansas. The World's Greatest Health and Pleasure Resort, (Little Rock, Arkansas: Democrat P. and L. Co., ca. 1917), p. 3.
19. William Parks, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1919 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1919), p. 4.
20. Promotional Pamphlets, Hot Springs National Park, Hot Springs, Arkansas, Scully Collection, Spa Therapy File; "Who's Here and Where," The Hot Springs Visitor's Bulletin, 28 February 1942, p. 23; and "To the Visitors and Tourist to Hot Springs," The Hot Springs Visitor's Bulletin, 23 December 1944, p. 30.
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22. "Army Publishes Booklet on Spa Returnees," Sentinel Record, 3 March 1945, p. 3.
23. "First Annual Bath Week" poster, Scully Collection, Spa Therapy File.
24. Van Cleef, The Hot Springs of Arkansas, 1878, p. 13; and Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 130.
25. Gaines to Thompson, August 24, 1889, Entry 1, Box 11, RG 79, NA.

26. Jelks, "Hot Springs of Arkansas and Their Therapeutical Indications," p. 518; Musick, Report on the Hot Springs Reservation, Hot Springs, Arkansas, p. 23.

27. Thomas Musick to Secretary of the Interior, December 31, 1891, Entry 1, Box 15, RG 79, NA; J.H. Gaunt to John W. Noble, January 6, 1890, Entry 1, Box 12, RG 79, NA; and Musick to Secretary of the Interior, December 11, 1891, Entry 1, Box 14, RG 79, NA.

28. "That Drumming Case," The Hot Springs Medical Journal, 1 (March 15, 1892): 60-61; and "Hot Springs Medical Matters," The Hot Springs Medical Journal, 1 (November 15, 1892): 231.

29. William J. Little to Secretary of the Interior, August 25, 1894, Entry 1, Box 17, RG 79, NA; Little to Secretary of the Interior, December 14, 1894, Entry 1, Box 17, RG 79, NA; Little to Secretary of the Interior, March 7, 1894, Entry 1, Box 17, RG 79, NA; Little to Secretary of the Interior, February 8, 1894, Entry 1, Box 17, RG 79, NA; Little to Secretary of the Interior, August 13, 1894, Entry 1, Box 17, RG 79, NA; and Little to Secretary of the Interior, October 15, 1894, Entry 1, Box 17, RG 79, NA.

30. George H. Eastman to Secretary of the Interior, Entry 1, Box 21, RG 79, NA; and Little to Secretary of the Interior, April 22, 1898, Entry 1, Box 22, RG 79, NA.

31. Martin A. Eisele to Secretary of the Interior, November 8, 1902, Entry 1, Box 27, RG 79, NA; J. George Wright to Secretary of the Interior, June 17, 1901, Entry 1, Box 26, RG 79, NA; Eisele to Secretary of the Interior, September 7, 1900, Entry 1, Box 25, RG 79, NA; Eisele to Secretary of the Interior, July 23, 1900, Entry 1, Box 25, RG 79, NA; Digest of City Ordinances, p. 147; and Wright to Secretary of the Interior, June 20, 1903, Entry 1, Box 28, RG 79, NA.

32. Benson and Libbey, "History of Hot Springs National Park," pp. 27-31.

33. Eisele to Secretary of the Interior, August 5, 1905, Entry 1, Box 31, RG 79, NA.

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36. "Scenes in Arkansas," The Spirit of the Times, 20 October 1849, p. 415; Norsworthy, "Hot Springs, Arkansas," p. 115; Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 52; "Arkansas's

Hot Springs," The New York Times, 13 January 1884, p. 4; "Arkansas Young City," The New York Times, 20 January 1884, p. 4; "Police Court," The Daily Hot Springs Globe, 23 September 1890, p. 1; and Brown, The American Spa, pp. 50-54.

37. "Utopia," The Hot Springs Medical Journal, 1 (December 15, 1892): 252; Digest of City Ordinances, pp. 173, 174, 197, 206-208; and "'A Just Criticism'" The Hot Springs Medical Journal, 1 (October 15, 1892): 212-213.

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43. Hempstead, A Pictorial History pp. 1,154; John Coburn to Secretary of the Interior, March 5, 1878, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA; "The Hot Springs Commission," The New York Times, 16 March 1878, p. 5; Benjamin F. Kelley to Carl Schurz, 15 November 1878, Entry 1, Box 3, RG 79, NA; and Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 65-66.

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45. "Death in a Flood," The New York Times, 2 September 1880, p. 1; and "Last Night's Flood," The Daily Hot Springs Globe, 23 September 1890, p. 1.
46. W. Scott Smith, Report of the Superintendent of the Hot Springs Reservation 1908, p. 3; Cron, "The Hot Springs of the Ouachita," pp. 294-295; Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 203; and "Hot Springs Loses \$2,000,000 in Flood," The New York Times, 16 May 1923, p. 1.
47. "Flood Leaves 1 Dead, Over \$250,000 Damage," Hot Springs New Era, 15 February 1956, p. 1; "Hot Springs Rapidly Recovers From Destructive Flash Flood," The Sentinel-Record, 16 February 1956, p. 1; "Terrific Flash Flood Hits Hot Springs; Twisters Sweep Northern Half of State," Arkansas Democrat, 15 February 1956, p. 1; and "Hot Springs Flooded; Winds Crush Homes in Morrilton Vicinity," Arkansas Gazette, 16 February 1956, p. 1.
48. Jones, "Hot Springs: Ante-Bellum Watering Place," pp. 9-31; Brown, The American Spa, pp. 45-46; "Scenes in Arkansas," The Spirit of the Times, 20 October 1849, p. 415; and Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 33-36.
49. By 1878, blacks trapped centipedes and tarantulas to sell to visitors as souvenirs. Other entrepreneurs sold novaculite rocks to visitors with novaculite Indian artifacts selling particularly well to tourists. Van Cleef, The Hot Springs of Arkansas, 1878, pp. 9, 19.
50. Brown, The American Spa, pp. 46-47; and Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 152.
51. Ibid., pp. 164-166.
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53. George Latta to William P. Parks, n.d., Entry 7, Box 1232, RG 79, NA.
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55. Brown, The American Spa, p. 71; Kelley to Schurz, September 15, 1880, Entry 1, Box 5, RG 79, NA; and Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 132.

56. The Hot Springs of Arkansas: America's Baden-Baden Illustrated: p. 7.

57. For a more detailed account of the various trails and shelters constructed in the reservation area, see Rhodes, Historic Grounds and Structures. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 114.

58. Rector to Teller, October 6, 1883, Entry 1, Box 8, RG 79, NA; "A Bill Granting the Right of Way over West Mountain, in the Hot Springs Reservation in the State of Arkansas, to the West Mountain Inclined Railway and Improvement Company," March 26, 1888, Entry 1, Box 10, RG 79, NA; "A Bill Granting the Right of Way for the Construction of a Railroad and other Improvements," August 15, 1898, Entry 1, Box 10, RG 79, NA; and "An Act to Extend the Time for the Completion of the Inclined Railway on West Mountain, Hot Springs Reservation," February 15, 1896, Entry 1, Box 7, RG 79, NA.

59. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 176; Brown, The American Spa, p. 72; and Works Project Administration, Arkansas, p. 162.

60. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 176-177; Brown, The American Spa, p. 70; and Philip Strong, "Hot Springs," Holiday 9 (January, 1951): 43.

61. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 389-390; and Brown, The American Spa, p. 72.

62. *Ibid.*; and Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 384.

63. *Ibid.*, pp. 172-173.

64. *Ibid.*, pp. 178-179, 191-192, 377-379.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 365; "Points of Interest," The Hot Springs Visitor's Bulletin: Your Guide to Everything, 13 (May 12, 1934): 4; and Norsworthy, p. 39.

66. Marguerite Lyon, Hurrah for Arkansas! (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1947), p. 245.

67. A more extensive list of the famous and near famous that visited Hot Springs can be found in Francis J. Scully's Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 390-395; Brown, pp. 90-94; Maurice Moore, "Historic Names Written in a Hot Springs Register," unidentified newspaper clipping, Visitor File, on file at Garland County Historical Society and Hot Springs, Arkansas; and "Arkansaw's Hot Springs," The New York Times, 13 January 1884, p. 4.



68. Maurice Moore, "Carry Nation Brought Her Hatchet to Spa In Early 1900s But Kept 'Mission' Peaceful," unidentified newspaper clipping, Visitor File, on file at Garland County Historical Society and Hot Springs, Arkansas; William B. Gatewood, Jr., "Theodore Roosevelt and Arkansas, 1901-1912," The Arkansas Historical Quarterly, 22 (Spring, 1973), pp. 15, 21; and Mary Hudgins, "Notification Rite Held in Spa," The Sentinel-Record 3 July 1976, p. 26-A.

69. Brown, The American Spa, pp. 92-93; and Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 393, 399.

70. Brown, The American Spa, pp. 92-94.



## CHAPTER 7: SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION OF THE HOT SPRINGS

Early explorers visiting the hot springs made observations that helped scientists understand these natural phenomena. The first attempt at scientific investigation, however, began when President Thomas Jefferson dispatched William Dunbar and George Hunter to report on the hot springs. These two made detailed geological and biological observations on the thermal pools during their expedition in 1804. They recorded the longitude and latitude of the springs and recorded the temperatures of each spring. Their findings were published in documents sent to President Jefferson.<sup>1</sup>

The next observations of the springs came in 1806 when Lieutenant James B. Wilkerson from the Zebulon Pike expedition drew maps of the springs. In January 1818 Major Stephen H. Long visited the springs and described their number, temperature, and approximate discharge. Two years later members of Long's expedition to the Rocky Mountains stopped on their way back east to make further observations.<sup>2</sup>

Besides attracting the attention of the American scientific community, the hot springs piqued the interest of European scientists. Thomas Nuttall, an English naturalist, wrote of the springs in May 1819. He made notations on the number and temperatures of the springs. Another Englishman, George W. Featherstonhaugh, arrived in Hot Springs in December 1834 to examine the springs. He described in detail the geology of the area and the characteristics of the springs.<sup>3</sup>

In 1856 Professor E. Hillis Larkin made a quantitative analysis of the thermal water.<sup>4</sup> He found eight and one-half grains of minerals in a gallon of water. The analysis of a gallon of thermal water at a temperature of 145 degrees revealed the following:

	Grains
Silicic acid . . . . .	24.74
Sesquioxide oxide of iron . . . . .	1.12
Alumina . . . . .	5.15
Lime . . . . .	28.93
Magnesia . . . . .	.73
Chlorine . . . . .	.07
Carbonic acid . . . . .	21.36
Organic matter . . . . .	8.31
Water (sic) . . . . .	1.72
Sulfuric acid . . . . .	4.40
Potash . . . . .	1.46
Soda . . . . .	2.01
Iodine and bromide, a trace . . . . .	_____
Total . . . . .	100.00 <sup>5</sup>

In 1860 David Dale Owens published the result of his analysis of the thermal springs, which he worked on in 1859 and 1860. He found that the water contained magnesia, soda, potash, chlorine, sulfuric acid, organic matter, silica, silicates, carbonate of lime, carbonate of magnesia, alumina, and oxide of iron. Owens and his assistant made detailed listings of the hot springs, along with their temperatures and locations. In his conclusions, Owens postulated that the internal heat of the earth warmed the water for the springs.<sup>6</sup>

William Glasgow, Jr., conducted a careful survey of the springs and mapped them in 1860. He also recorded the temperatures and the overflow patterns of the springs. Glasgow calculated that total flow of the springs to be nearly one-half million gallons a day.<sup>7</sup>

Algernon S. Garnett undertook the next major scientific investigation of the hot springs in 1874. Garnett presented a general history of scientific investigation at Hot Springs in his publication, and then added his own observations. He devoted most of his discussion to the medical aspects of the water.<sup>8</sup>

In the summer and fall of 1876 J.L. Gebhart, a Hot Springs physician, examined the thermal water to determine its medicinal value. Gebhart found a slight electrical impulse in the thermal water. The rest of his analysis yielded little new.<sup>9</sup>

In 1880 Superintendent Benjamin Kelley requested that funds be provided for a "competent scientist" to determine the medicinal value of the thermal waters. This request was repeated the next year in a report on the reservation at Hot Springs by special investigator Amos Hadley. The secretary of the interior took no actions on these requests.<sup>10</sup>

John C. Branner published the results of his investigation of the geological formation around the hot springs in 1888. Branner believed that the hot springs gradually were drying up. He cited as evidence for this assertion the fact that he found evidence of extinct springs higher up on the slope of Hot Springs Mountain than the present active springs. The theory that Branner advanced was that as the internal heat supply diminished the springs gradually dried up, with the first ones to dry up being the ones farthest away from the heat source.<sup>11</sup>

Branner, in an 1891 report, provided an analysis of the thermal water. The water of the hot springs contained small amounts of silica, sodium, potassium, magnesium, calcium, lithium, iron, aluminum, manganese, sulfuric acid, carbonic acid, bromide, iodine, chlorine, and phosphoric acid. The report found the waters very pure. He disputed the early speculation by Gebhart that the water contained any signs of electricity.<sup>12</sup>

Branner's report again stirred the demands for an official government analysis of the thermal water. The secretary of the interior in 1899 requested that the Department of Agriculture undertake a chemical analysis of the thermal water. In 1901 J.K. Haywood of the Bureau of Chemistry receive the assignment. He published his findings the next year, along with the geological investigation of Walter Harvey Weed. Haywood examined 44 hot springs and two cold springs on the

reservation. The chemical analysis revealed the following elements and compounds: oxygen, albuminoid ammonia, lithium, ammonia, sodium, potassium, magnesium, calcium, iron, aluminum, manganese, arsenic, iodine, bromine, chlorine, boric acid, phosphoric acid, nitric acid, nitrous acid, sulfuric acid, silicic acid, carbonic acid, bicarbonic acid, nitrogen, and hydrogen sulfide.<sup>13</sup>

Dr. Betram B. Boltwood of Yale University made a new discovery in 1904. Boltwood received authorization from the secretary of the interior to examine the hot springs for any indications of radioactivity. He found the thermal waters to be radioactive and believed the radioactivity came from radon gas. Hot Springs newspapers claimed that the radioactivity was the miraculous element in the thermal water that had cured so many people.<sup>14</sup>

The next scientific controversy came about in 1910 when A.H. Purdue published a paper on the origin of the water for the hot springs. Purdue hypothesized that water of meteoric origins passed down through the earth until heated by an uncooled mass of igneous rock and then rose to create the hot springs. Another, less accepted hypothesis advanced was that the spring water was of juvenile origin, meaning that it originated underground. Purdue rejected this argument. Later geological investigation by Waldemar Lindgren in 1919 and Kirk Bryan in 1922 supported Purdue's findings.<sup>15</sup>

The question of the exact amount of radioactivity in the Hot Springs water continued to be raised. The American Medical Association, in an editorial, requested that the United States government further investigate the matter. Herman Schlundt, a professor of chemistry at the University of Missouri, conducted an examination for radioactivity at the hot springs in 1932. The testing conducted over several days time found the radioactivity of the springs to range from 0.11 to 3.31 millimicrocuries per liter. R.H. Arnt and P.E. Damon, using more precise instruments, studied the waters for radioactivity in 1952. In addition, the waters were studied for radioactivity in 1953 by Dr. P.K. Kuroda. Kimio Noguchi of

Japan tested the radioactivity of the water in 1961. These tests proved that the thermal springs contained some radioactivity. The exact relationship between the radioactivity and the cures obtained at Hot Springs remains unknown and unproven.<sup>16</sup>

A USGS study in the early 1970s applied techniques not previously used to get data to be able to more effectively manage this resource. As a result, land in the recharge area was acquired. With other lands, the park size increased to four times what it had been early in the decade.

Scientific investigation on the origin of the hot springs and the value of the radioactivity in medical treatment continues, with new theories being advanced as new discoveries are made and more sophisticated equipment is available. The full understanding of the complex natural processes that formed and maintain the hot springs will be of scientific interest for years to come.

## Notes from Chapter 7

1. McDermott, The Western Journals, pp. 11, 102-103; and Bryan, "The Hot Water Supply of the Hot Springs of Arkansas," p. 438.
2. Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, p. 32; Athearn, High Country Empire, 17-18; and Brown, The American Spa, p. 12.
3. Nuttall, A Journal of Travels into Arkansas During the Year 1819, pp. 124-125; and Featherstonhaugh, Featherstonhaughs Excursion Through the Slave States, p. 106.
4. The date of 1856 is disputed by Scully who places the date of the analysis in 1859. Frank M. Thompson, Report of the Superintendent, 1890, p. 9.
5. Ibid.
6. Owens, Second Report of a Geological Reconnaissance of the Middle and Southern Counties of Arkansas, pp. 19-23, 102-103, 292-293.
7. United States Geological Survey, The Waters of Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas--Their Nature and Origin (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1979), p. C7; J.K. Haywood, p. 92.
8. Garnett, A Treatise on the Hot Springs of Arkansas, pp. 24-25.
9. J.L. Gebhart, On the Therapy of the Waters of Hot Springs, Arkansas, and Their Relation to the Medical Profession at Large (St. Louis: n.p., 1881), pp. 3-5.
10. Kelley to Schurz, September 15, 1880, Entry 1, Box 5, RG 79, NA; and Amos Hadley to Schurz, January 27, 1881, Entry 1, Box 6, RG 79, NA.
11. John C. Branner, Annual Report of the Geological Survey of Arkansas for 1888 (Little Rock, Arkansas: Press Printing Co., 1888), pp. 48-50.
12. Ibid., pp. 10-11.
13. Haywood, The Hot Springs of Arkansas, pp. 9, 12.
14. Cron, "The Hot Springs of the Ouachita," p. 353; "Evidence of Radium," unidentified newspaper clipping, Entry 1, Box 79, RG 79, NA; and Eisele to Acher, April 14, 1904, Entry 1, Box 29, RG 79, NA.
15. Bryan, "The Hot Water Supply of the Hot Springs, Arkansas," p. 440.



16. "The Government And Radium," Journal of the American Medical Association, 61 (September 20, 1913): 369; Scully, Hot Springs, Arkansas and Hot Springs National Park, pp. 116-117; and United States Geological Survey, pp. C25-C26.



## CHAPTER 8: THE BATHHOUSES

Bathhouse Row consists of an impressive array of structures. Individually and collectively, the bathhouses provide the greatest architectural contribution to downtown Hot Springs, Arkansas.

Framed by the Army and Navy Hospital on the south and the Arlington Hotel on the north, Bathhouse Row creates the city's architectural identity. This stylistically diverse group of structures possesses an architectural unity brought about by careful site design. The government-required setback, the green spaces in front of each bathhouse, the Magnolia Promenade, and the Grand Promenade provide the key unifying links between the buildings. Those unifying links only serve to accentuate the architectural differences between the bathhouses.

The individual character of the bathhouses did not fully develop until the 1890s. The dissolution of the "Pool" began the serious competition among bathhouse owners to woo bathers. The owners realized that unique architectural features helped to promote an individual bathhouse's image. An owner could use that image as a marketing tool to increase business. This competition, most evident during the final phase of Bathhouse Row's construction, began in earnest with the erection of the Hale in 1892-93. Sometimes the effects of this competition on architecture appeared in correspondence. Most often bathhouse owners silently challenged each other by adding improvements and amenities to their own structures without directly referencing any competition. The rivalry seems to have been tougher among the more expensive bathhouses--the Fordyce, Maurice, and Buckstaff.<sup>1</sup> The following summary includes information on structure, design, competition, and the more important changes to the bathhouses over time.

Constructed in 1892-93, the Hale Bathhouse replaced an earlier structure of that name on the same site. Iron and steel reinforced the brick and concrete structure. When first constructed the Hale had an enormous

central cupola and possessed a flamboyant Victorian air similar in feeling to the other 19th century bathhouses along the row. That exotic character soon changed.

Designed in 1912 by Little Rock architect Frank W. Gibb, the Buckstaff Bathhouse's (fig. 29) Neoclassical Revival style radically departed from the fanciful structures that preceded it. Superintendent Harry Meyers wrote to the chief clerk of the Department of the Interior that the Buckstaff resembled

the Irish House of Parliament or the White House, or the Treasury Building, or some such magnificent structure; and from it you will also observe that within a very few years the form of the Hot Springs Reservation will be about the handsomest block of buildings in this, or any other country. It looks now to me very much like this house is going to have our friend, Billie Maurice, completely "skinned off the board."<sup>2</sup>

The Buckstaff's staid appearance came from its architectural formality. The cream-colored brick of the exterior walls, the white stucco finishes of the spandrels, friezes, cornices, and parapets and the finely polished brass details gave the building a solid, formal presence that remained unique on Bathhouse Row.

William G. Maurice opened his new Maurice Bathhouse, designed by George Gleim, the same year. The building's exterior possessed a less stylized quality than the Buckstaff. Instead, its vague transition style had ties to Mediterranean architecture--a trait common in the work of California architects of the time. The architecture had fair quality, but lacked the imposing presence the Buckstaff commanded. The Maurice had a white stucco exterior. The symmetrical front elevation had wings to the north and south.

By 1914 the Hale needed major structural work. The owners chose George Mann and Eugene John Stern as the architects for the change. Basically, they gutted the building and rebuilt portions of the walls.

They removed the enormous cupola and changed the roofline to a simpler, flat roof. The overall design (fig. 30) followed the formal neoclassical revival lines set down so solidly in the Buckstaff. Mann and Stern also redesigned and updated the interior and constructed cooling tanks adjacent to the building.

In 1915 Mann and Stern also completed the plans for the Fordyce Bathhouse (fig. 31). This Renaissance Revival structure contained strong Spanish and Italianate elements. A handsome marquee of copper and stained glass sheltered the entrance. The building's interior spaces were quite elegant. The men's bath hall had an enormous skylight with art glass panels in an aquatic motif and a fountain with Soto receiving water from an Indian girl below (fig. 32). The third-floor assembly room had a vaulted, stained-glass ceiling and arched window openings.

Not to be outdone, Maurice hired Mann and Stern in 1915 to do a major overhaul of the Maurice. They added a sun parlor to the front of the building on the first floor between the north and south wings. The original "Solartarium" became the Roycroft Den and featured dark wood paneling, a cobblestone fireplace flanked by built-in benches, carved mascarons as brackets below the box beams of the ceiling, and arts-and-crafts furnishings constructed in the Roycrofters' workshops (fig. 33). Undoubtedly the handsome appointments of the Fordyce had lured some patrons away from the Maurice, so Billie Maurice felt compelled to provide updated amenities.

The new Superior opened in 1916 (fig. 34). Harry C. Schwebke of Claremore, Oklahoma, completed the design. Compared to the Buckstaff or Fordyce, the Superior lacked an outstanding architectural character. Yet in a businesslike fashion it fulfilled its duties on Bathhouse Row. The basically commercial building contained some details of classical origin. Those principal architectural details--most of which appeared on the front elevation--included a three-bay division separated by brick pilasters and decorated with concrete painted in imitation or ornamental tile.

Green tile medallions sat centered over the pilasters in the friezes below the first- and second-story cornices. On the interior, marble walls, tile floors, and brass hardware added a feeling of higher style to the building.

In 1921 Mann and Stern became involved with designing some interior changes for the Buckstaff. That same year they worked on plans for the Maurice again, modifying the roof, installing storage and cooling tanks, and making additional interior changes.

Mann and Stern continued their role in the design of Hot Springs. Even though their master plan for the reservation would never be implemented, they, more than any other architectural firm, gave Bathhouse Row its sense of place. They designed the new Government Free Bathhouse (1922) that was constructed off Bathhouse Row (fig. 35). For it they chose a Greek Revival style, always suitable for federal structures. Mann and Stern also designed the Quapaw and the Ozark bathhouses, which were also on Bathhouse Row in 1922 and were considerably freer.

Just about all the Ozark's architectural significance rested in its Spanish Colonial Revival facade (fig. 36). The impressive front elevation had twin towers with three-tiered setbacks flanking the main entrance. The windows of the north and south pavilions had decorative cartouches above themselves, as well as a series of rectangular setbacks that evoked a vaguely Art Deco feeling. The sloped roofs over the porch (a later addition) and the hipped roofs of the towers were covered with red clay tile. The tower roofs were topped with finials.

The Quapaw (fig. 37), on the other hand, not only had a handsome facade and a beautifully constructed dome, but also a groin-vaulted sun porch and, of course, the Quapaw spring in its basement. Stucco finished the exterior of this masonry and reinforced-concrete structure. The central dome, this building's most impressive exterior feature, had a covering of brilliantly colored tiles. A small metal cupola finished the dome. On the front elevation a central pavilion that formed the entrance

interrupted the series of arched openings. Two smaller arches flanked the entrance doorway. Directly above the entrance rested a cartouche with a carved Indian head set into the decorative, double-curved parapet. The parapets at the north and south ends of the building were capped with scalloped shells that framed spiny sculpin fish. The shell and the fish emphasized the aquatic aspect of the building, and the Indian head stressed the prehistoric use of the waters. After all, this bathhouse had its own legend--the "Legend of the Quapaw Baths"--which claimed that the Indians had discovered the magical healing powers of the cave and spring incorporated into the building's basement. The scallop shell was a common architectural element found in Spanish Colonial Revival buildings. Originally, the symbol represented Santiago de Campostela, patron saint of Spain. The shell evolved into a mere decorative element in secular revival buildings such as this.

Mann and Stern designed two identical comfort stations that were constructed by the National Park Service north and south of the Quapaw. The facades were simple yet elegant. A central arched opening led into a small, open vestibule that provided access into the one-room structures. Exterior walls were white stucco, and the roofs were tiled to provide a good architectural relation with the Spanish Colonial Quapaw.

The Lamar was the last bathhouse to be completed, finished in 1923. The design by Harry Schwebke, who also did the Superior, was again not particularly distinctive. The Lamar was a clean-lined commercial building not totally devoid of the elements left over from various classical revivals (symmetry, cornices, and vague pediments articulating the front entrance).

In the late 1930s the architectural firm of Thompson, Sanders, and Ginocchio was hired to redesign the Hale Bathhouse. The Neoclassical feeling that Mann and Stern had given the building disappeared and was replaced by a Mission Revival feeling. The hip roof was covered with red tile. The classical segmental arch of the main entrance became a simpler Spanish bell gable. The brick received a stucco finish and the windows

flanking the entrance were adorned with wrought-iron grilles. The entire effect became very "Californian" in feeling. The architects may have been following suit behind Charles Peterson's new administration building at the south end of the row, or perhaps they were encouraged to provide a greater architectural link between the Hale and the other bathhouses like the Quapaw and the Ozark. Whatever the reason, removing the classical feelings from the Hale made the Buckstaff's classicism that much more noticeable. The Buckstaff's only highly stylized ally was the Thompson block--another classical temple with a glossy white, terra-cotta facade on the opposite side of Central Avenue--the work of Mann and Stern (fig. 38).

Through the years the bathhouses underwent hundreds of changes, but the architectural character of the Bathhouse Row of the late 1930s remained. Most of the changes were relatively minor, and completed on the buildings' interiors. The numbers of tubs varied. Sometimes a major advance in hydrotherapy, such as the use of the Hubbard tub, spawned interior changes that went far beyond cosmetics. The basic face of Bathhouse Row, however, was completed when the Hale withstood its transformation to Mission Revival. The removal of the cooling towers in the late 1950s only enhanced the row's architectural character.

Bathhouse Row's architectural character resulted from many factors. Geologic forces formed the hot springs, mountains, and small gorge that became Hot Springs' Central Avenue. Little remained from the springs' early centuries other than a pattern of use and a pattern of settlement. Development during the 19th century took on a more tangible shape. Lt. Robert Stevens' contributions to Bathhouse Row were perhaps the most noteworthy of that era. His Grand Central Entrance, for example, provided an architectural focal point along Bathhouse Row. In the 20th century, Mann and Stern first visualized Bathhouse Row as a series of primarily Neoclassical buildings like the Hale, although their Fordyce and Maurice designs fit into the pattern. When the department could not implement their grand scheme, Mann and Stern let their architectural ideas evolve. Especially after World War I, Bathhouse Row provided a



fertile testing ground for the influx of "new" styles and more progressive architectural thinking. Although Mann and Stern could not help but revert to Greek Revival in the federal bathhouse, they allowed whimsy to assist them with the Ozark and Quapaw designs.

The construction of Charles Peterson's administration building and the "missionization" of the Hale Bathhouse in the late 1930s finalized Bathhouse Row's architectural character. The new administration building and the majority of bathhouses possessed architecture derived from Spanish influences (Spanish Colonial Revival, Mission Revival, Spanish/Italianate Renaissance Revival). These buildings sat in a landscape pervaded by order--a physical order first brought about by the Department of the Interior in the 19th century and handsomely polished and perfected by the National Park Service's Branch of Plans and Design. This unique combination of geology, politics, and people built Bathhouse Row.

## Notes From Chapter 8

1. To get a sense of bathhouse competition, Ms. Harrison reviewed considerable correspondence during the course of research; she found very little specific information on competition. Next, she constructed a chronological history of all the bathhouses using primary sources and reliable secondary sources such as Diane Rhodes' Historic Grounds and Structures: An Interim Report on Bathhouse Row. Promotional literature, such as the Cutter's Official Guide and that put out by the Missouri Pacific Railroad, tended to include the information the bathhouse owners wanted to mention. Her conclusion is that most of the documented competition was done through verbal drumming.

2. Superintendent Harry Myers to Clement Ucker, Chief Clerk, Department of the Interior, July 18, 1911, from Box 2, Buckstaff File, Rhodes Collection.

## CHAPTER 9: THE DESIGNERS

A number of highly talented architects and landscape architects contributed to the design of Bathhouse Row. Included here is a summary of the information uncovered.<sup>1</sup>

### MANN AND STERN

The architectural firm of Mann and Stern was in business in Little Rock from about 1913 until about 1925.<sup>2</sup> The more powerful personality of the firm seems to have been George R. Mann, who was known for years as the "dean of Arkansas architects."<sup>3</sup> Mann was born July 22, 1856 in Syracuse, Indiana. His father was a Virginia "planter, a fox hunting squire who later in life met financial reverses through promiscuous endorsements."<sup>4</sup> Mann's uncle encouraged him to be an architect. Eventually Mann moved on to Indianapolis and worked in the offices of architect W.H. Brown. Instead of having him work on simple drafting projects, Brown recognized Mann's talent and allowed him to do construction drawings. Mann then went on to the Institute of Technology in Boston (later Massachusetts Institute of Technology) where he was allowed to skip the first two years of general courses by passing an exam. He graduated in 1876.

Mann moved to New York and for a very short time worked for McKim, Meade, and White, the most prominent architectural firm in the United States at the time. Mann then returned to Goshen, Indiana, and designed a handful of residences. Then, at age 21, Mann set up an architectural firm in Minneapolis with Edward Stebbins, a former classmate. Business in Minneapolis was slow, so Mann decided to leave. He signed on with a traveling opera troupe as a member of the chorus and tried to get architectural work in every town where the troupe stopped. Mann finally landed a job with A.B. Cross, the leading architect in Kansas City, Missouri. Dissatisfied with that position, he got a job as a draftsman in St. Joseph, Missouri.

St. Joseph's wealth was based on its wholesale industries, and Mann designed several warehouses there. A year after he started he ended up as head of the architectural firm that had hired him as a draftsman. He designed the Paxson Hotel in Omaha, the courthouse at Council Bluffs, courthouses in Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, and branches of his wholesale houses in Kansas City, Omaha, Pueblo, and Fort Worth. He also designed the Haverly Opera House, later known as the Columbia Theatre, in Chicago and the Union Depot in Hannibal, Missouri. While he worked designing commercial buildings, he also entered many architectural competitions, winning several and placing in many more. He entered and won the competition for designing the St. Louis city hall.

Then he was appointed resident architect of the St. Joseph, Missouri, post office, overseeing the construction of the building that was designed in the office of the supervising architect of the Treasury, the highest public architectural office in the nation. He warned the Treasury Department that the local soils could not handle the weight of the dome they proposed, but his warnings went unheeded. Eventually Mann ended up rebuilding the structure on a foundation more suitable to the local soils. He was then offered the job of supervising architect of the Treasury. He declined the position, despite the prestige, because he felt the salary was too low for the high cost of living in Washington.

Mann moved to St. Louis and designed a number of buildings there--the Martin Dry Goods building, the Gateways at Washington Terrace, and St. Vincent's Asylum. Then he won the competitions for the Carnegie Library and the Philadelphia Bourse.

In the competition for the Minnesota state capitol, Mann's design was judged equal with architect Cass Gilbert's design. Gilbert ended up winning the competition, perhaps, Mann believed, because of his connection with James J. Hill, the owner of the Great Northern Railroad for whom Gilbert had designed a residence. Mann returned to St. Joseph and designed the exchange building for Swift Meat Packing Company of Chicago.

In 1900 Mann took some plans he had drawn up for a new state capitol to the governor of Arkansas. He realized that the state had no money for such a venture but pursued it by hanging the plans in the old capitol building, hoping to influence the legislature. He was successful, and eventually they funded his building.

Mann designed a number of structures in Little Rock--the Southern Trust building, the Marion Hotel, the Bank of Commerce, the State Bank building, the Gus Blass store, and many residences. He also designed a high school in Pine Bluff, the Pulaski County courthouse, and commercial buildings in Shreveport and Alexandria, Louisiana.

During the time he was associated with Eugene John Stern, they designed the Beaumont Hotel in Beaumont, Texas, the Thompson Building in Hot Springs, and the Fordyce and Hale Bathhouses. They also, in Mann's words, "laid out a scheme of beautification for Hot Springs, the plans for which were being generally followed."<sup>5</sup> Then they designed the Quapaw, Ozark, and Government Free bathhouses.

When the firm dissolved about the middle of the 1920s, Mann formed a partnership with Harry Wanger and Milton King. They designed the Masonic Temple in Fort Smith, North Little Rock High School, and a number of commercial and residential structures.<sup>6</sup>

Eugene John Stern was born in Austria-Hungary in 1884. He completed a full course in architecture at the Mechanics Institute in New York City from 1900 to 1904 and attended the Beaux Arts Ateliers in New York the following year. He also took a course in architectural rendering from Columbia University. During 1907 he was the principal architect in the architectural firm of Stern and Morris in New York, and from 1908 until 1913 he was a partner in Wheeler and Stern in Charlotte, North Carolina. Stern was allied with Mann in their firm from about 1913 until about 1927 when Stern went out on his own. Buildings he designed after that were the Continental Hotel in Kansas City, Missouri; Simmons National Bank in Pine Bluff, Arkansas; the William Len Hotel in Little Rock; and the

Slattery office building in Shreveport, Louisiana. He was still practicing architecture in 1939 when he applied for and was granted an architectural license for the state of Arkansas.<sup>7</sup>

The regional significance of the architectural firm of Mann and Stern is obvious. Although Mann was the more prolific of the two, their joint contributions to Hot Springs are enormous.

#### NATIONAL PARK SERVICE DESIGNERS

The key people involved in the design of Hot Springs National Park during the late 1920s through the 1930s were Thomas Chalmers Vint and Charles E. Peterson.

Tom Vint studied landscape architecture at the University of California (Berkeley). His college studies were interrupted by World War I, during which time he was commissioned as a lieutenant in the Army Air Corps. While stationed in France, Vint took enough architectural courses at the University of Lyon to be allowed a semester's credit at Berkeley. After graduating, Vint worked for architect Frank Lloyd Wright in Los Angeles and then became an assistant landscape architect in the National Park Service, working for Daniel Hull. For a time Hull and Vint shared an office with Gilbert Stanley Underwood in Los Angeles. Underwood was the architect of a number of major buildings in national parks, including the Ahwahnee at Yosemite, Grand Canyon Lodge, and Bryce Lodge. Underwood later designed the Timberline Lodge.

Vint succeeded Hull as chief landscape architect in 1927, eventually ending up as chief of the Branch of Plans and Designs. Among Vint's major contributions to the fields of architecture and landscape architecture were his belief in the need for sound, long-range planning for national parks and his strong design philosophy, from which developed the nonintrusive (often called "rustic") park architecture for natural areas. Vint also was the prime force behind the development of

parkway standards. Vint is the only man elected a Fellow of both the American Society of Landscape Architecture and the American Institute of Architects, the highest honors that peers can award in those fields.<sup>8</sup>

Charles Peterson is best known for his major contributions to historic preservation in the United States. He joined Tom Vint's staff in 1929 after receiving a degree in architecture from the University of Minnesota. Peterson worked for about a year and a half in the Southwestern Parks and Monuments Association before transferring to Colonial Parkway.<sup>9</sup> His early work on building restoration was pioneering in nature. His restorations were based on scholarly research rather than romantic conjecture.<sup>10</sup> The administration building at Hot Springs is one of the few modern structures he designed.

#### OTHERS

Captain Robert Stevens oversaw landscape construction at the Hot Springs Reservation from 1892 until 1895. Nothing is known about his earlier life. Stevens left Hot Springs and arrived in Yellowstone National Park in July 1895 as disbursing quartermaster. Records indicate that Stevens was at Yellowstone in that capacity until September 1896, during which time he controlled expenditures under a congressional appropriation entitled "Improvement and Protection of Yellowstone National Park," most of which dealt with road construction. During his year-plus at Yellowstone the Army constructed no new buildings at Fort Yellowstone.<sup>11</sup> Where Stevens went after Yellowstone is a matter for future research.

Charles Thompson and Associates (Thompson, Sanders, and Ginocchio) designed hundreds of buildings throughout Arkansas, from residences to university buildings and bathhouses. Among the buildings they designed in Hot Springs were the Alhambra Bathhouse, the Como Hotel, the Samuel W. Fordyce residence, the Hale Bathhouse alterations, the Hotel Moody, the Leon Levi Hospital, an addition to the Majestic Hotel, the Waukesha Hotel, and several churches.<sup>12</sup> Although the firm's work was quite good,

it was not as prolific or on such a monumental scale as that of the Mann and Stern firm.

No information was uncovered on Frank Gibb of Little Rock, architect for the Buckstaff; Harry C. Schwebke of Claremore, Oklahoma, and Hot Springs, Arkansas, architect for the Superior and the Lamar; or George Gleim of Chicago and New York, architect of the Maurice.



## Notes From Chapter 9

1. During the course of research, Ms. Laura Soulliere Harrison was able to turn up considerable information on a few of the designers, but nothing on others.
2. Exact dates are conflicting for the period of the Mann and Stern partnership. Mann states that they ended the partnership in 1924. Stern's papers revealed that they remained partners until 1927.
3. David Y. Thomas, ed., Arkansas and Its People (New York: American Historical Society, 1930), p. 214.
4. George R. Mann, "Autobiographical sketch," manuscript dated October 6, 1932, Little Rock, Arkansas, on file in the Arkansas State Historic Preservation Office, n.p.
5. Mann's apparent exaggeration throughout the document is evident. Ibid., n.p.
6. Ibid.
7. Arkansas State Board of Architects, Application for Registration as a Registered Architect, Eugene John Stern. On file at the Arkansas State Historic Preservation Office.
8. William G. Carnes, "Tom Vint," Courier (the National Park Service newsletter, August, 1980), pp. 23-24.
9. Tweed, Soulliere, and Law, National Park Service: Rustic Architecture: 1916-1942, p. 50.
10. Charles Hosmer, Preservation Comes of Age (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1981), various pages.
11. Personal letter from Yellowstone National Park Historian, Timothy Manns to Laura Soulliere Harrison, January 9, 1987.
12. F. Hampton Roy, Charles L. Thompson and Associates: Arkansas Architects 1885-1938 (Little Rock: August House, 1983), pp. 106-107.



CHAPTER 10: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS  
AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The spa industry in Hot Springs can be compared and contrasted with the spas of North America and Europe. Hot Springs, like the other great spa resorts, experienced times of economic and cultural booms followed by busts. The leisurely nature of spa life fostered the proliferation of recreational activities, including those considered immoral by local customs such as gambling and prostitution. The sad plight of the sick being manipulated by unscrupulous physicians is a tragedy that has occurred in any great spa. The attempt by hired representatives to illegally direct patients to a particular doctor, hotel, or bathhouse, however, seems unique to the Hot Springs spa.

Equally unique is the government control over the thermal waters and the attempt thereby to regulate the bathing industry. Government policy toward the spa industry has been touched on only as appropriate to the requirements of this report. An administrative history of the Hot Springs National Park would provide useful data for management decisions; this park has a particularly complex history that has been somewhat abbreviated in this report. Because of funding constraints and the requirements of this special study, the records at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and the privately held Fordyce collection in St. Louis were not consulted. These materials probably could yield valuable information for an administrative history, which could describe in detail the policies and works of each superintendent; this report only briefly describes them.

Hot Springs played a significant role as a health resort in the 19th and early 20th centuries for the people living in the Midwest and Gulf Coast states. This health resort's appeal outside of these regions has proved limited, despite promotional claims to the contrary. The national significance for this resort is attributable to the national government's administration of the thermal waters.

The dramatic decline in popularity of this resort in the post-World War II era resulted from many causes: the development of drugs in curing venereal disease and other maladies treated at Hot Springs; the changing vacation patterns of the American public and their use of leisure time; the failure of the bathhouses to adopt more economical and efficient bathing procedures; and the failure of the bathhouse owners to use new procedures and technology. These factors have led to the closure of all but one of the bathhouses on Bathhouse Row.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1. This 19th century photograph shows how one Hot Springs bathhouse owner carried water to his bathhouse. He tapped the water directly from a hot spring and brought it, by means of an open wooden trough, to a holding tank at the rear of the bathhouse. (Photograph circa 1860.)

Garland County Historical Society

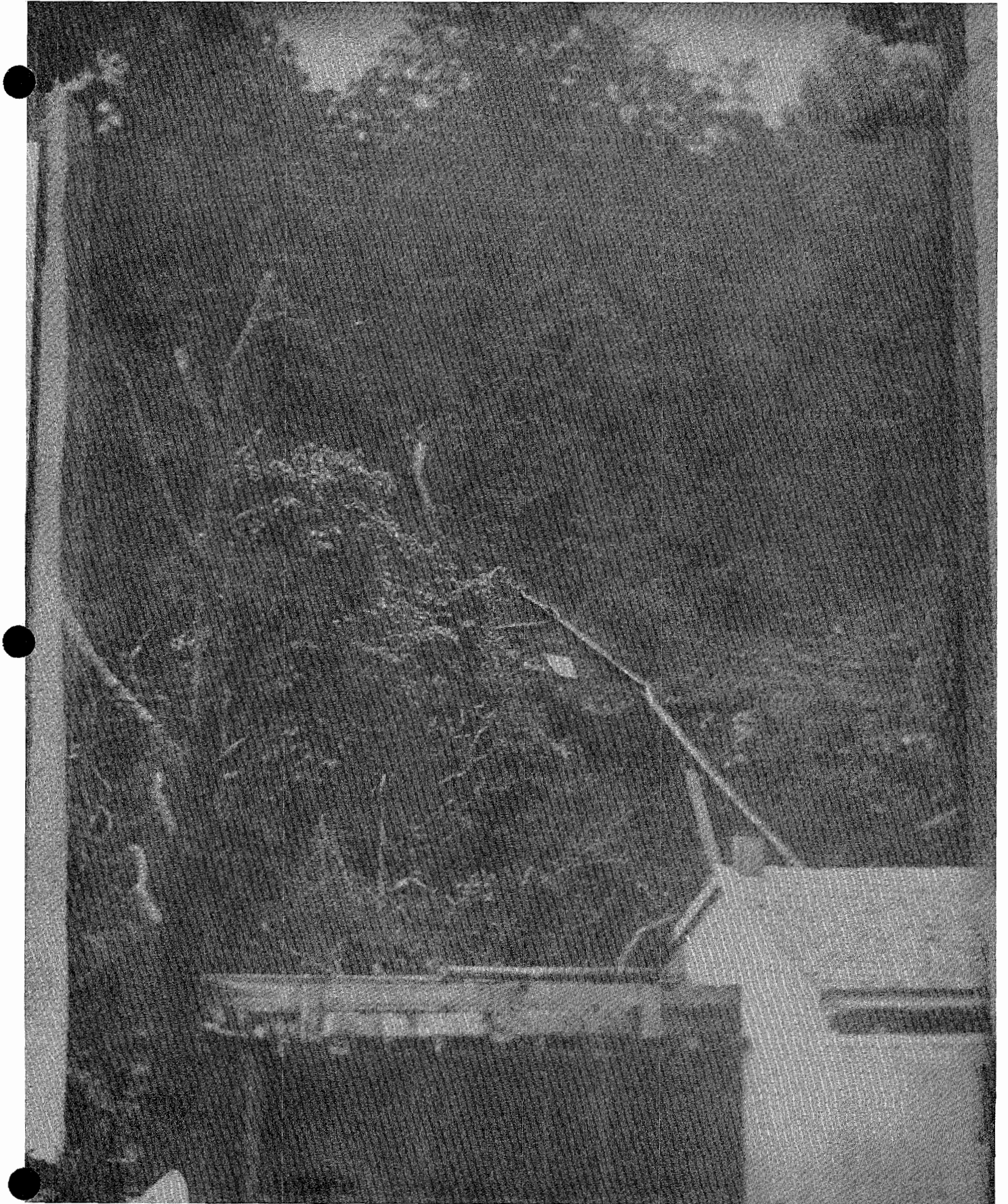


Figure 2. Segregation of the sexes was commonplace in Hot Springs' early bathhouses. In this photograph a small sign (here illegible) on the lattice-work addition designates the "Ladies Department." (Photograph circa 1860.)

Garland County Historical Society



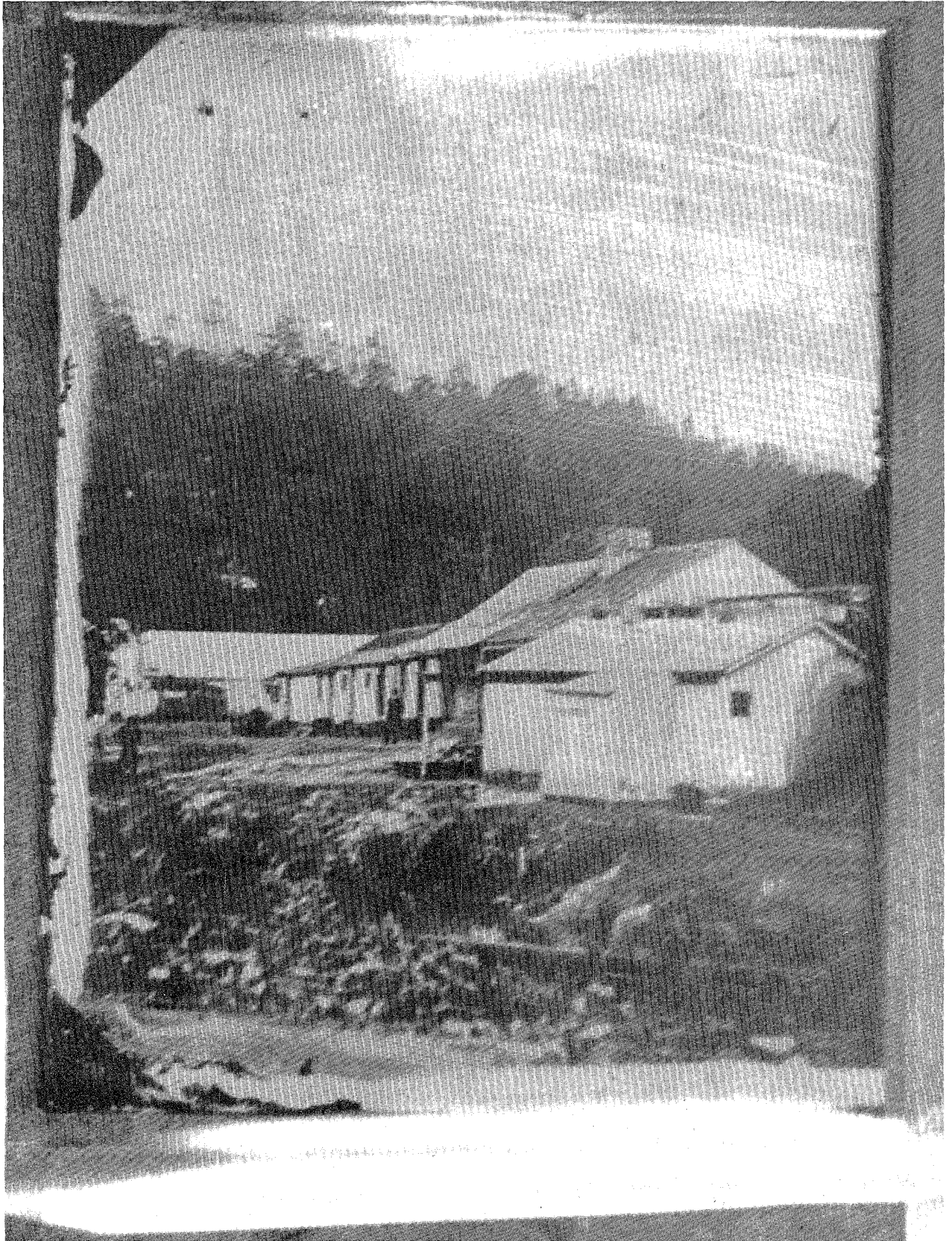


Figure 3. Nonambulatory patients wishing to use the waters might have friends or relatives carry them to Hot Springs Creek on litters such as this one on the bridge. The patients could then totally submerge themselves in the "healing waters." (Photograph circa 1860.)

Garland County Historical Society



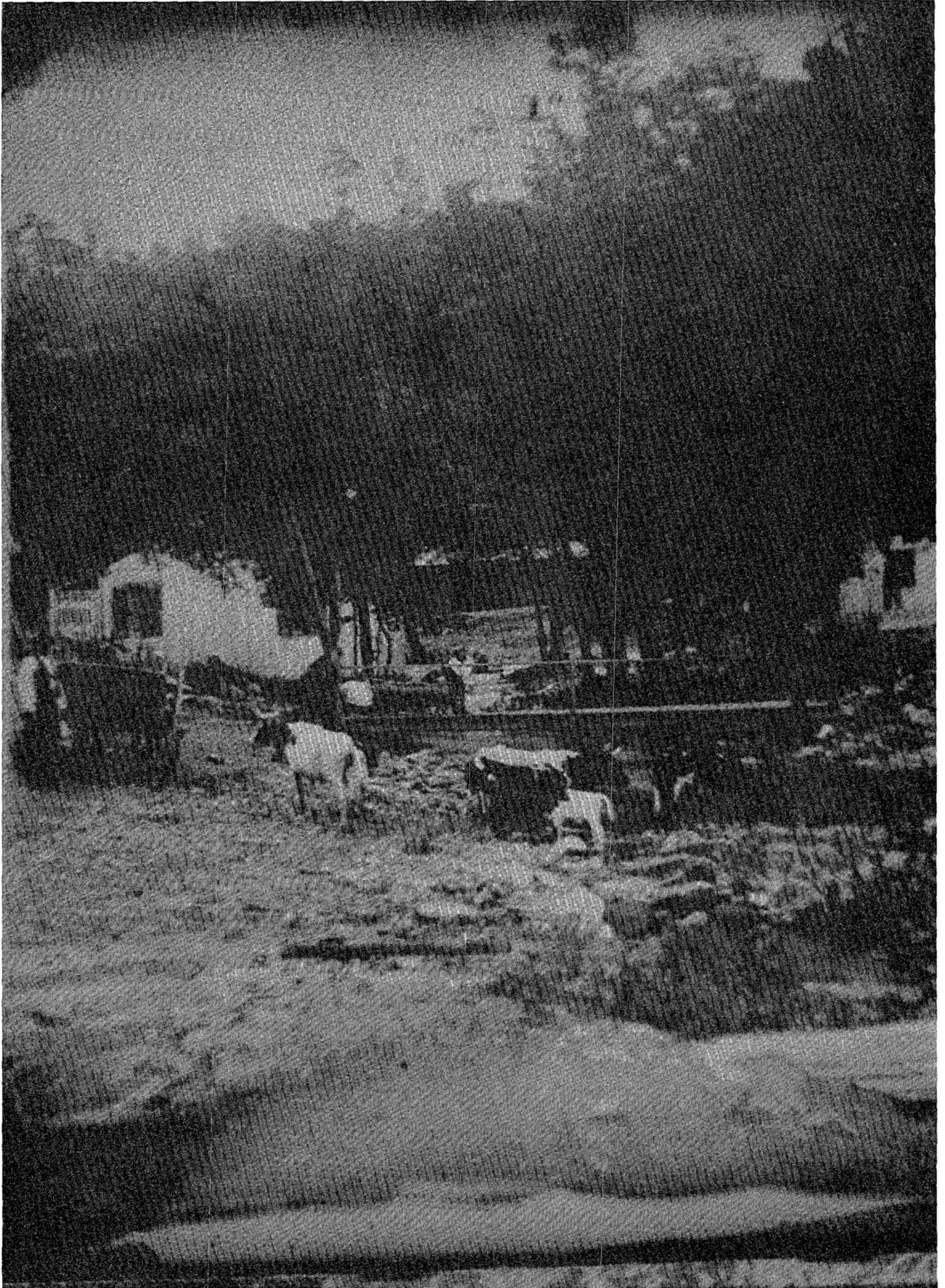


Figure 4. Hoping to gain certain health benefits, residents and visitors often drank the waters directly from the springs. The open troughs supplied water to the early bathhouses. (Photograph circa 1860.)

Garland County Historical Society

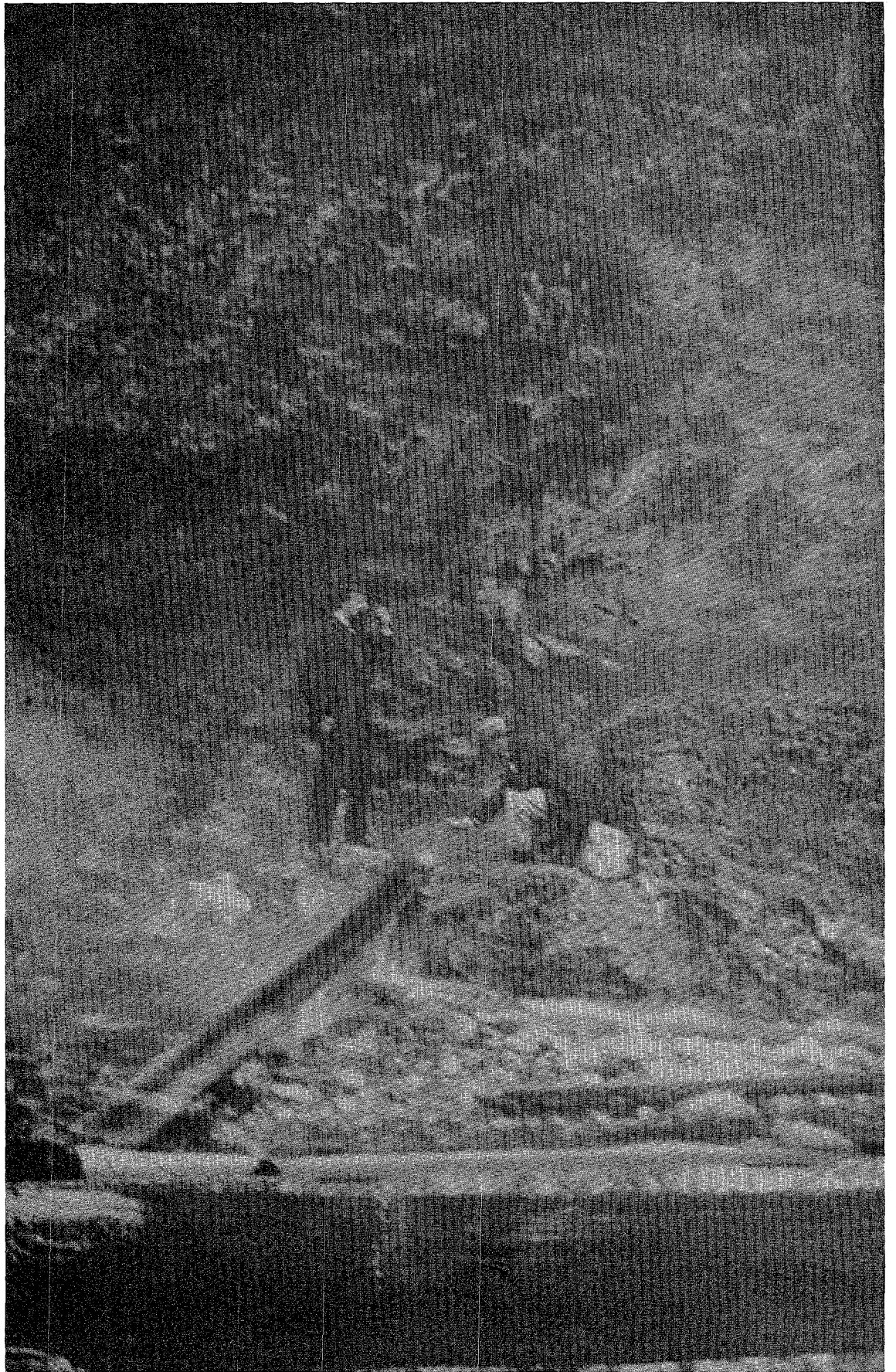


Figure 5. Visitors and residents also collected water from the springs for later use. Primitive, unsanitary conditions continued until the construction of the Creek Arch in 1884. (Photograph circa 1860.)

Garland County Historical Society



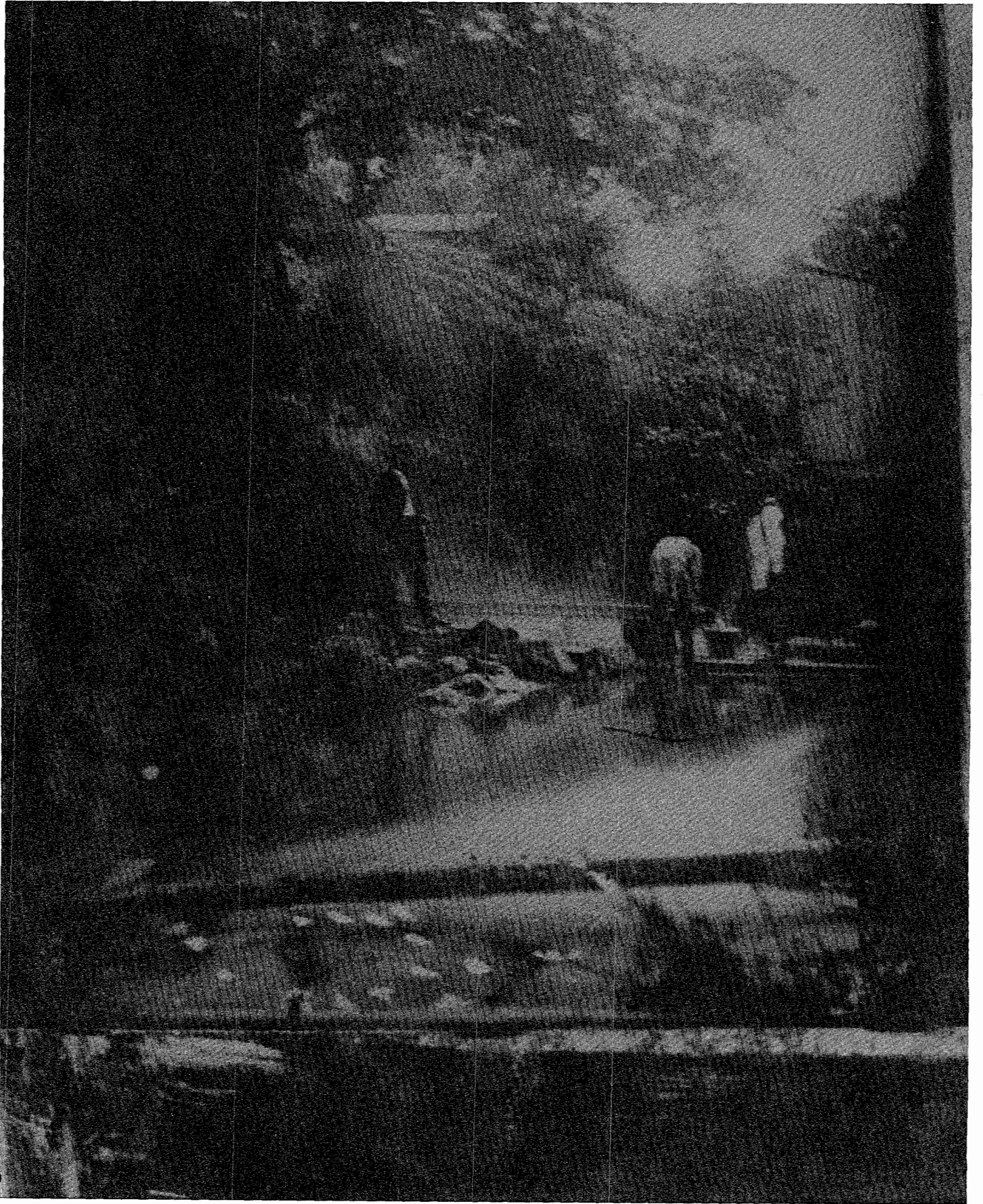


Figure 6. In the late 1870s, Hot Springs' main street presented a cluttered appearance. In this stereoscopic view taken from the balcony of the first Arlington Hotel, bridges crossed Hot Springs Creek (left) to provide access to the individual bathhouses. The creek banks eroded to the edge of the dirt street and nearly undermined the wooden sidewalk. Mansard roofs proliferated in bathhouse architecture (left) and gave the row a cosmopolitan air. The simpler false fronts and gable roofs at the businesses on the west (right) side of the street provided a commercial image that was subservient to the higher styles of the bathhouses on the east side of the street. (Photograph taken after 1875 and before 1884.) Balch and Clary Photograph.

Arkansas History Commission



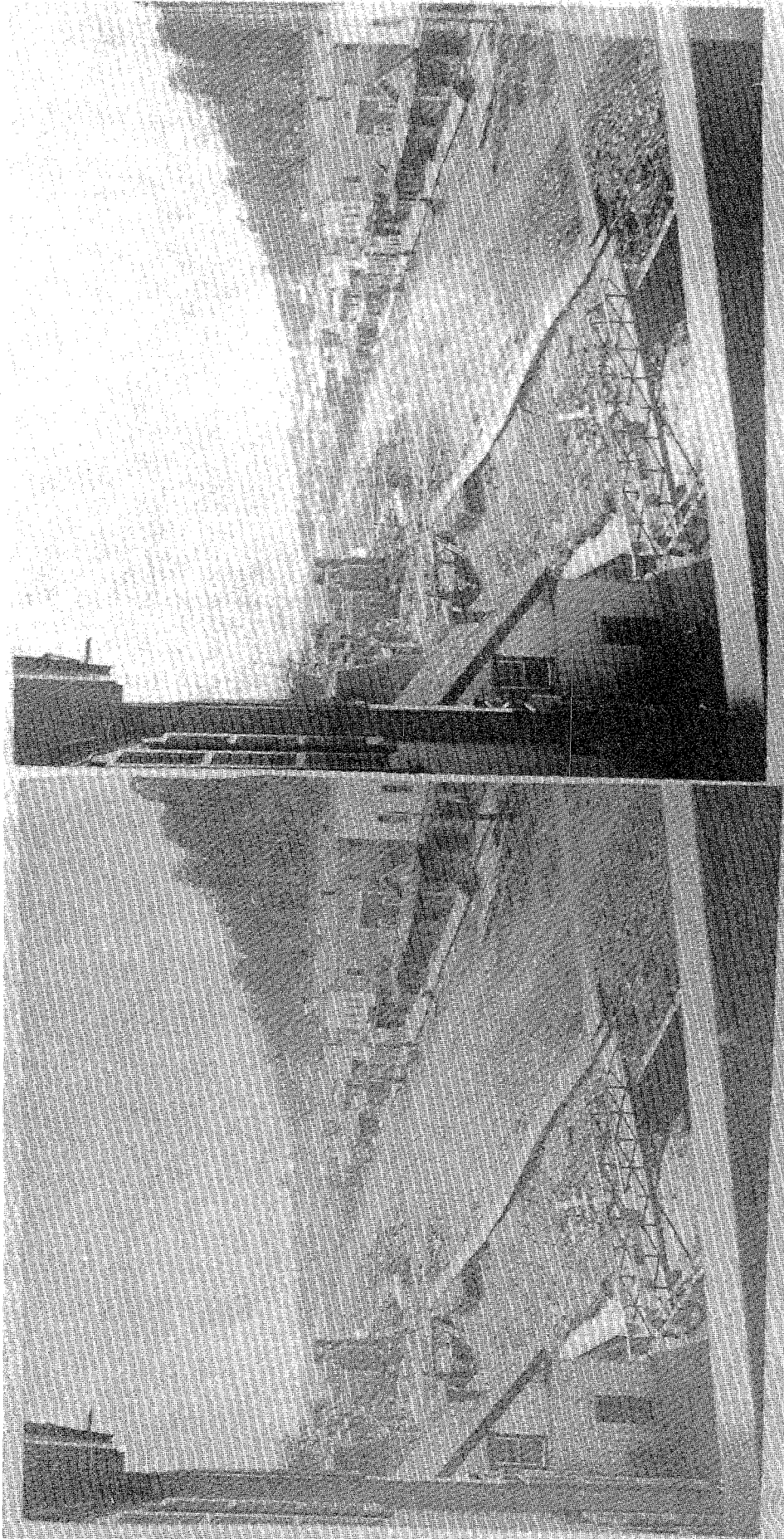


Figure 7. Downtown Hot Springs in the late 1870s had a commercial strip that paralleled Hot Springs Creek. Constructed side-by-side, the small, wood-frame buildings were prime candidates for the fires which later devastated the town. The elaborate trough-and-trestle system in the photograph carried spring water to bathhouses and businesses. Dogs, cattle, horses, and mules freely roamed the streets and the creek banks and contributed to the town's unsanitary conditions. (Photograph post-1875 and pre-1884.)

Arkansas History Commission

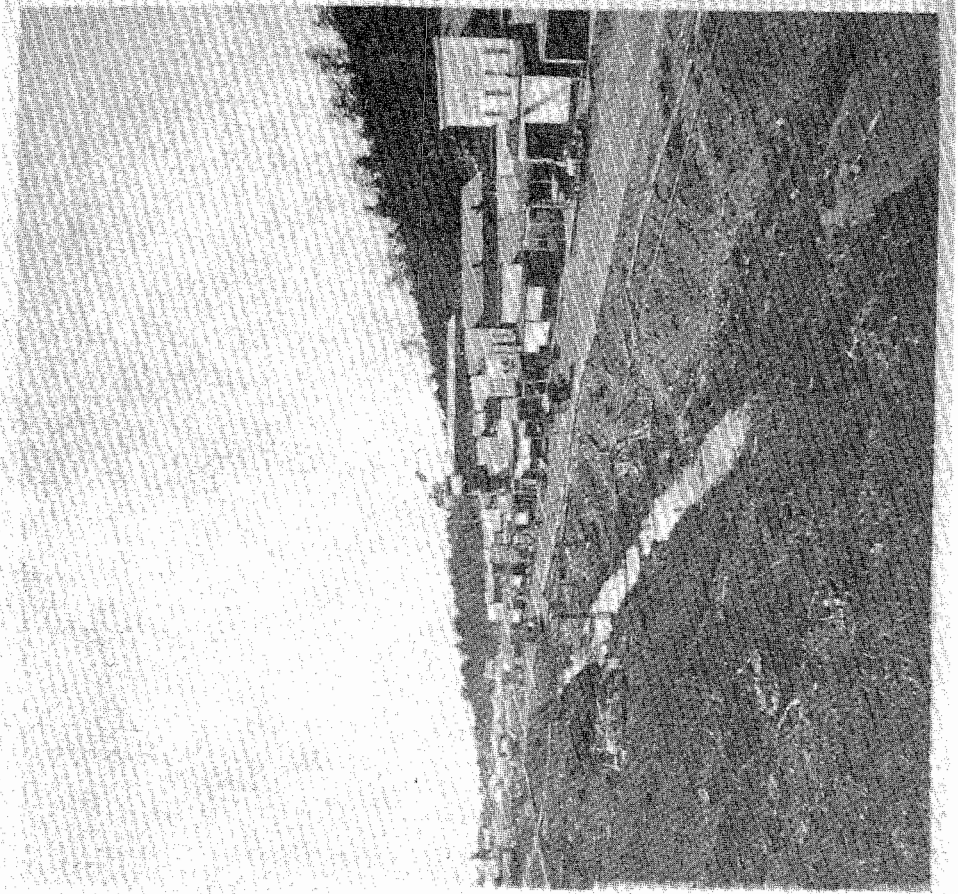
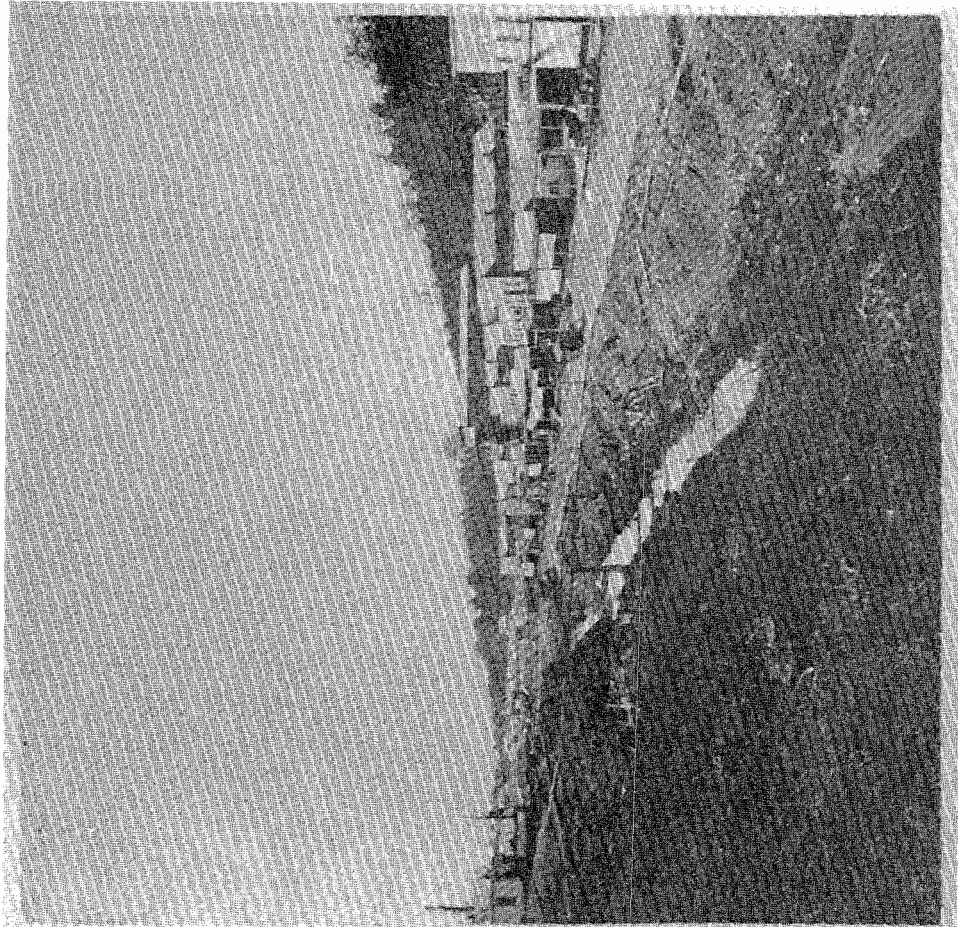


Figure 8. Hot Springs, circa 1870, sported wood-frame structures of vernacular design with few decorative elements.

Garland County Historical Society



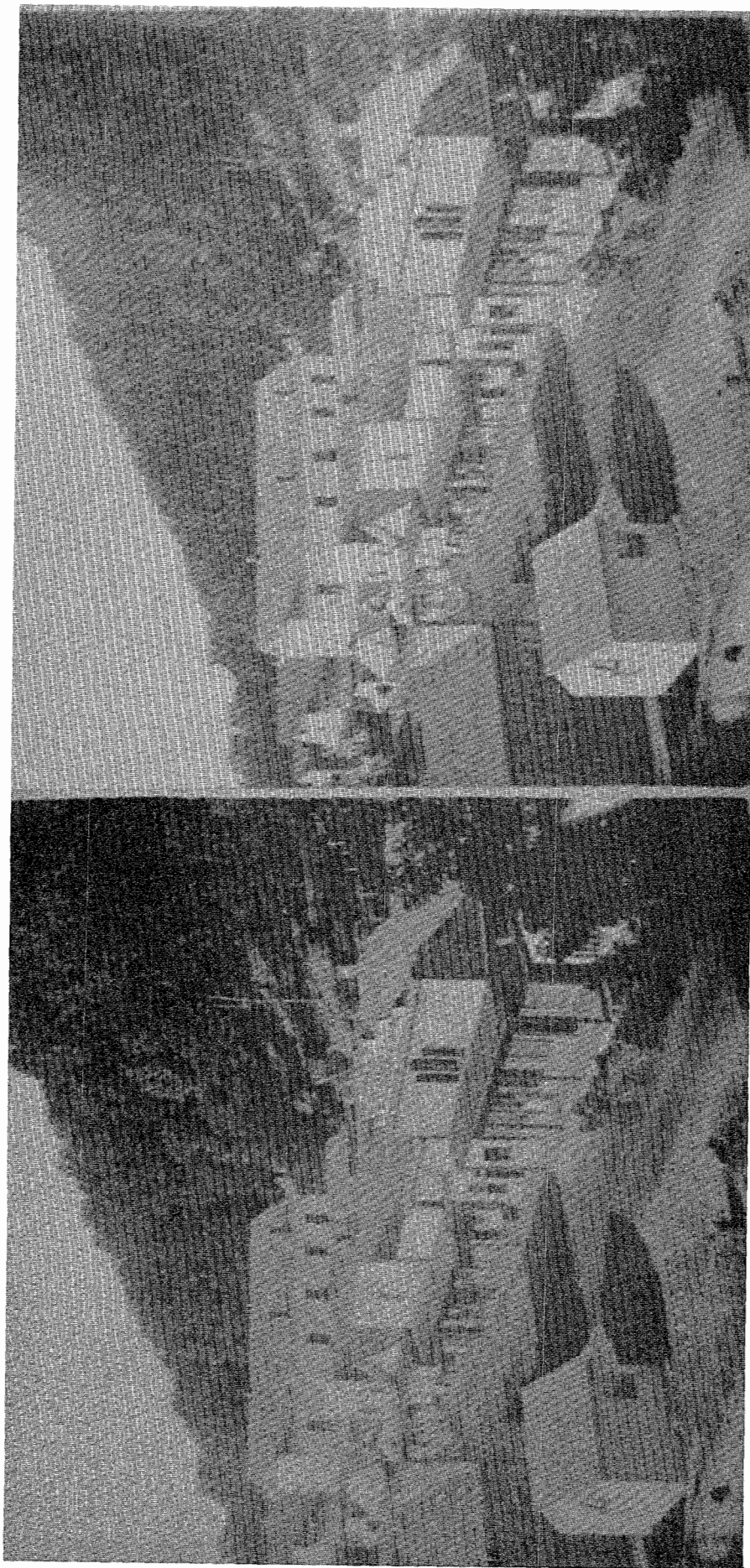


Figure 9. This idealized view of Hot Springs in 1875 belied contemporary accounts complaining of the town's "retarded" development and its "temporary" architecture. In 1878 two factors contributed to a more substantial architectural character for the town: settlement of land claims against the federal government, which encouraged better building, and reconstruction after a devastating fire in March of that year.

Maurice Collection, Arkansas History Commission

Hot Springs, Ark. The Worlds Sanitarium in 1875.

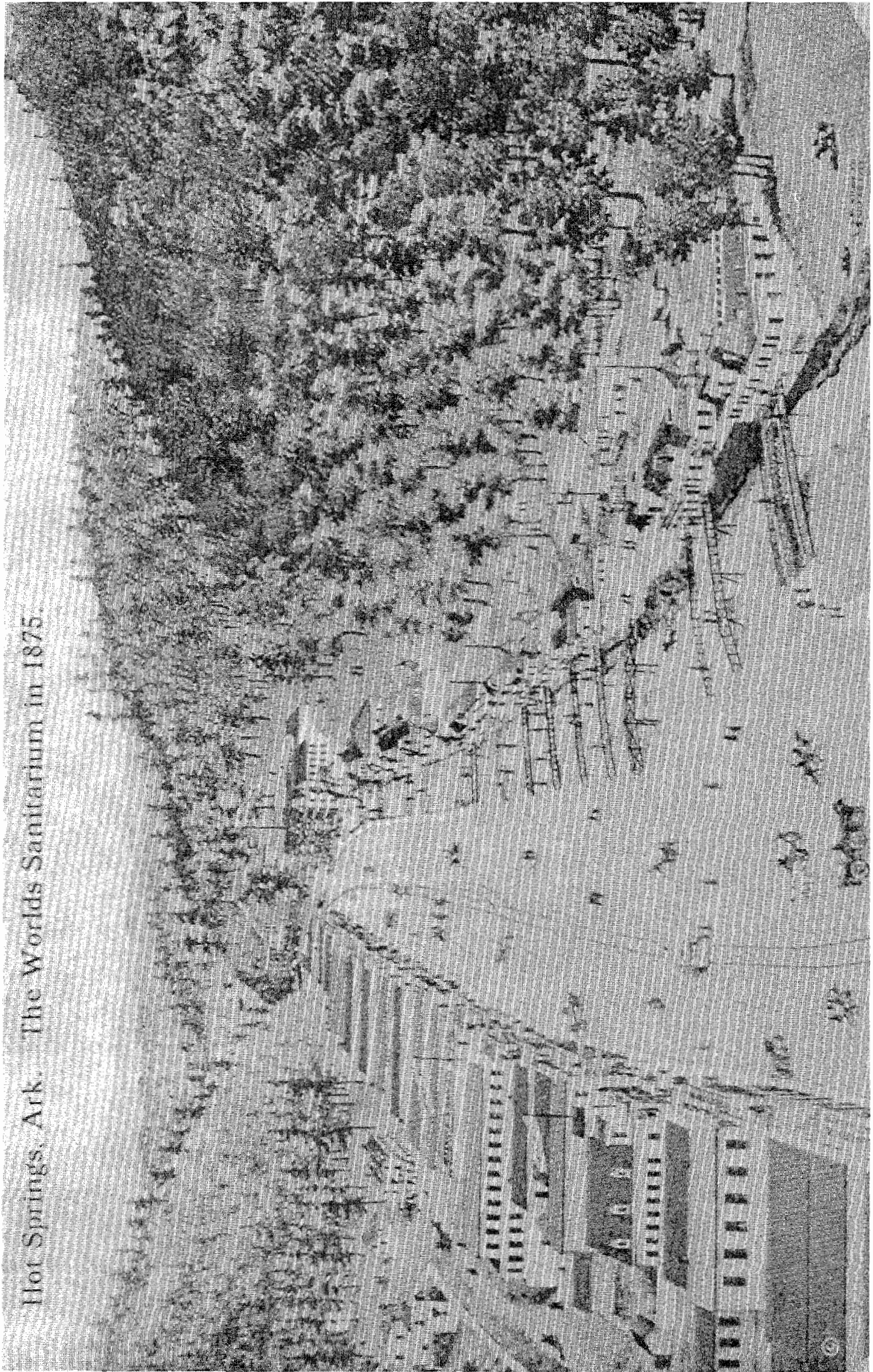
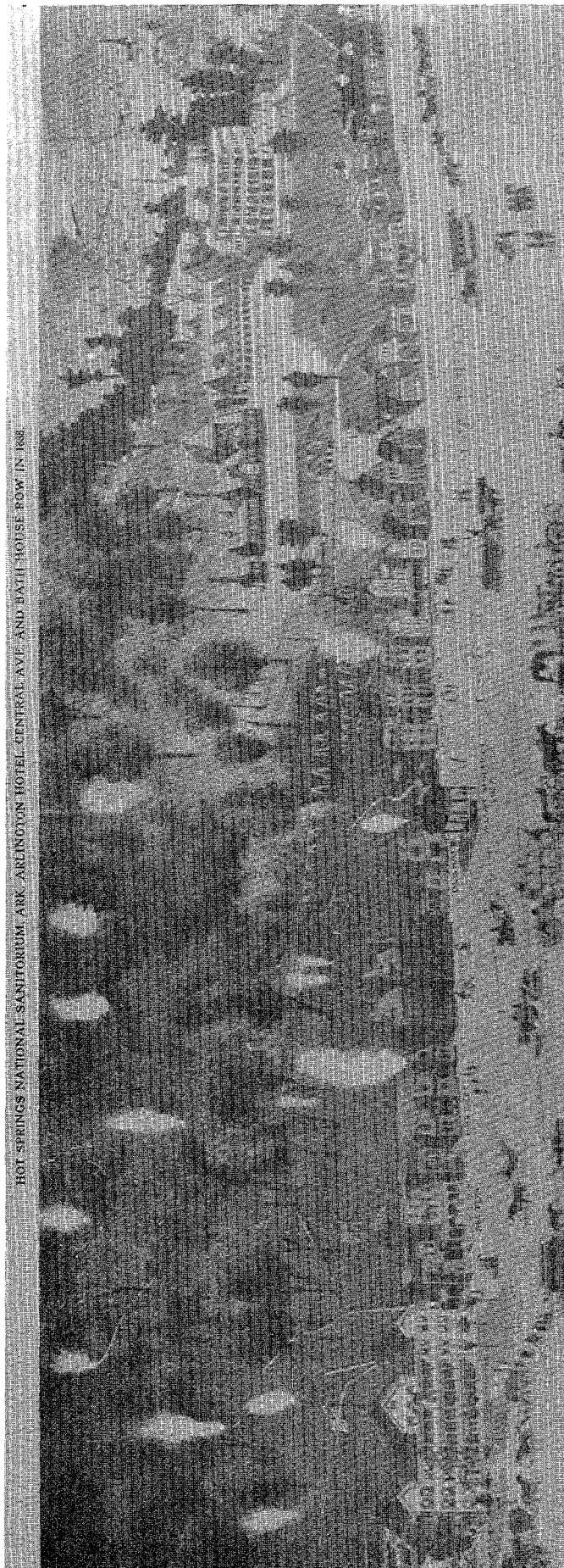


Figure 10. Following the devastating fire in March 1878, and the settlement of land claims against the federal government, the face of Hot Springs changed dramatically. Constructed in 1882, the Gothic-inspired Army and Navy Hospital (upper right) loomed on the mountainside above Bathhouse Row. The construction of the Creek Arch in 1884 provided a uniformity to Bathhouse Row in the new, elegant, spacious setback for the bathhouses. Finally, too, the wide walkway constructed on top of the Creek Arch separated pedestrians from the busy street and created an appropriate space for a popular Victorian pastime--promenading. (1888 rendering).

Arkansas History Commission

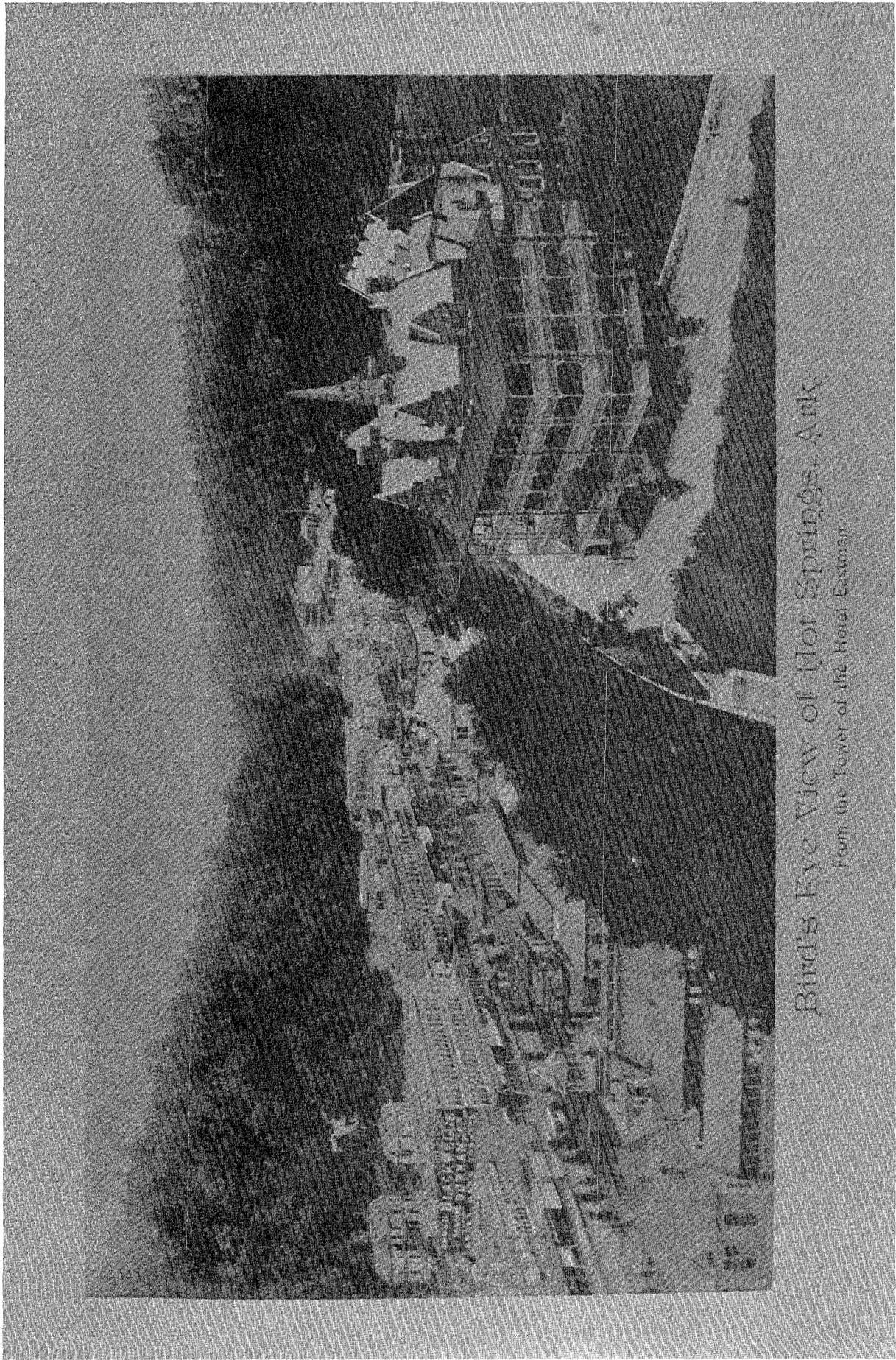




HOT SPRINGS NATIONAL SANATORIUM, ARK. ARLINGTON HOTEL, CENTRAL AVE. AND BATH HOUSE, POW IN 1888

Figure 11. By 1891, the approximate date of this photograph, brick building construction became commonplace. The Department of the Interior allowed only fireproof construction for new buildings on the reservation. The town also began adopting zoning laws and regulations concerning fireproof construction. Here the Gothic verticality of the brick Army and Navy Hospital towered above the bathhouses and Central Avenue businesses. Note the increase in brick construction throughout the town.

Arkansas History Commission



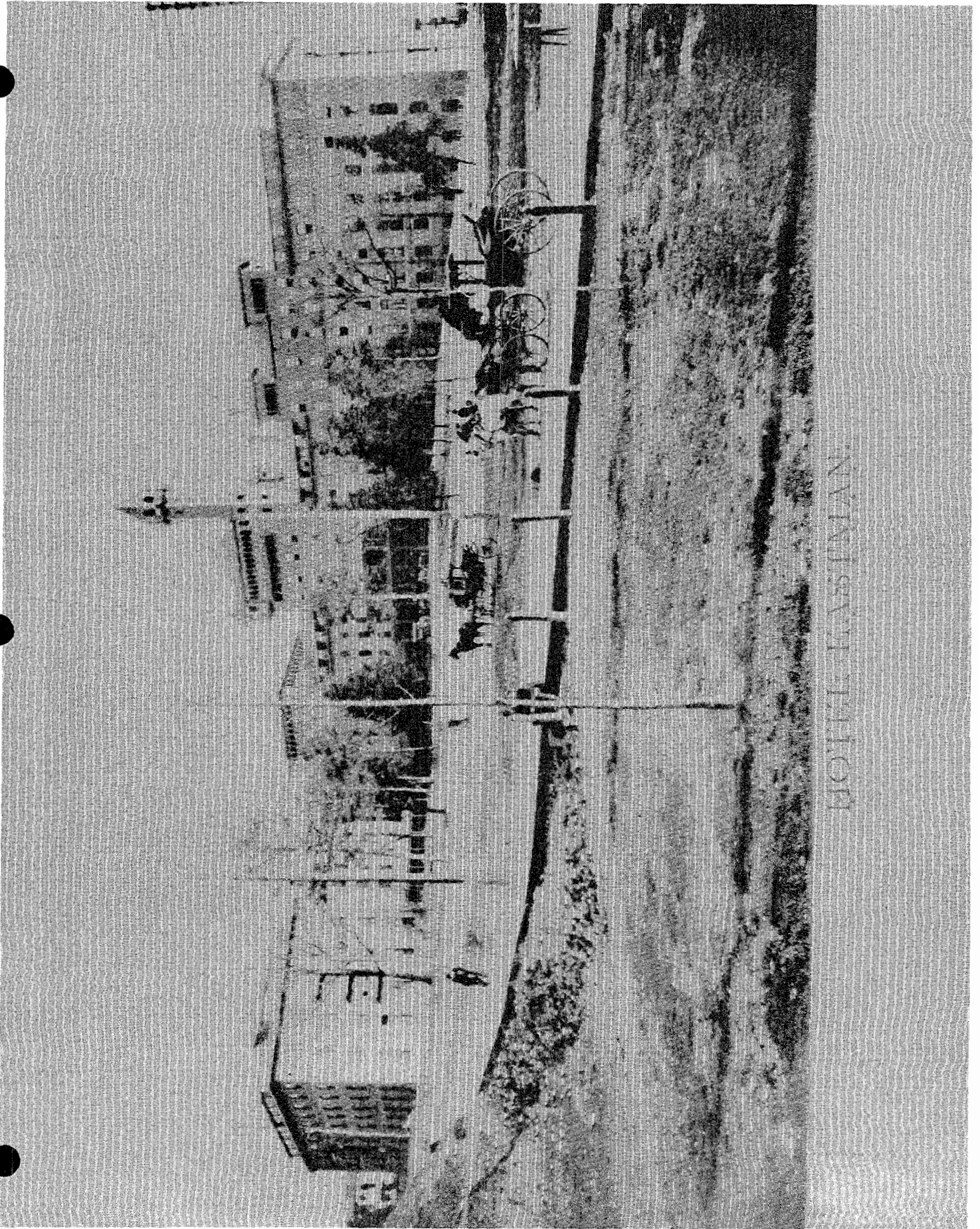
Bird's Eye View of Hot Springs, Ark.

From the Tower of the Hotel Eastman.

Figure 12. Once the largest hotel in the United States, the Hotel Eastman sported Spanish and Moorish elements in its design. The 300-room hotel boasted steam heat, electricity, and a minaret observatory for viewing "a magnificent cyclorama of mountain and vale and forest streams." Constructed in 1891, the hotel took up an entire city block directly south of Bathhouse Row.

Arkansas History Commission





HABSIYAN.

Figure 13. Constructed in 1893, the second Arlington Hotel contained 300 rooms. The paired observatory towers of the Spanish Renaissance revival structure dominated the north end of Bathhouse Row. The hotel provided numerous diversions for its guests, including three concerts every day. The architectural firm of McClure, Stewart, and Mullgardt of St. Louis designed the building. Louis Mullgardt left that firm shortly after the Arlington's construction and went to San Francisco, where he spent the rest of his productive career. Mullgardt, best known as a California architect, designed a number of major commercial and residential structures in the Bay Area, including the Court of the Ages for the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition and the M.H. de Young Memorial Museum.

Arkansas History Commission



7448. Arlington Hotel, Hot Springs, Ark.

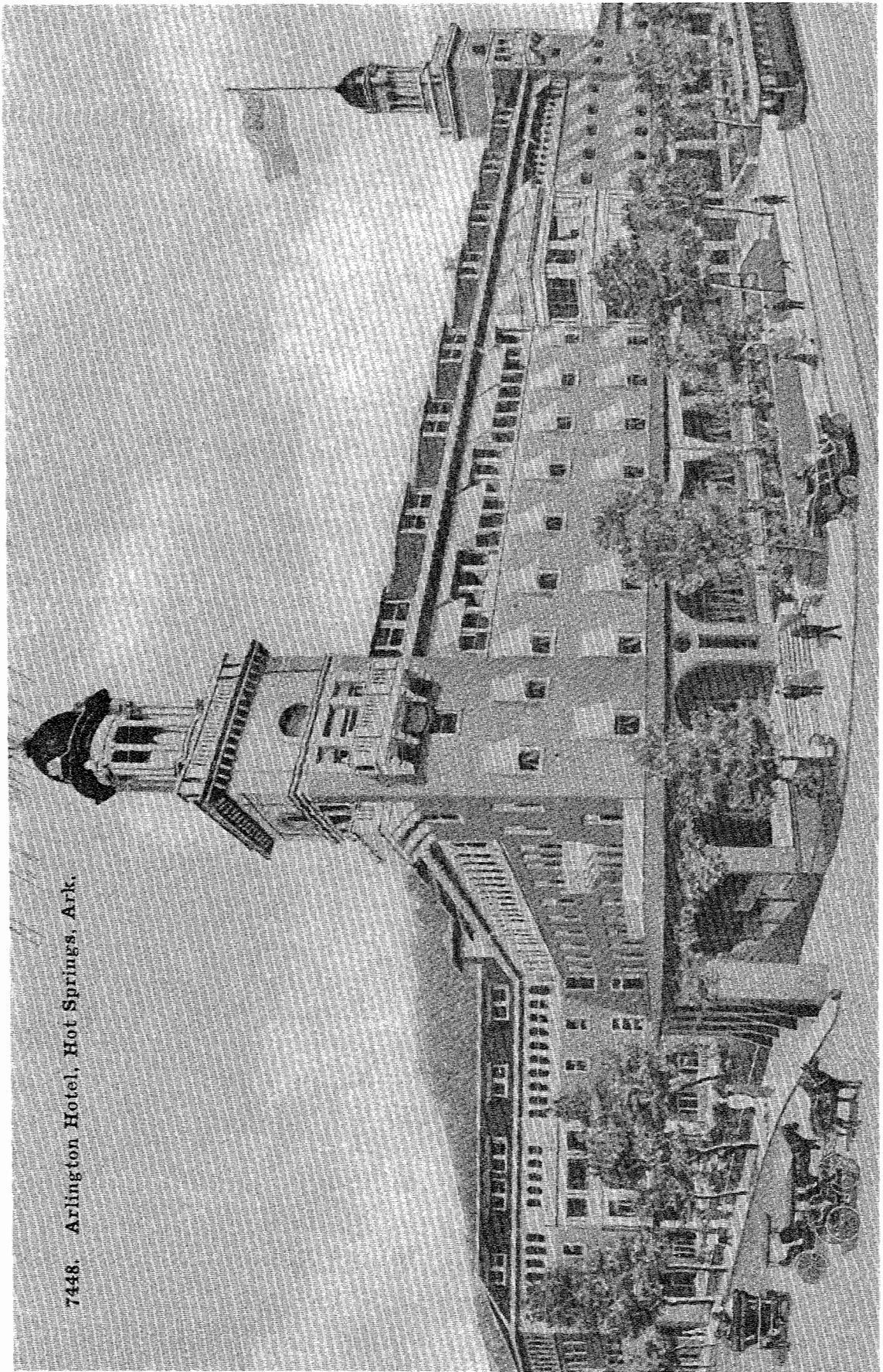
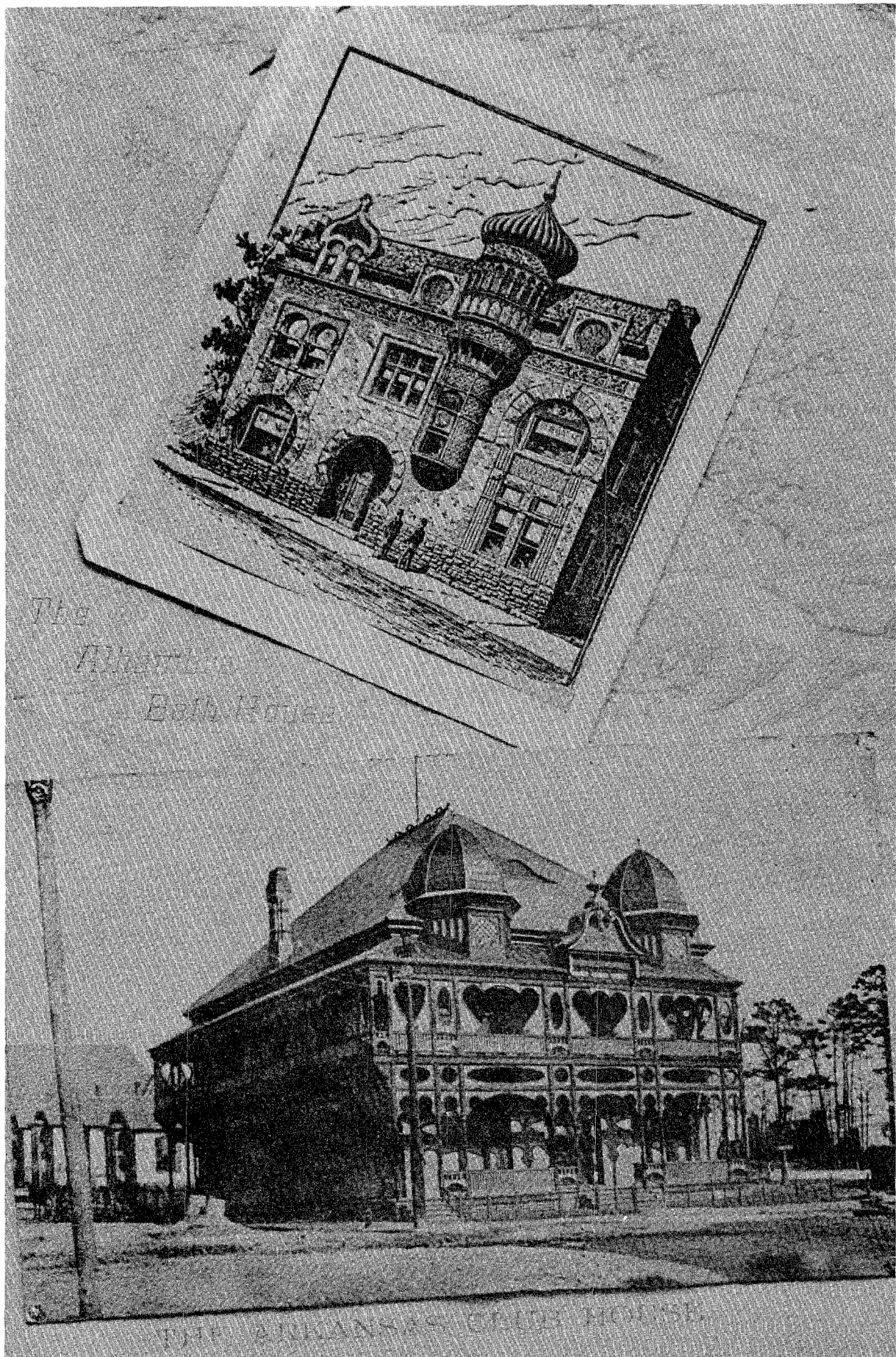


Figure 14. By the early 1890s Spanish and Moorish architectural elements appeared in the larger hotels such as the Eastman and the Arlington and in slightly smaller buildings such as the Alhambra Bathhouse and the Arkansas Clubhouse. A late Victorian preference for exoticism and the area's loose ties with the Soto expedition made this preference for Spanish allusions in architecture an obvious choice. (Photograph circa 1891.)

Arkansas History Commission





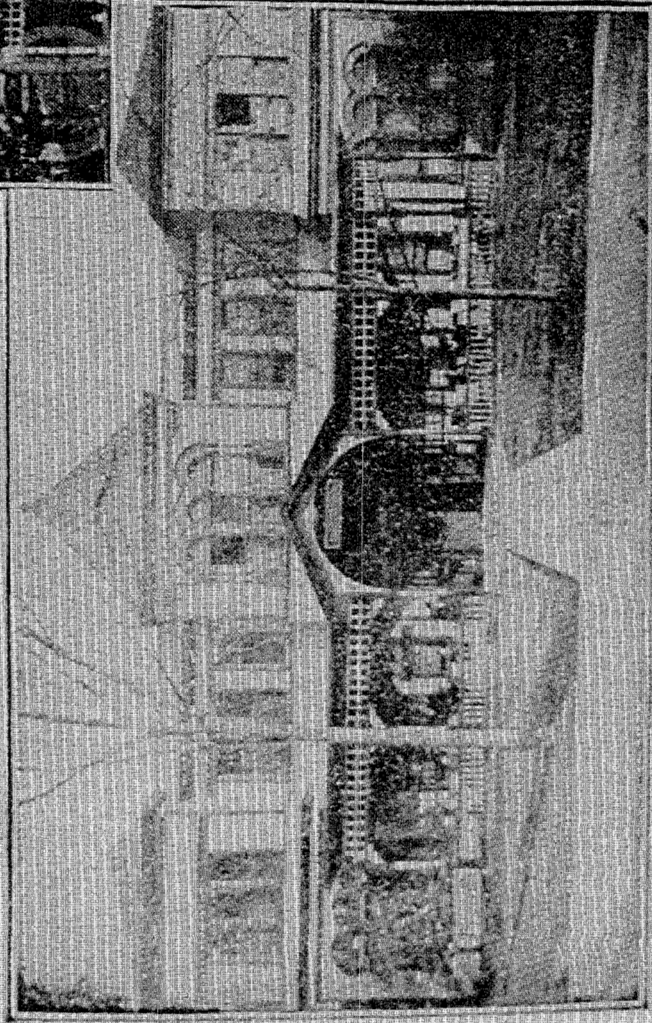
The  
Atlantic  
Ball House

THE ATLANTIC BALL HOUSE

Figure 15. Although the Magnesia Bathhouse favored the Romanesque Revival, the Horseshoe Bathhouse retained a Moorish feeling in its first-floor fenestration. (Photographs circa 1900.)

Arkansas History Commission

MAGNESA BATH HOUSE  
Owen Corrington, Manager.



HORSE SHOE BATH HOUSE  
Ed. S. Weaver, Manager.

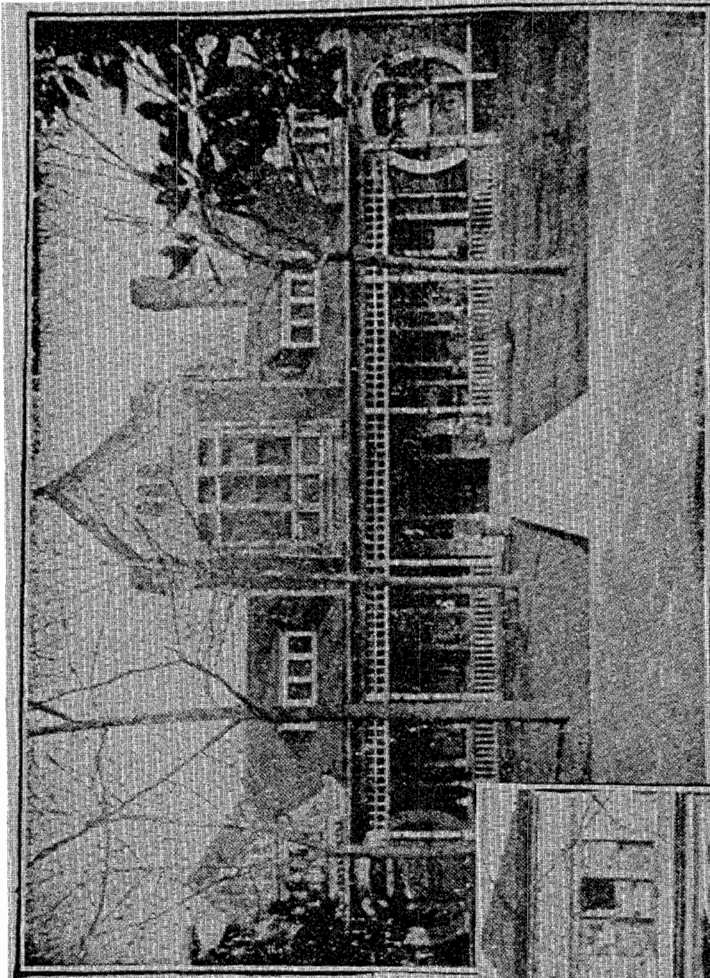


Figure 16. In its promotional literature, the Park Hotel emphasized its fireproof bathhouse and 10-acre park. Besides bathing in and drinking the waters, the "cure" at Hot Springs most often included pursuit of outdoor exercise to clear the head and tone the body. Here guests could enjoy the hotel's private, parklike setting in addition to the woodsy parks the federal reservation provided. (Rendering circa 1891.)

Arkansas History Commission



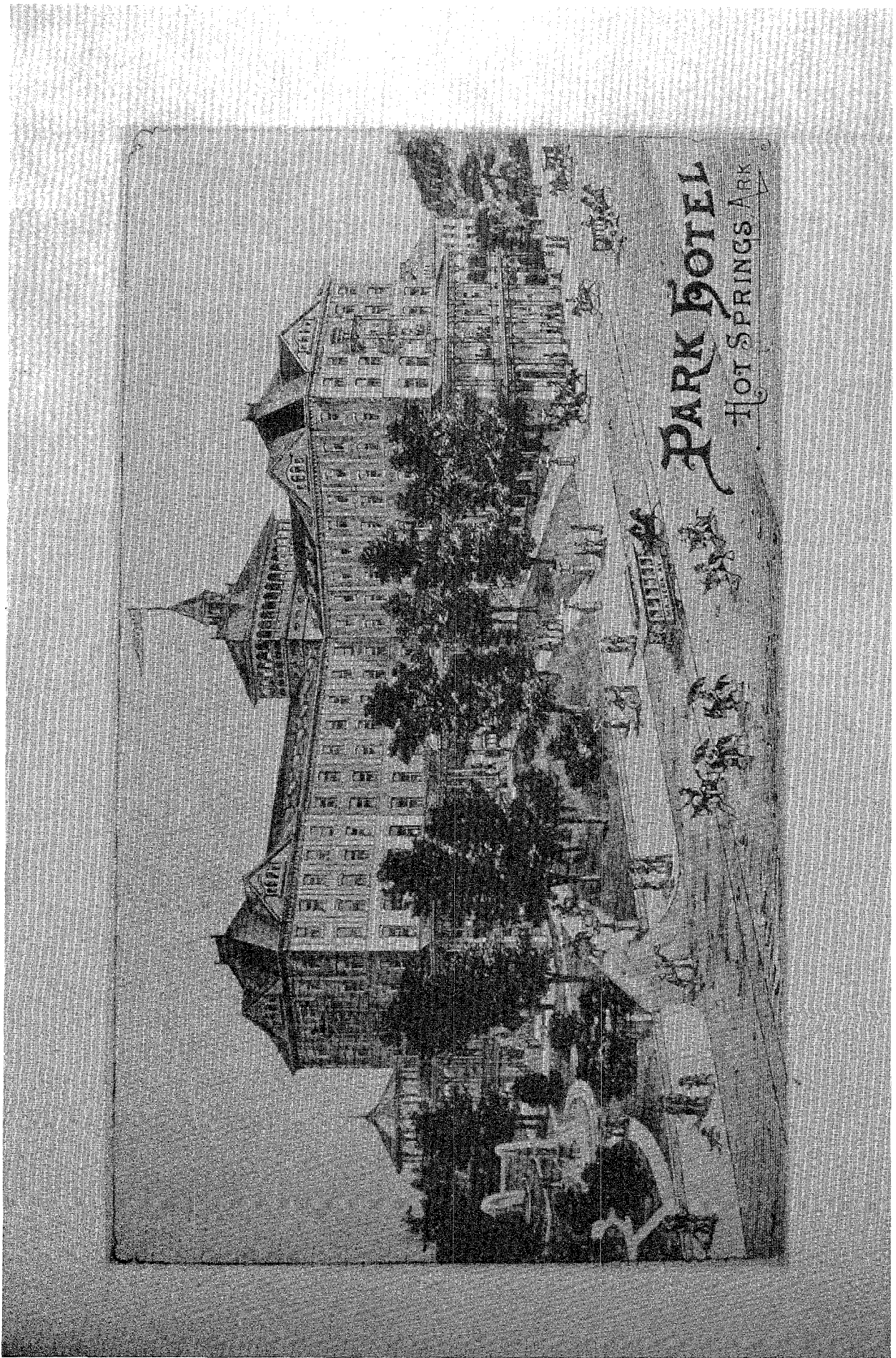


Figure 17. Changes to the reservation in the 1890s included a very formal approach to the landscape. Detailed from the War Department to accomplish this work, Lieutenant Robert Stevens of the 6th Infantry developed the first master plan for the area. He also oversaw the construction of this Grand Central Entrance topped with its Roman temple bandstand. (Photograph circa 1900.)

Arkansas History Commission

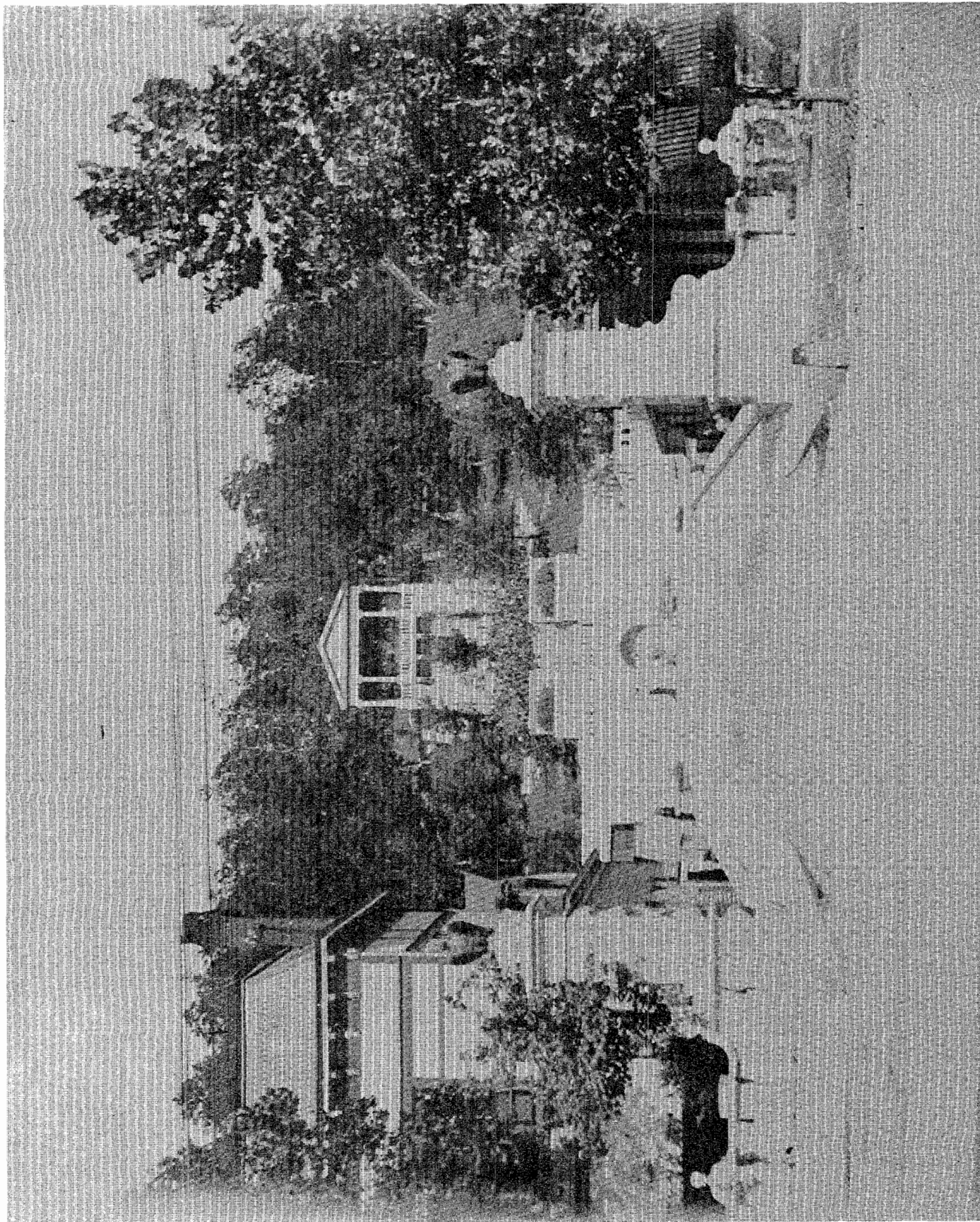


Figure 18. As shown in this idealized rendering, Bathhouse Row's formal character was well established by the first decade of the 20th century. Exedra fountains and stone columns capped with bronze eagles flanked the entrance and marked the formal axis leading to the Stevens Balustrade and bandstand. Creating a linear unity in front of the bathhouses, the wide cement sidewalk and handsome magnolia trees framed the Magnolia Promenade. (Rendering circa 1911.)

Arkansas History Commission



7445. Entrance to Government Reservation, Hot Springs, Ark.

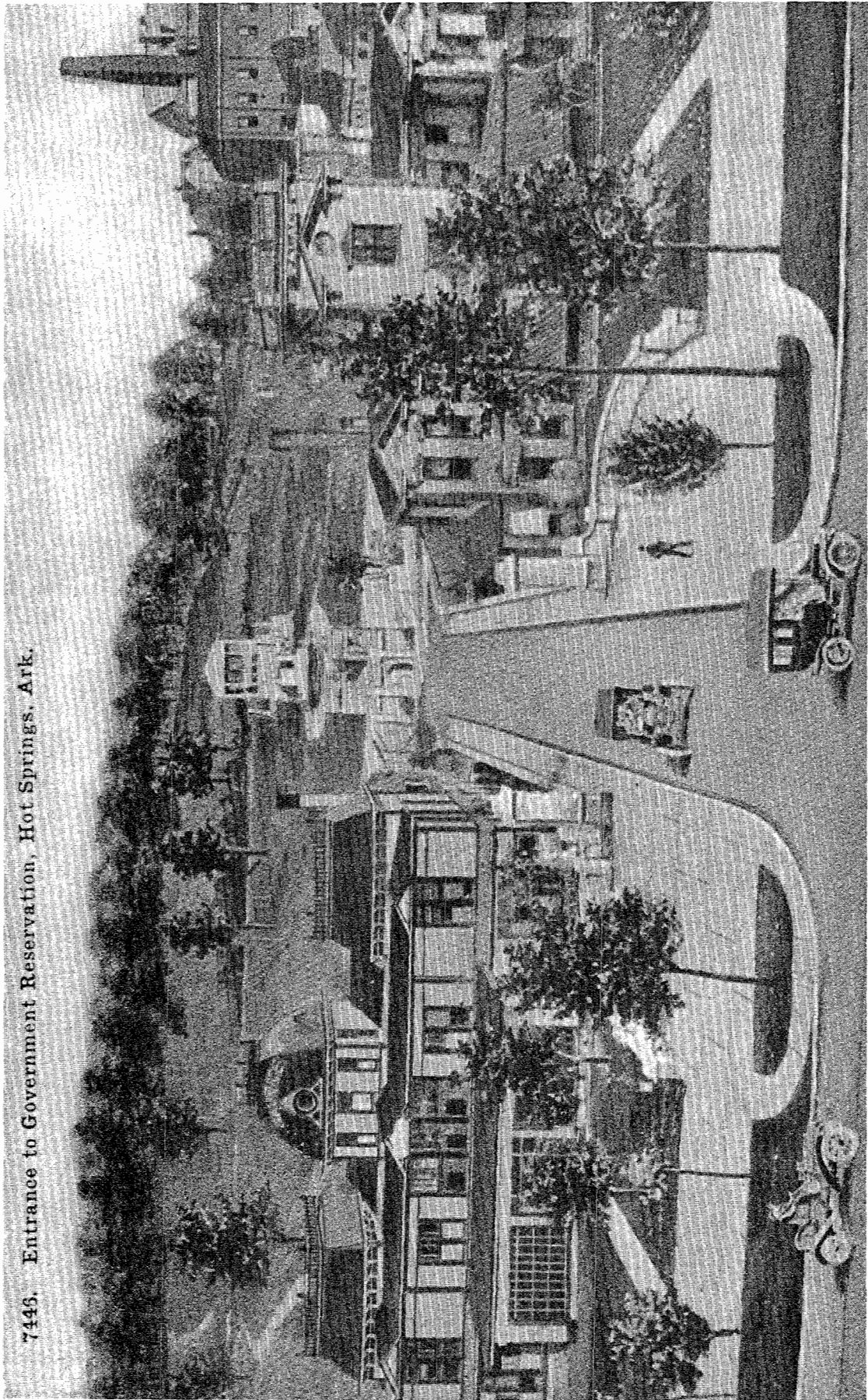
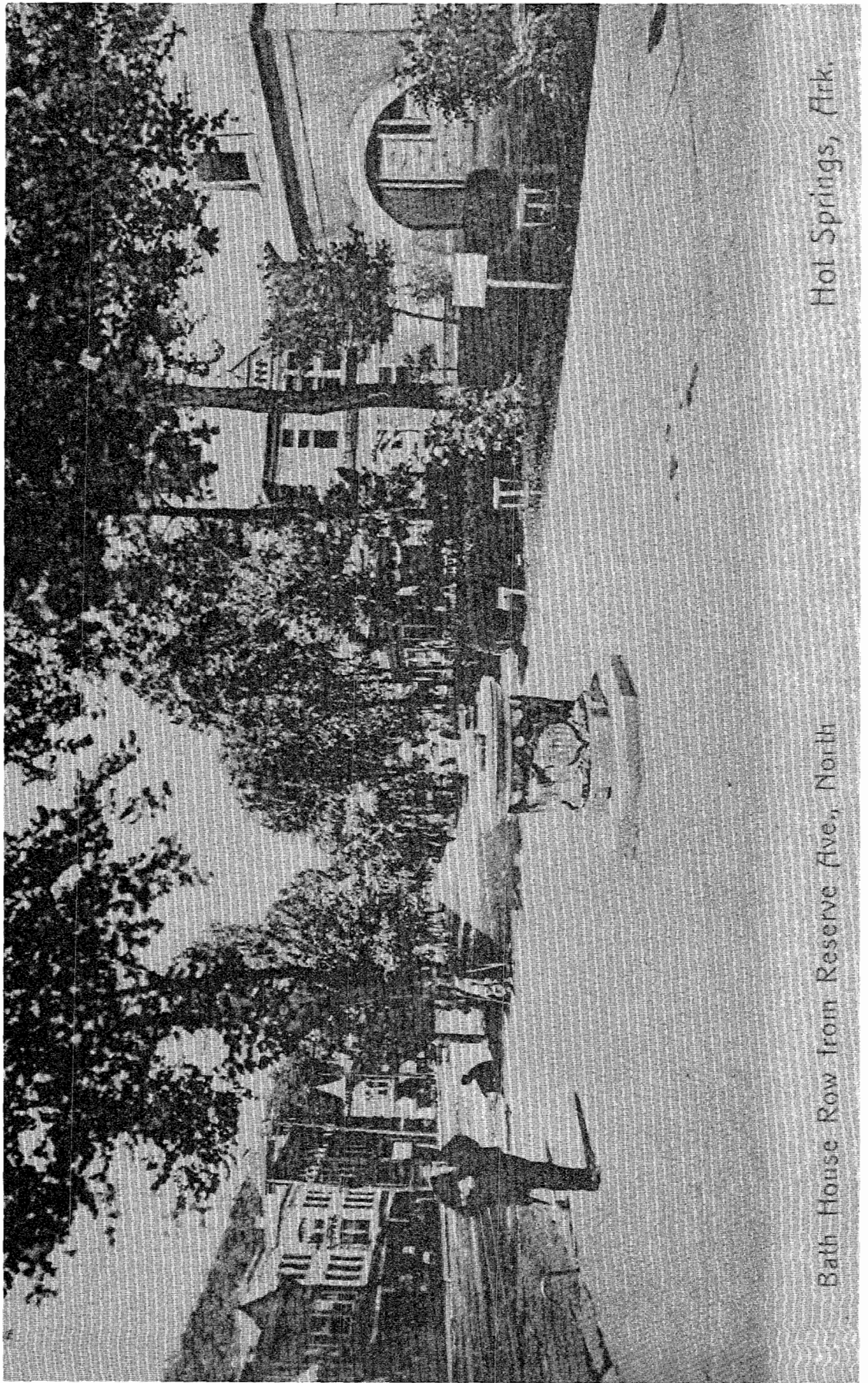


Figure 19. The Noble Fountain, along with several others spaced along Bathhouse Row, served the thermal waters to thousands daily. Originally at the southwest corner of Bathhouse Row, the fountain now graces the south entrance to the Grand Promenade. (Photograph circa 1915.)

Arkansas History Commission



Hot Springs, Ark.

Bath House Row from Reserve Ave., North

Figure 20. In 1895 author Stephen Crane commented on Hot Springs' cosmopolitan nature. To him it typified a cross-section of the United States better than any other town. He saw the northern, southern, eastern, and western regions of the nation represented in the town's architecture--from humble wooden structures to large brick commercial blocks. Note the twin towers of the second Arlington Hotel to the left of center. (Photograph circa 1900.)

Arkansas History Commission



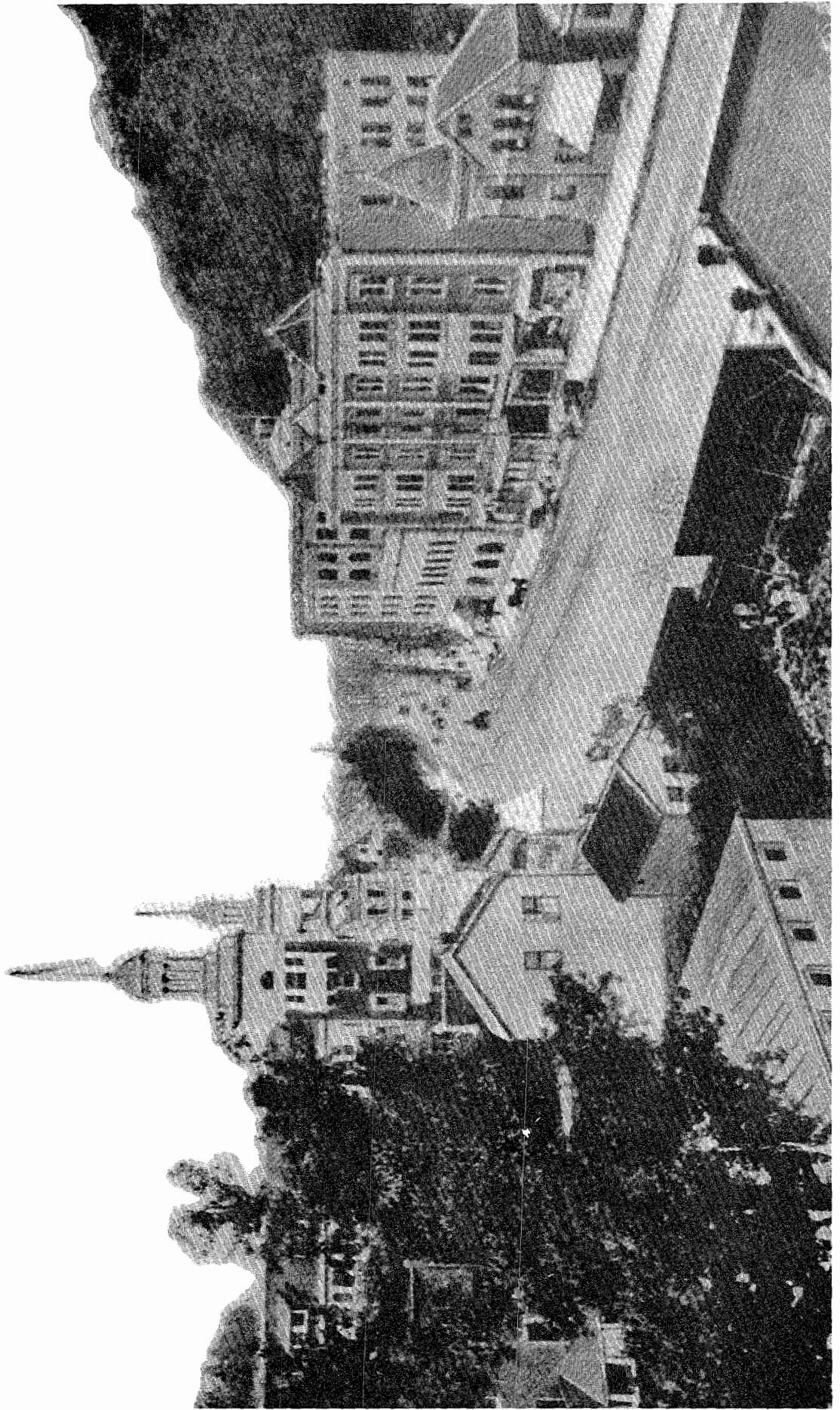
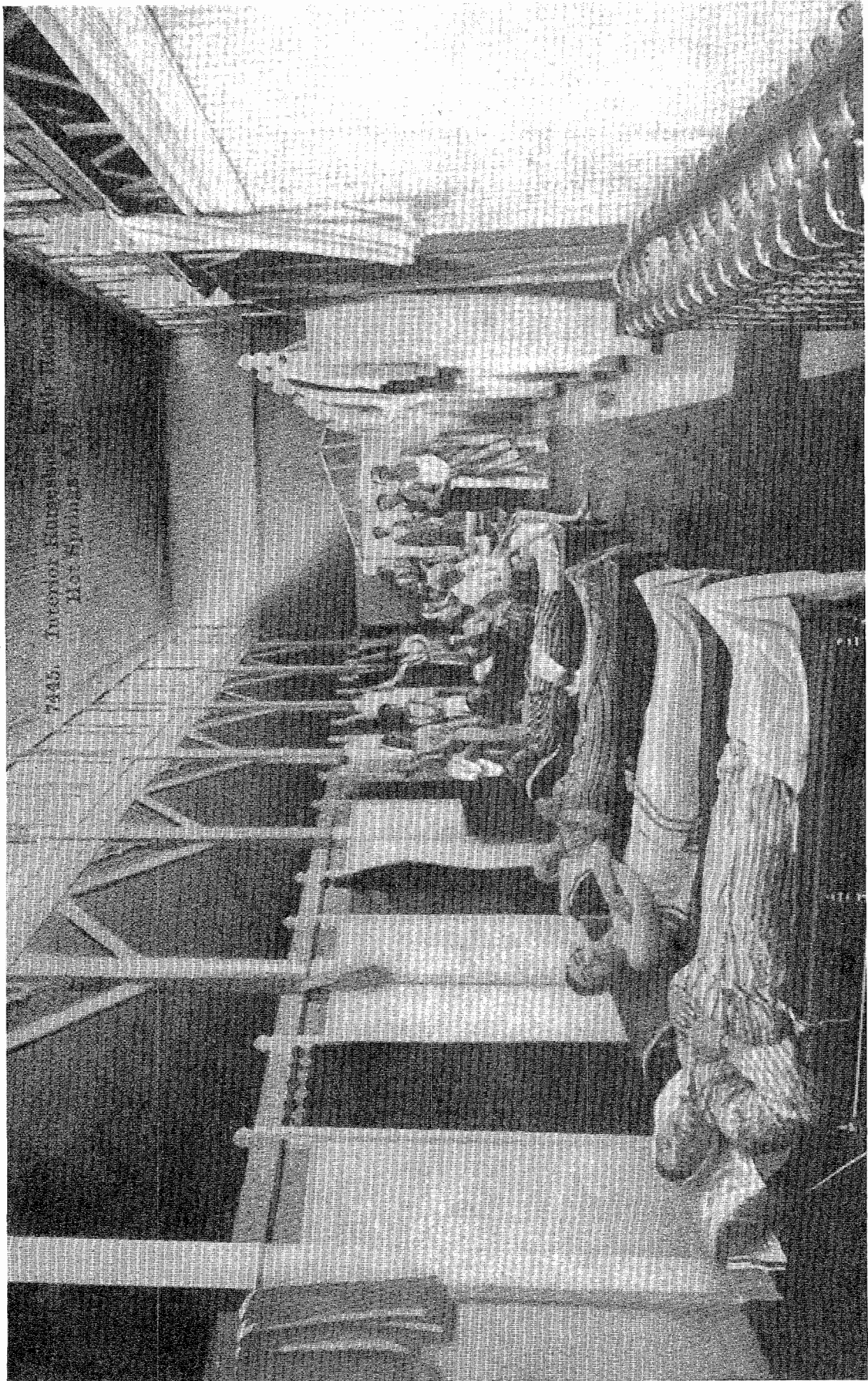


Figure 21. Author Stephen Crane noted that, in Hot Springs, "a man becomes a creature of three conditions. He is about to take a bath--he is taking a bath--he has taken a bath." Here in the crowded interior of a portion of the men's department at the Horseshoe Bathhouse, men partook of one of Crane's "conditions."

Arkansas History Commission



7445. Interior of the  
Hill Building

Figure 22. At the turn of the century Central Avenue took on its most cluttered appearance in history. Lines of the electric trolley cars, which had replaced the horse-drawn street railway, crowded the airspace above the avenue. Overhanging telephone lines added to the visual noise. The busy facades of the late Victorian bathhouses also contributed to the confusion.

Arkansas History Commission



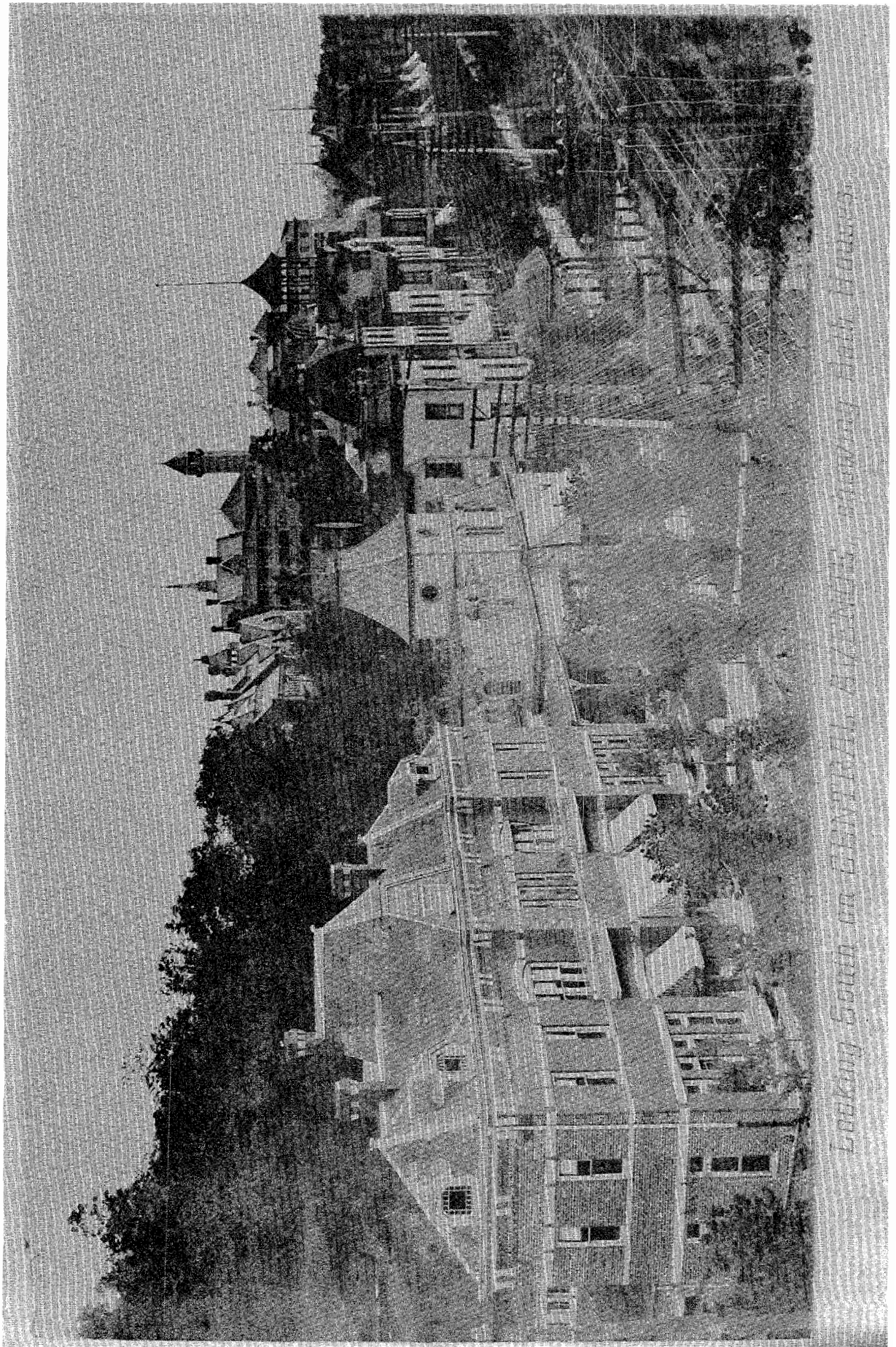


Figure 23. Originally erected for use as a pump house (circa 1890), this building fell into the hands of the National Park Service when the reservation became Hot Springs National Park in 1921. NPS Director Stephen T. Mather felt that this substantial and squat superintendent's office was an embarrassment to an agency that had forced its bathhouse lessees to construct handsome buildings. Mather believed that the Service should have an administration building in the same class as the bathhouses. The site of this building became the location for the new administration building in 1935. (Photograph circa 1925.)

Hot Springs National Park Photo Collection

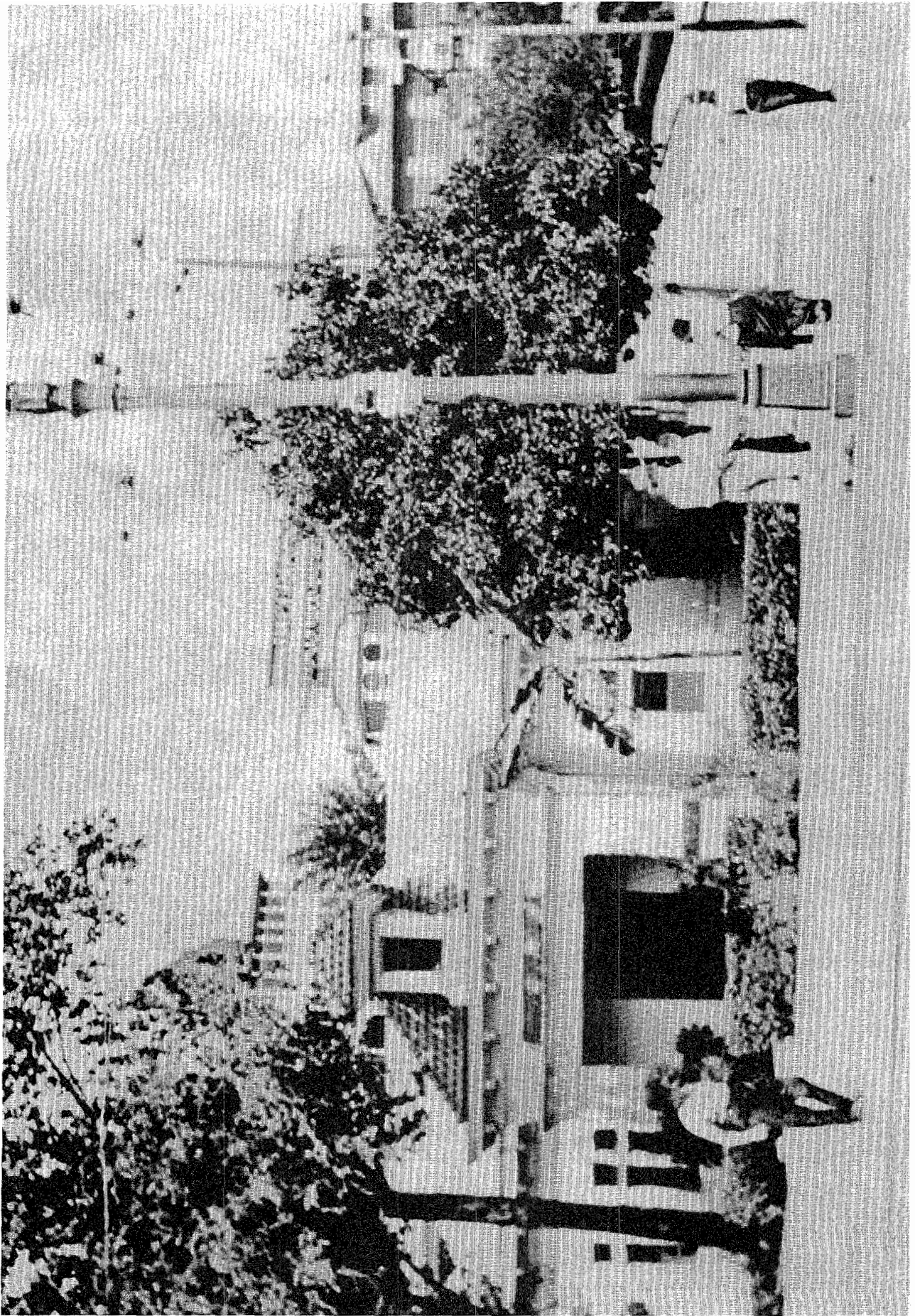


Figure 24. A huge fire destroyed the second Arlington Hotel on April 5, 1923. The site of the enormous hotel later became Arlington Park at the north end of Bathhouse Row.

Arkansas History Commission



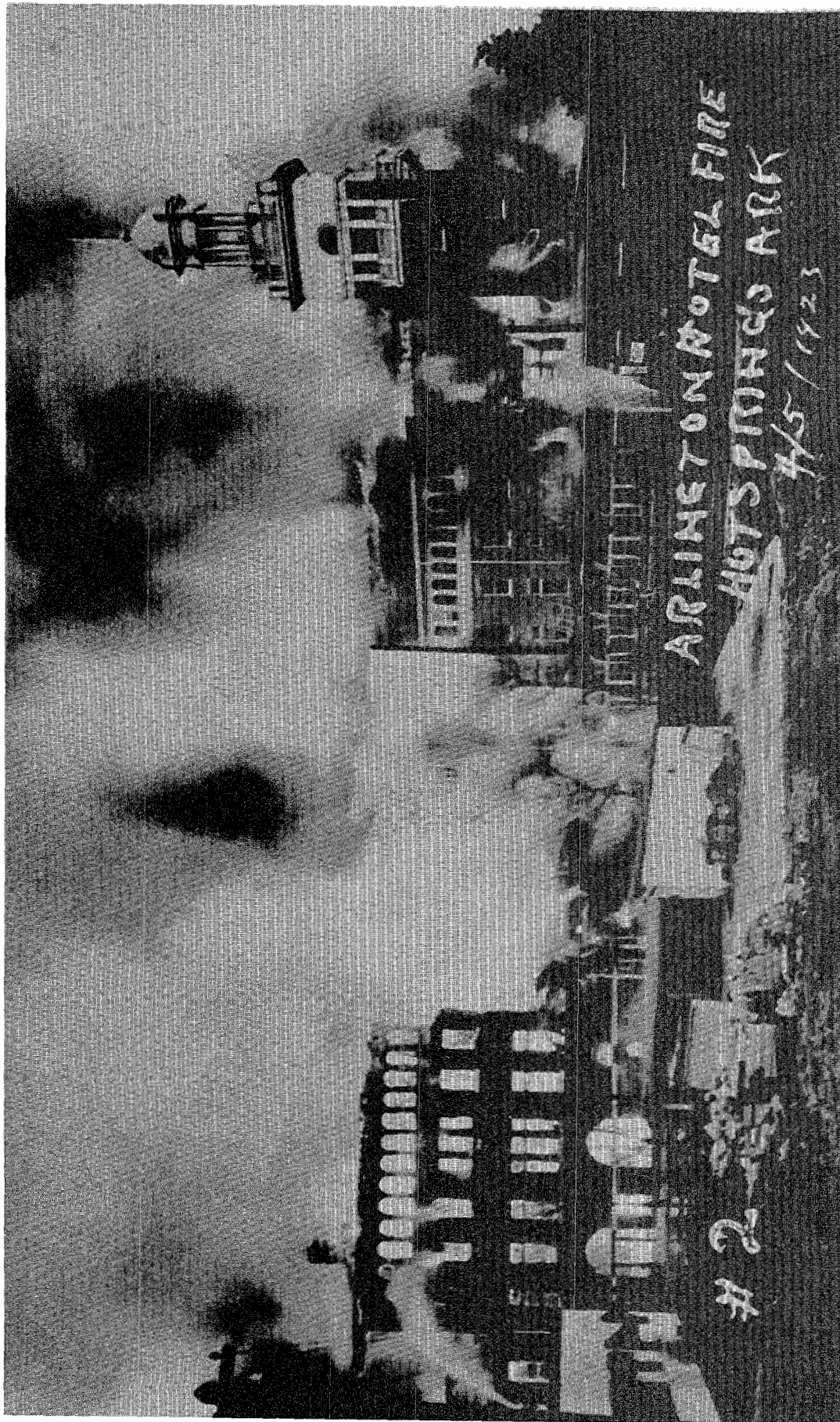


Figure 25. The architectural firm of Mann and Stern designed the third Arlington Hotel. Constructed in 1925 in a "Y" junction formed by Central Avenue and Fountain Street, the Spanish-inspired landmark accomplished two significant architectural functions. The hotel anchored the north end of Bathhouse Row and Hot Springs' central business district, and it completed the vista looking north on Central Avenue in an elegant fashion.

National Park Service photo by Laura Soulliere Harrison, 1986.

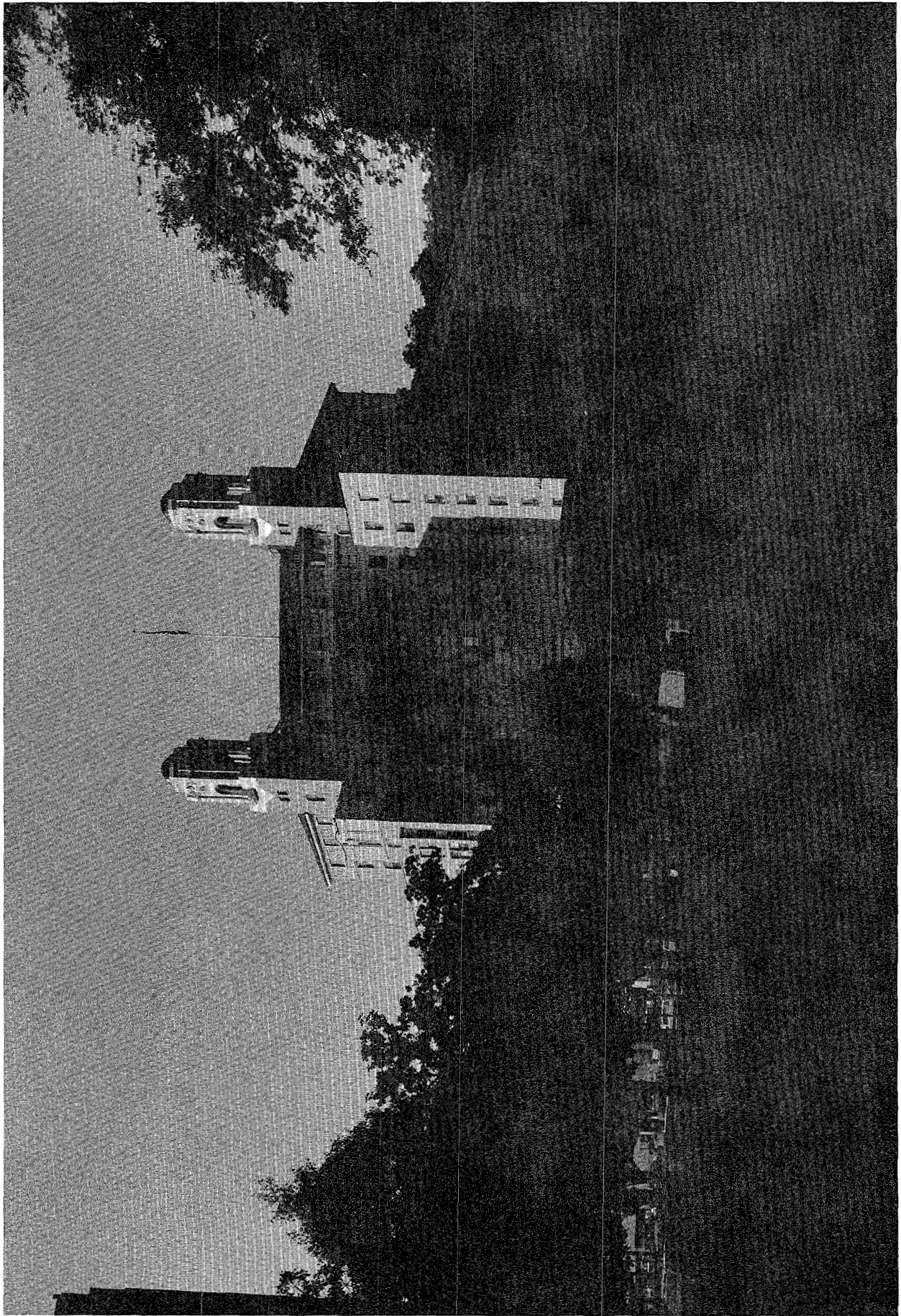


Figure 26. Completed in 1933, the Army and Navy Hospital (now the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center) dwarfed the buildings on Bathhouse Row. Its enormous size was consistent with that of the Hotel Eastman to the south. The Spanish elements in its design harmonized with those found in the Arlington, the Eastman, and several of the bathhouses.

National Park Service photo by Laura Soulliere Harrison, 1986.



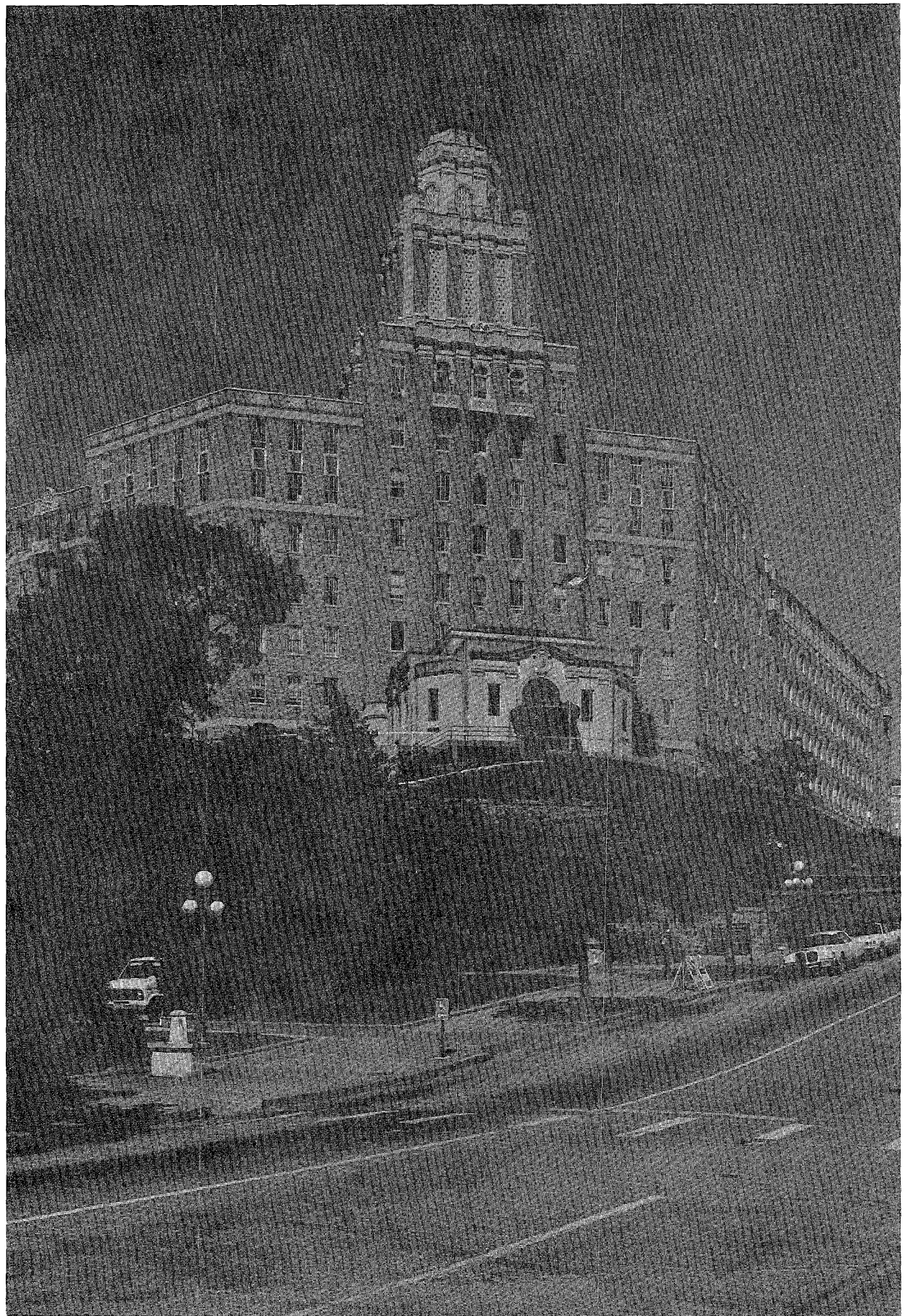


Figure 27. With its wrought-iron balconies and window grates, baroque entrance, and tile roof, the new administration building created a visual link between the Army and Navy Hospital and Hotel Eastman and between Bathhouse Row and the Arlington around the corner. NPS architect Charles Peterson recognized the importance of this building's pivotal location and incorporated specific features in the design to tie the structure into its urban setting. For instance, he designed the building's main entrance facing Reserve Avenue rather than Central Avenue to visually connect the structure to the Army and Navy Hospital and the Eastman and to provide an appropriate western edge to the Grand Promenade's entrance.

National Park Service photo by Laura Soulliere Harrison, 1986.



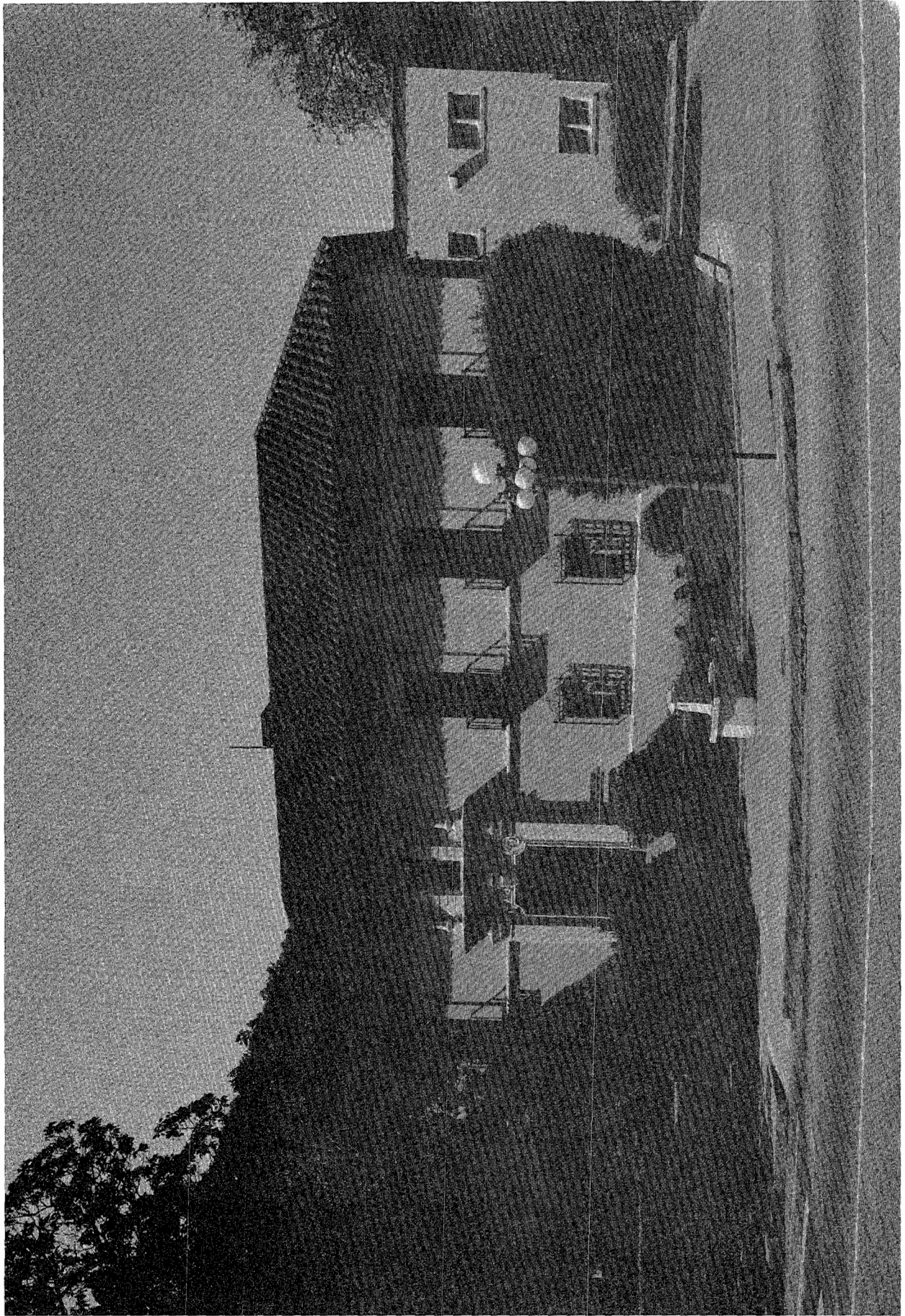


Figure 28. The enormous size of the Army and Navy Hospital (right) dwarfed the other structures around it. Yet from a pedestrian point of view along Central Avenue, Bathhouse Row and the backdrop of trees along the Grand Promenade hid the structure from sight. (1950s photograph.)

Arkansas History Commission

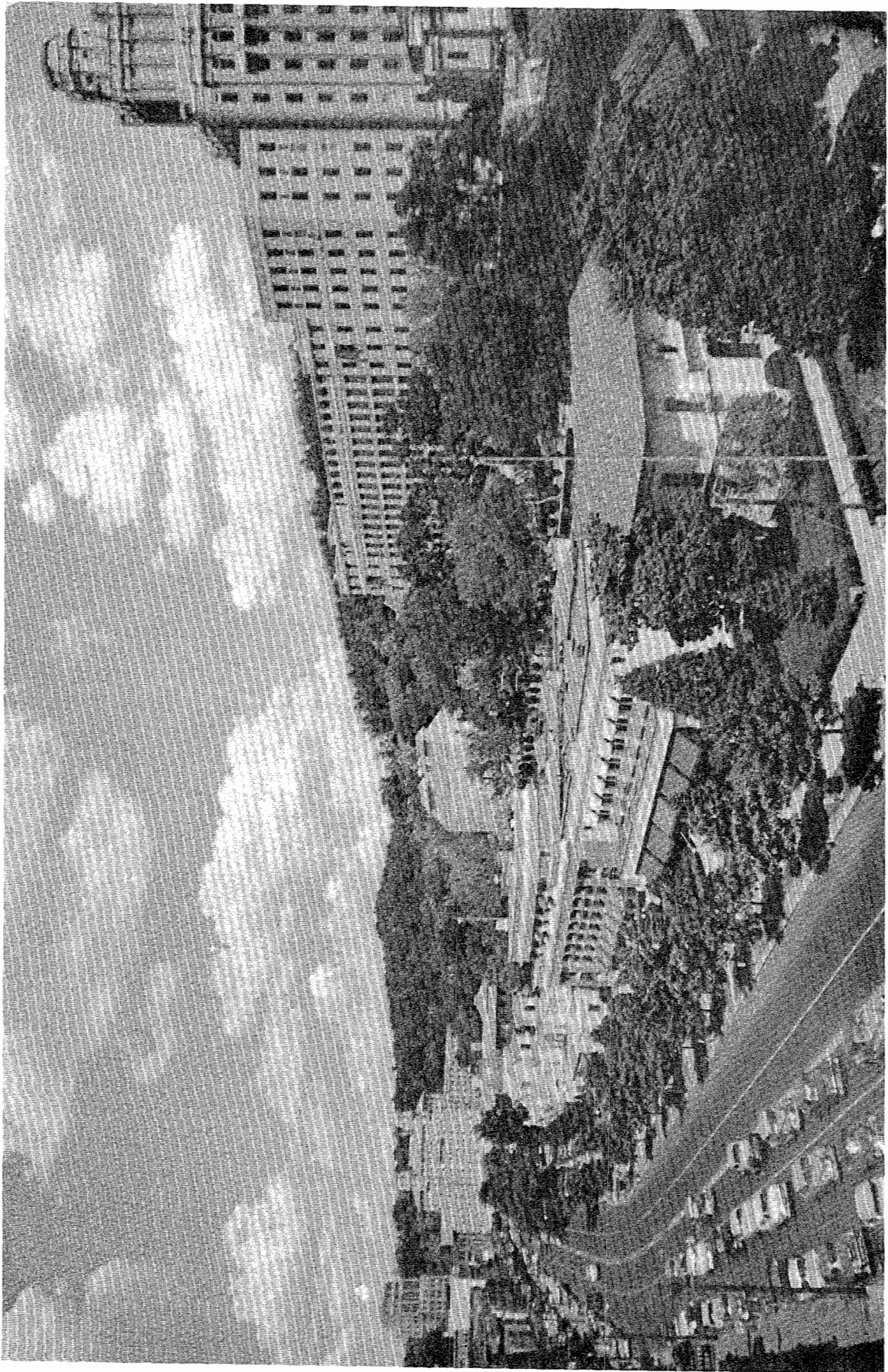


Figure 29. Designed by Frank W. Gibb of Little Rock, the neoclassical Buckstaff Bathhouse received lavish praise because of its resemblance to the Irish House of Parliament. Built in 1912, the structure possessed a formal ambience with strong classical allusions. (Photograph circa 1920.)

Arkansas History Commission



Buckstaff Baths, U. S. Reservation,  
Hot Springs, Ark.

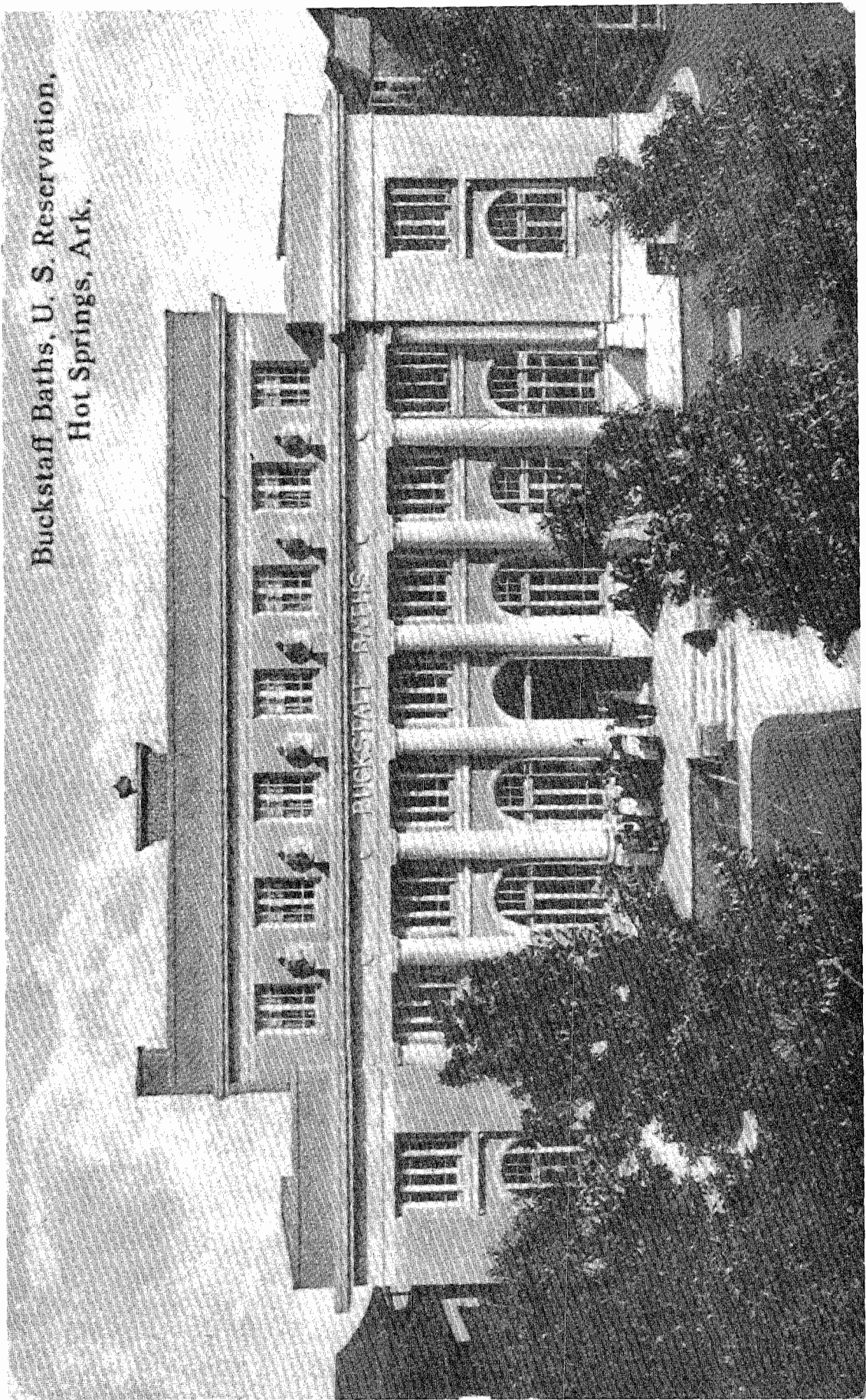


Figure 30. In 1916 the architectural firm of Mann and Stern redesigned the Hale Bathhouse. They gutted the old 1892-93 structure and rebuilt major portions of walls. Then they changed the look of the building to one of Beaux-Arts classicism, and they redesigned and updated the interior. In the late 1930s the firm of Thompson, Sanders, and Ginocchio again redesigned the building and turned it into a Mission Revival structure. (Photograph circa 1920.)

Hot Springs National Park Photo Collection.



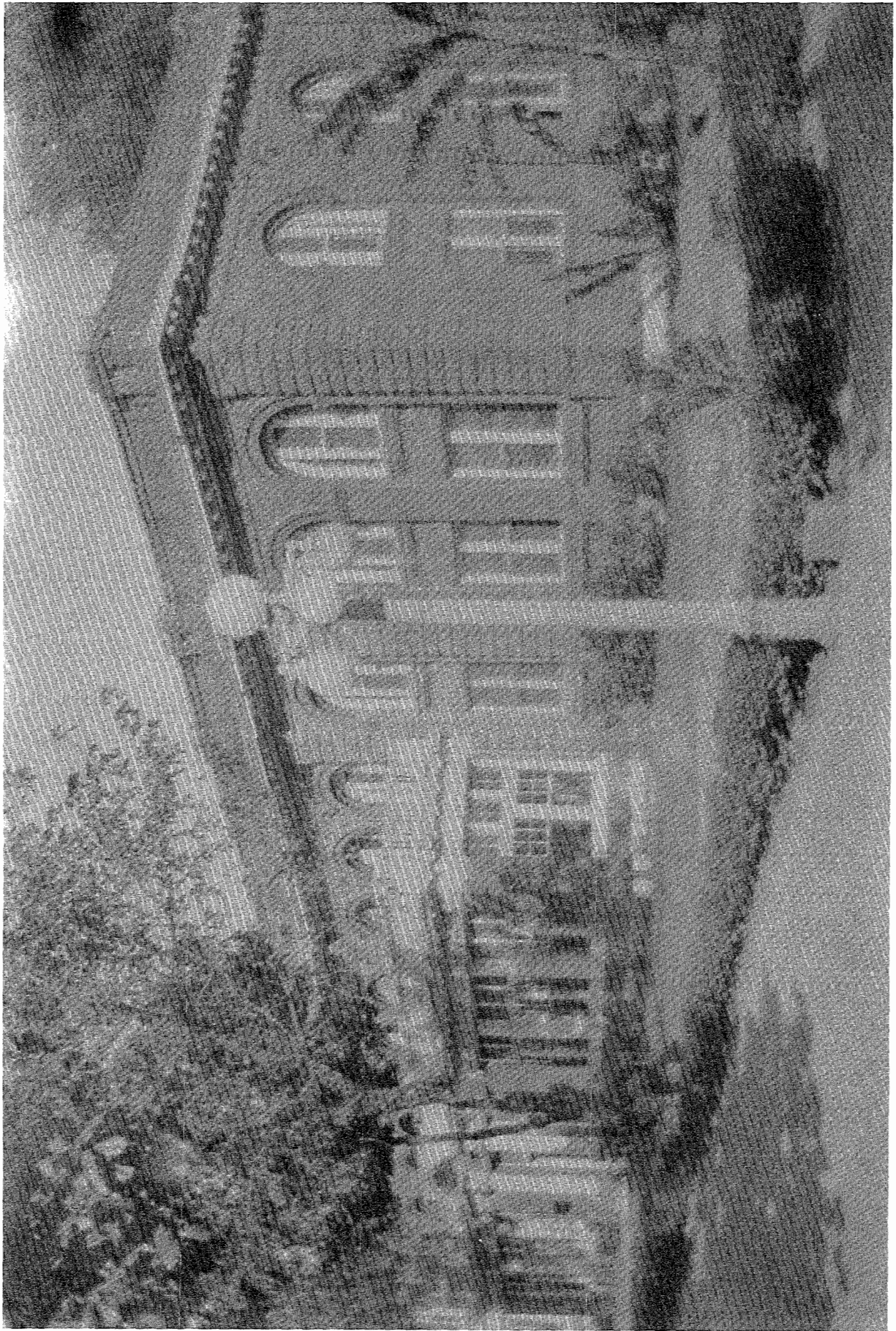


Figure 31. Completed in 1915, the Fordyce Bathhouse possessed the most ornate exterior on Bathhouse Row. The owners hoped to attract a wealthy clientele, so they hired Mann and Stern to design a luxurious building. Spanish and Italianate elements gave the building a distinct character.

Arkansas History Commission.

FORDYCE BATHS.

JNO. F. MANIER, MGR.

HOT SPRINGS NATIONAL PARK.

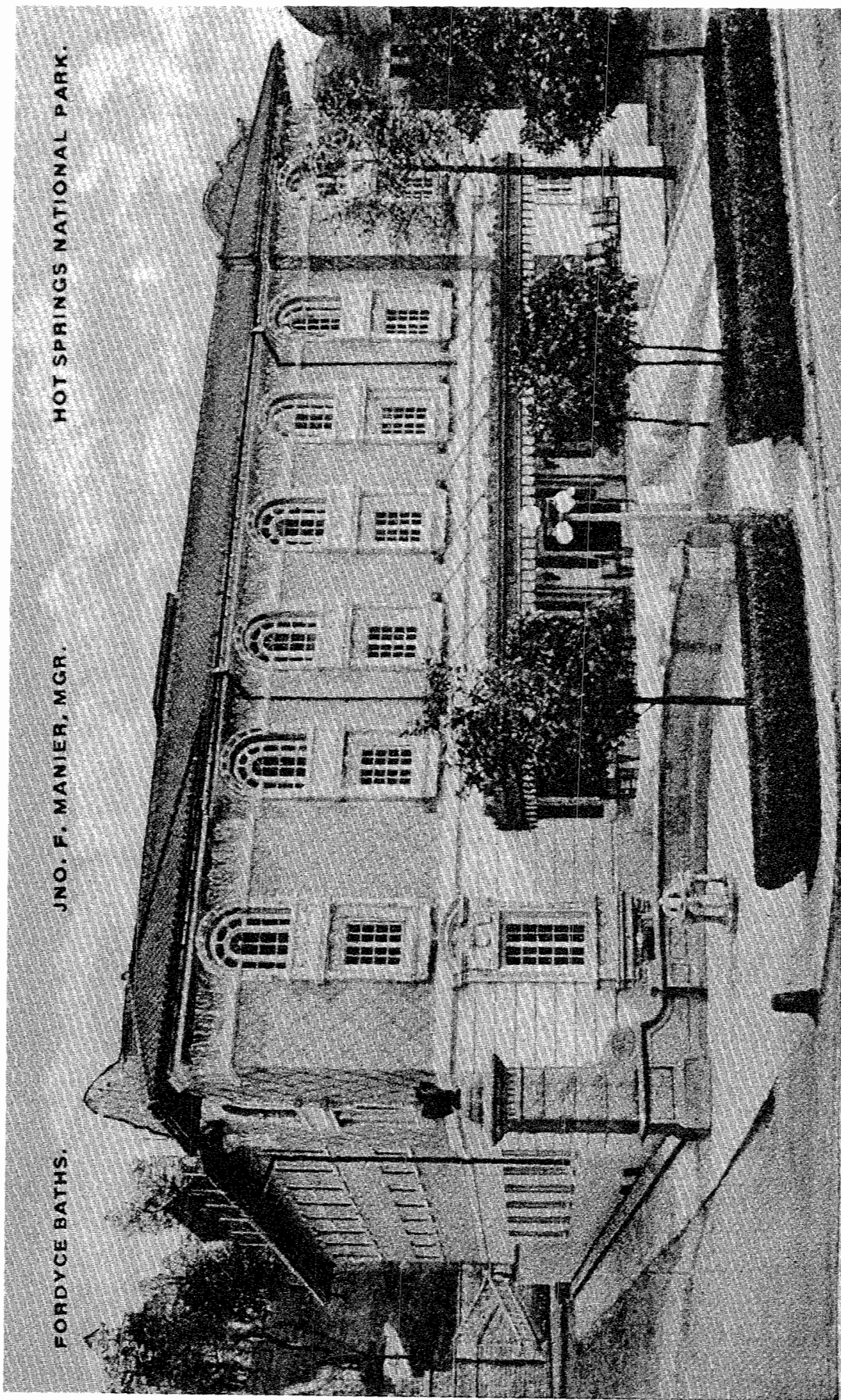


Figure 32. The marble partitions, stained glass skylight, and De Soto Fountain in the men's bath hall show the level of elegance attained in the Fordyce Bathhouse.

Hot Springs National Park Photo Collection.



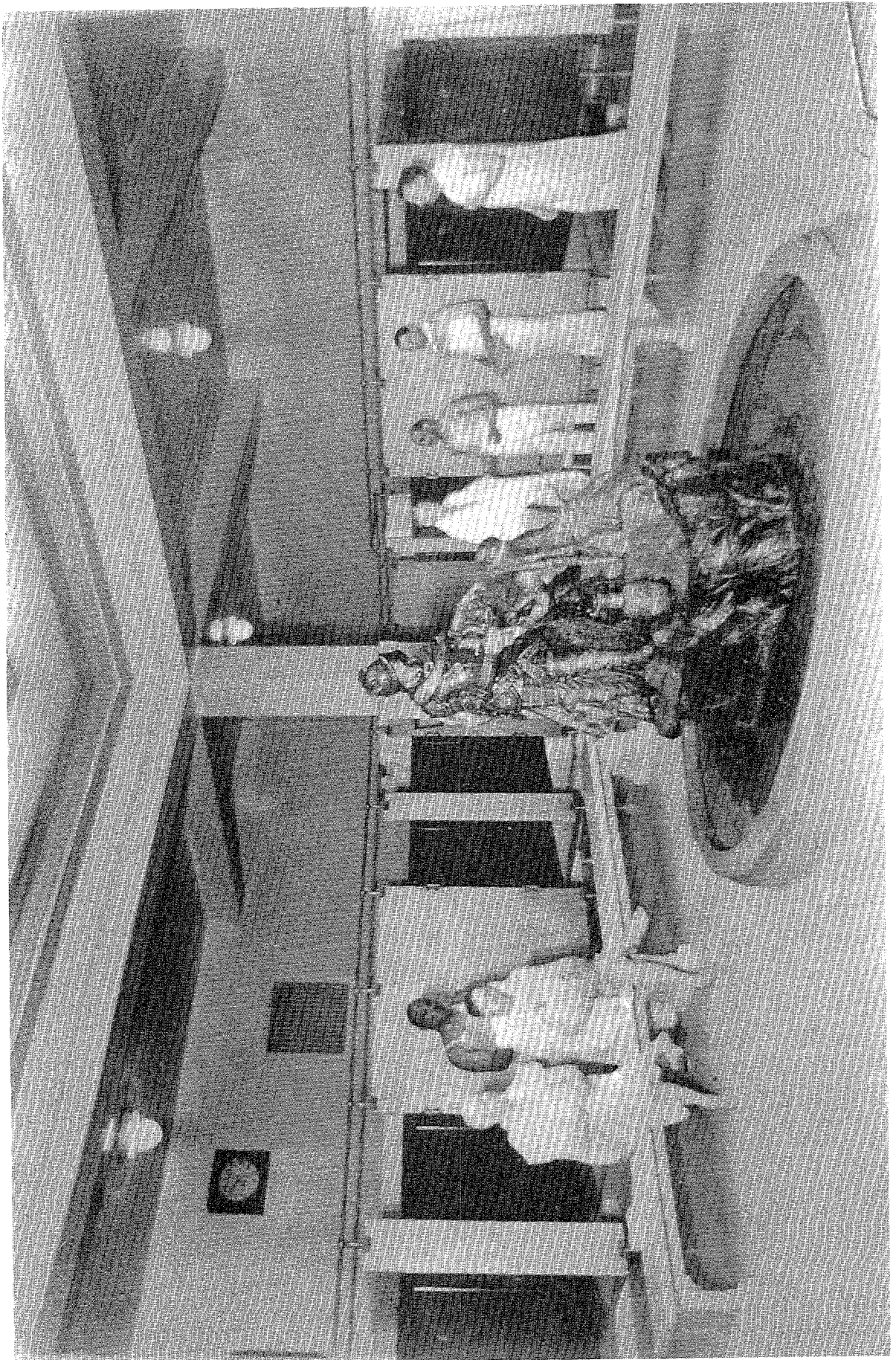


Figure 33. To compete with the amenities the Fordyce provided, Bathhouse owner Billie Maurice updated the interior of the Maurice Bathhouse in 1915. The new Roycroft Den provided an architectural space derived out of Elbert Hubbard's arts-and-crafts Roycrofters movement. The reverse of this postcard read:

The Roycroft Den. This is the most unique and artistic room in America. The size is 23 x 60 ft., red tile floor, walnut wainscotting, with art glass panel ceiling. The frieze picture "Holland Life" is by the well-known artist Frederick Warnecke. The large homey cobblestone fireplace, and the comfortable Roycroft furnishings make it an ideal rest room. The croquet billiard table, latest magazines and victrola furnish entertainment for our guests.

Arkansas History Commission.

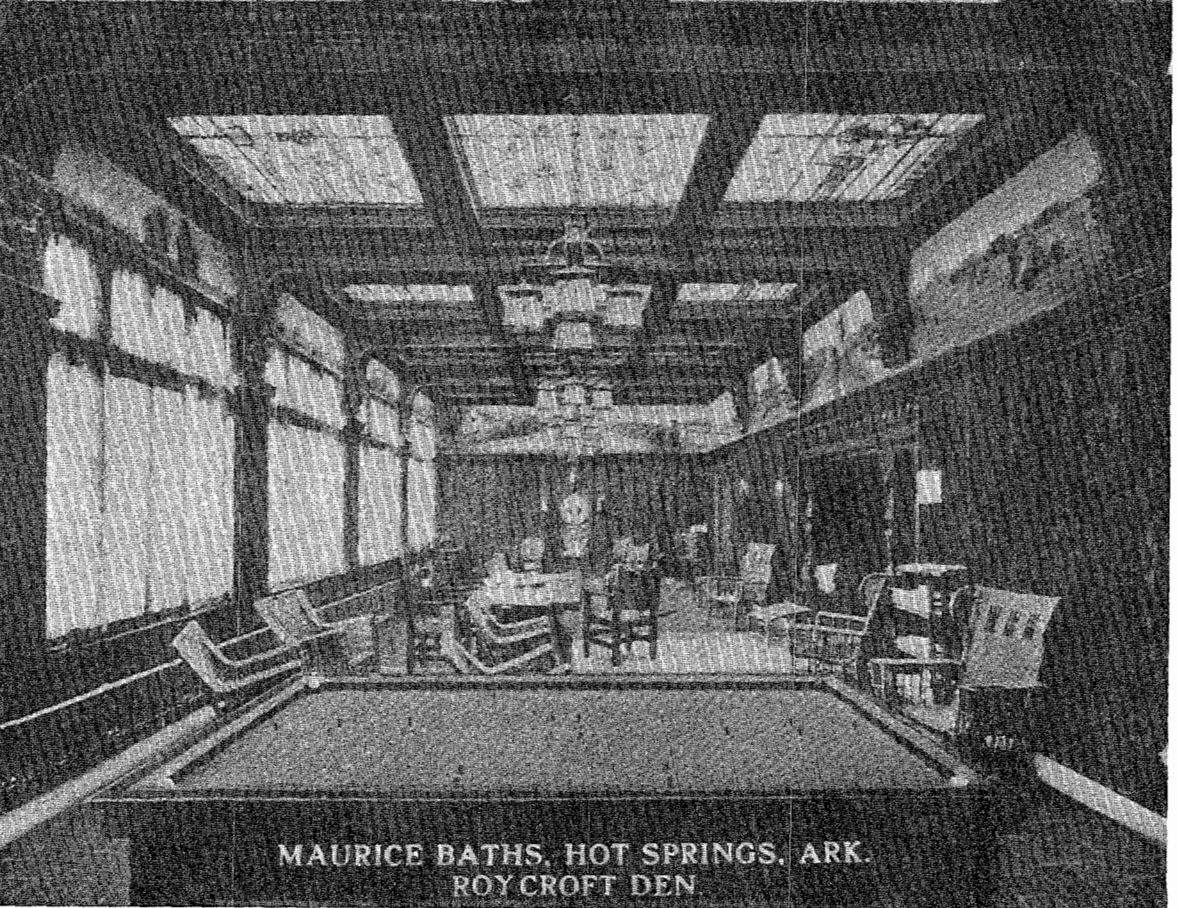
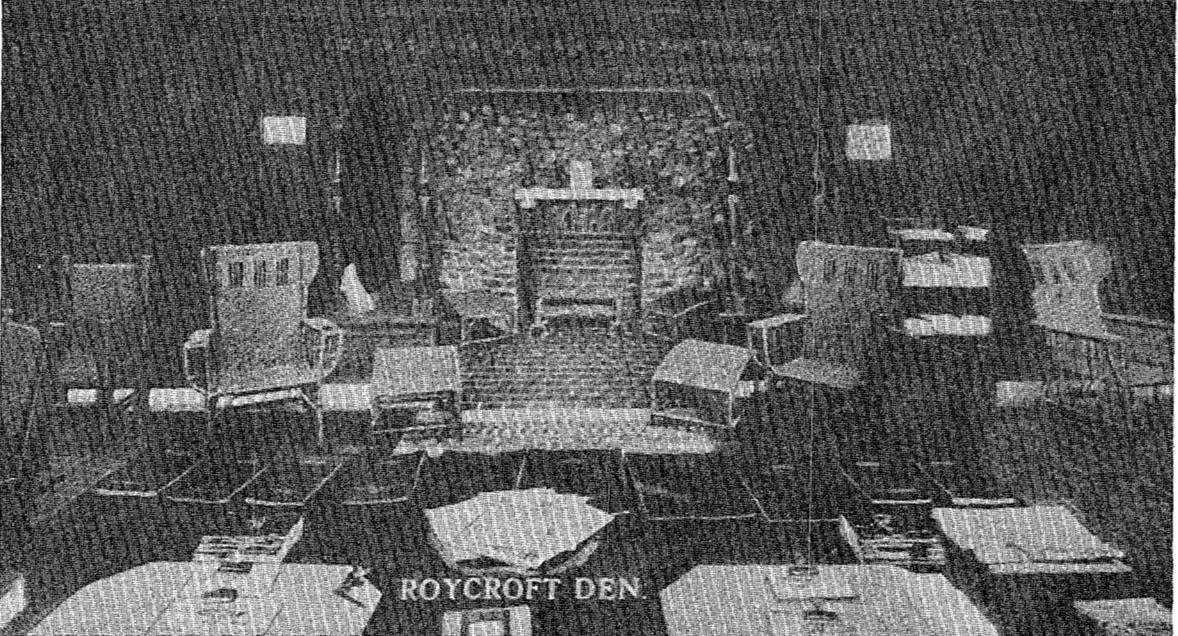
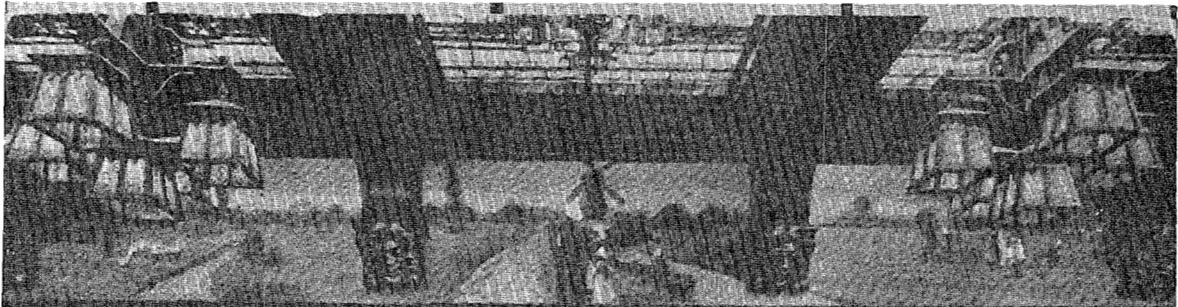


Figure 34. Designed by architect Harry Schwebke, the Superior Bathhouse possessed a strictly commercial facade which was of little impact when compared with the Fordyce and the Maurice. The Superior was constructed in 1916.

Arkansas History Commission.



B. D. RAPLEY  
MANAGER



# Superior Baths

Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas

UNDER SUPERVISION OF U. S. GOVERNMENT

Figure 35. Mann and Stern designed the Government Free Bathhouse in 1922 to serve the indigent. Lack of space on Bathhouse Row and, undoubtedly, political pressure to remove indigents from the sight of wealthier patrons forced construction of this handsome Greek Revival building on Reserve Avenue.

H.W. Lix photo for the WPA Federal Writers' Project. Arkansas History Commission.



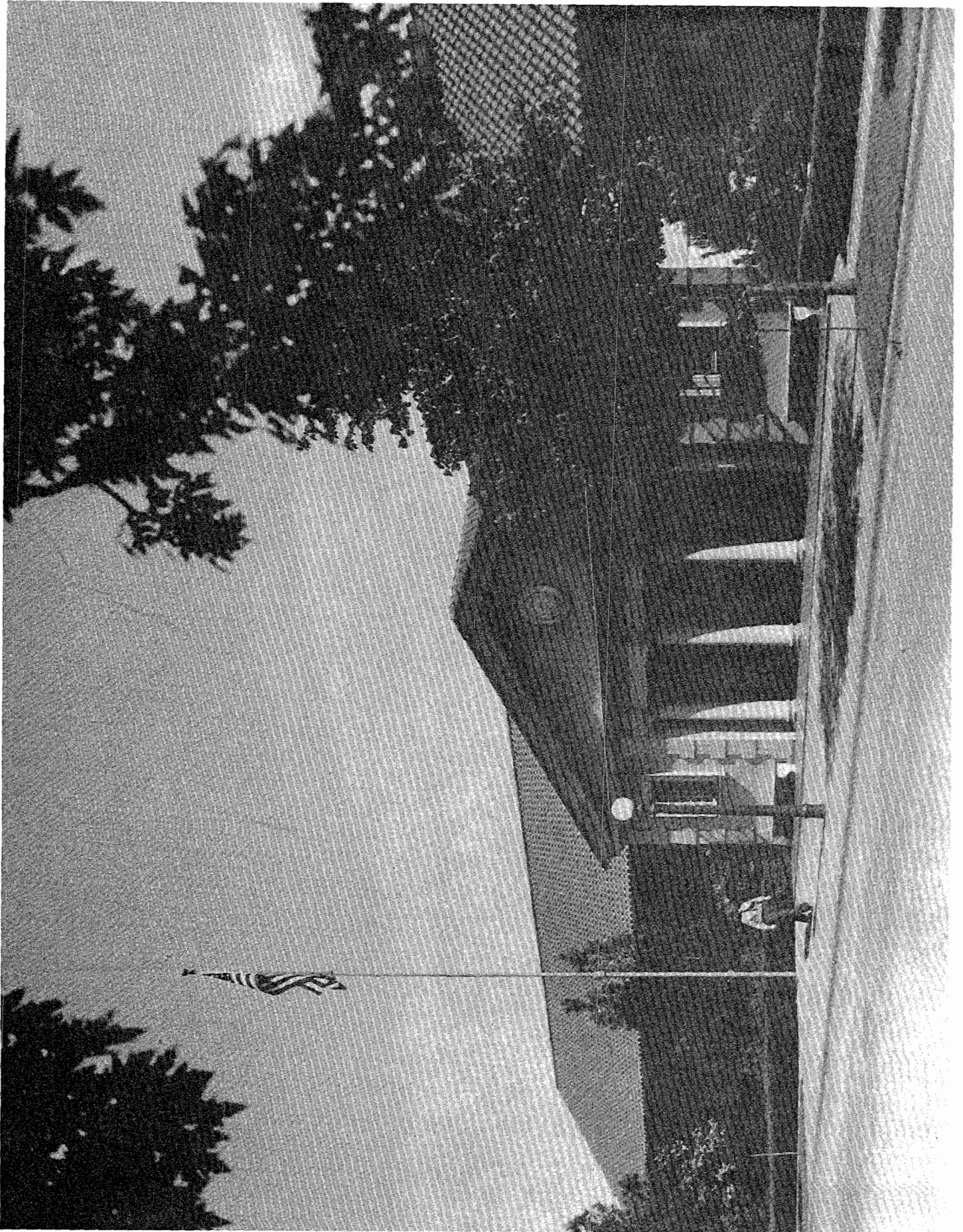
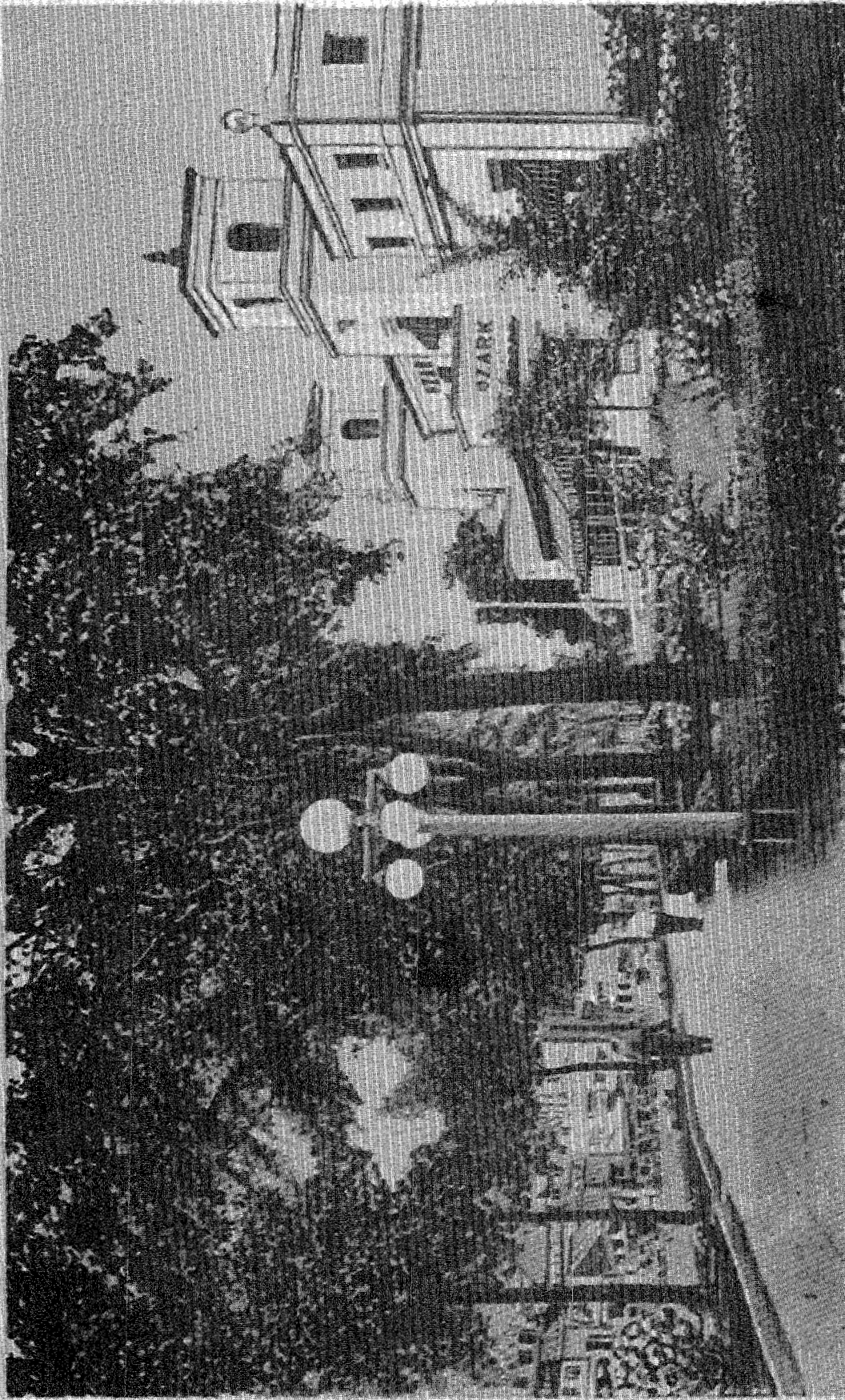


Figure 36. In 1922, Mann and Stern also designed the Ozark Bathhouse. Its elegant Spanish Colonial Revival facade belied its simple interior.

Arkansas History Commission

OZARK BATHS, C. M. KING, MGR.

Operated under Supervision of U. S. Government.



WE WELCOME YOU. HOT SPRINGS NATIONAL PARK, ARK.

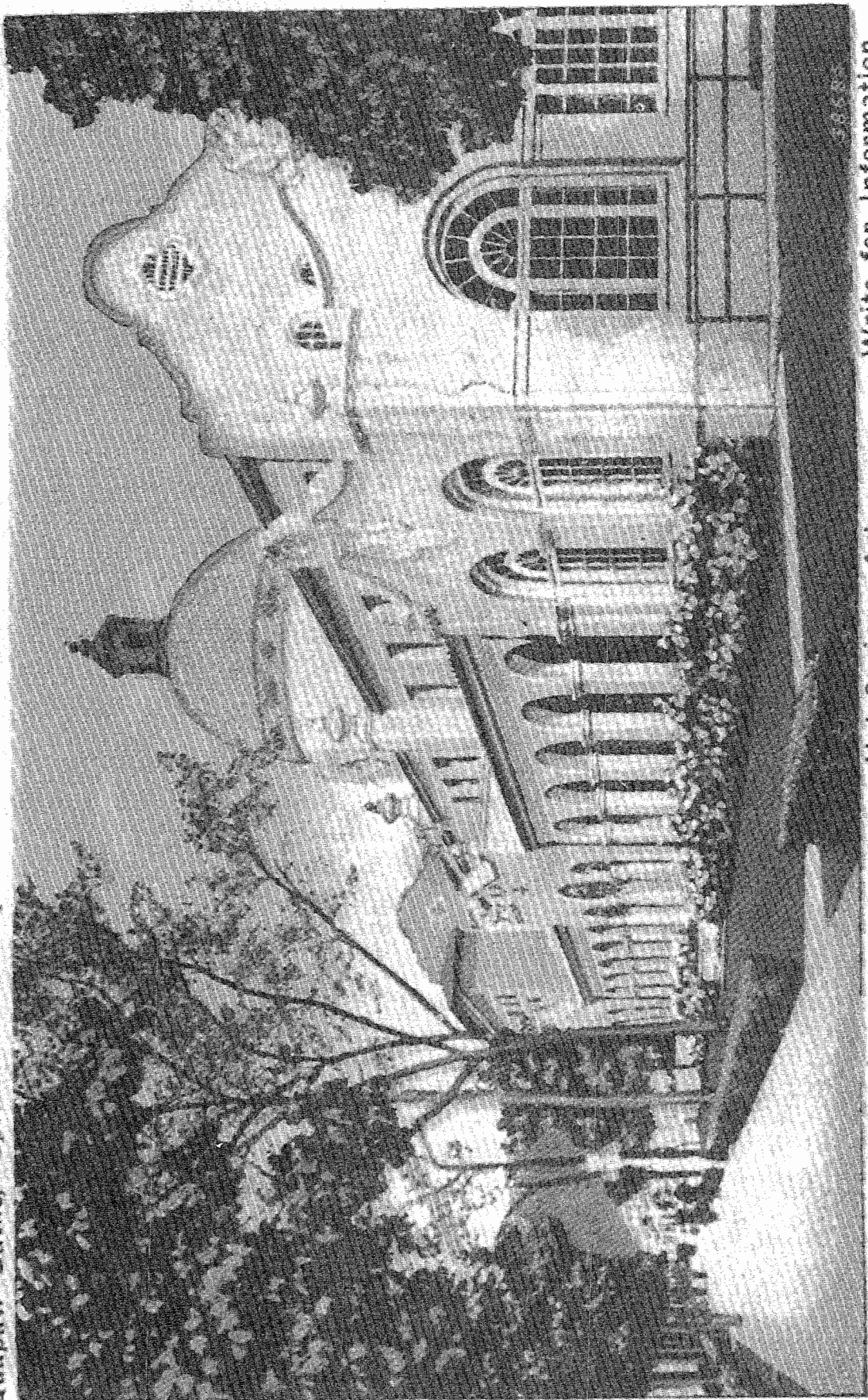
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Figure 37. Mann and Stern's design of the 1922 Quapaw Bathhouse combined a handsome Spanish Colonial Revival facade, a mosaic-tiled dome, and a groin-vaulted sun porch. NPS architect Charles Peterson believed that the only two buildings on Bathhouse Row with any architectural character were the Fordyce and the Quapaw.

Arkansas History Commission



Quapaw Baths, Operated under Supervision of U. S. Government. "The House with the Big Dome."



G. A. Callahan, President.

Hot Springs, Ark.

Write for Information.

Figure 38. In 1913 George Mann designed the Thompson Building across from Bathhouse Row. This neoclassical building provided a fine counterpoint for the Buckstaff and the Hale (before the latter's "missionization"). Mann envisioned Beaux-Arts structures of this type in his 1916 master plan for Bathhouse Row. The Department of the Interior rejected Mann's plan as too costly.

National Park Service Photo by Laura Soulliere Harrison, 1986.



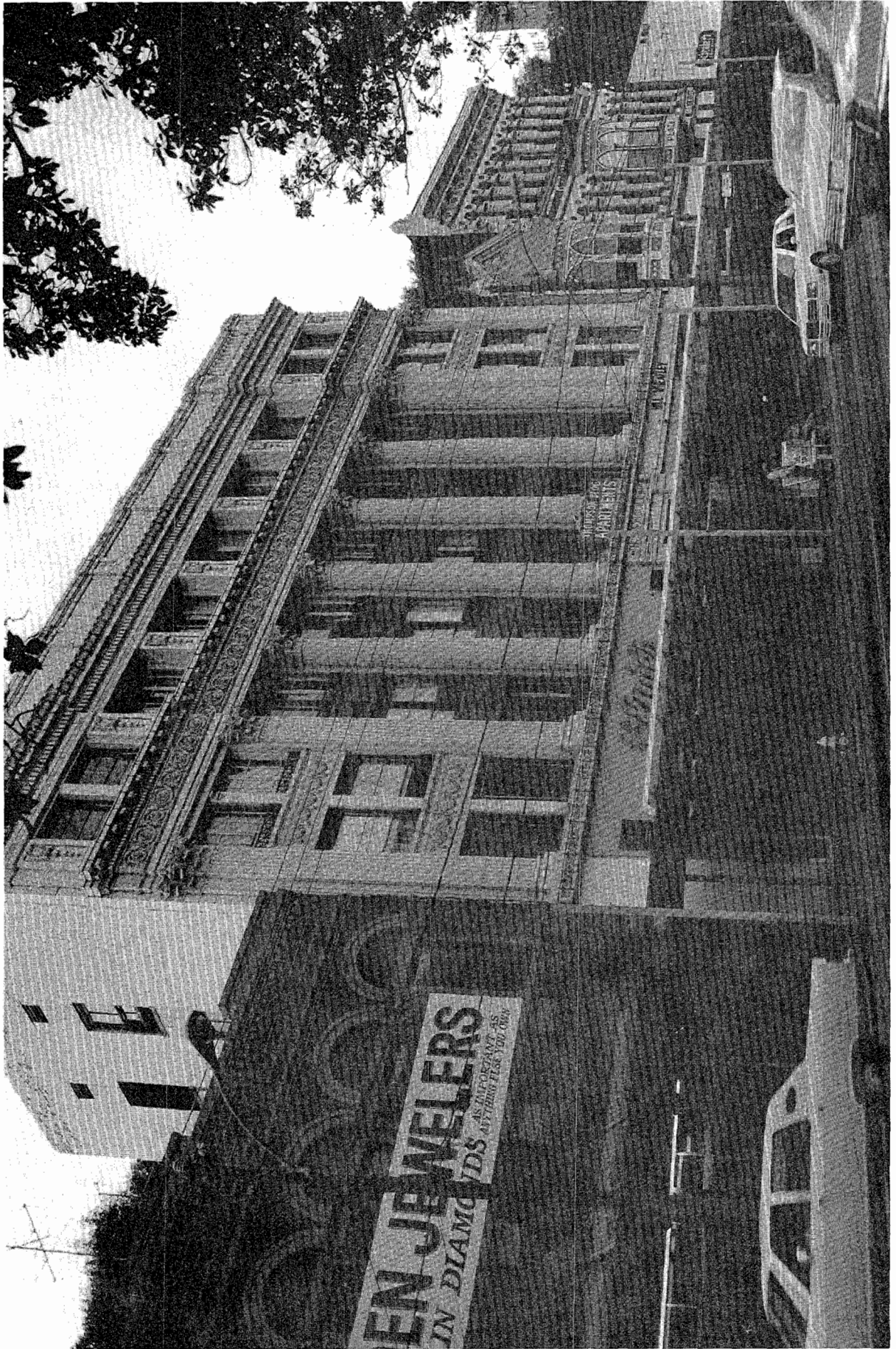


Figure 39. By the late 1930s, Bathhouse Row possessed an architectural character and ambience nearly identical to its character today.

Arkansas History Commission.

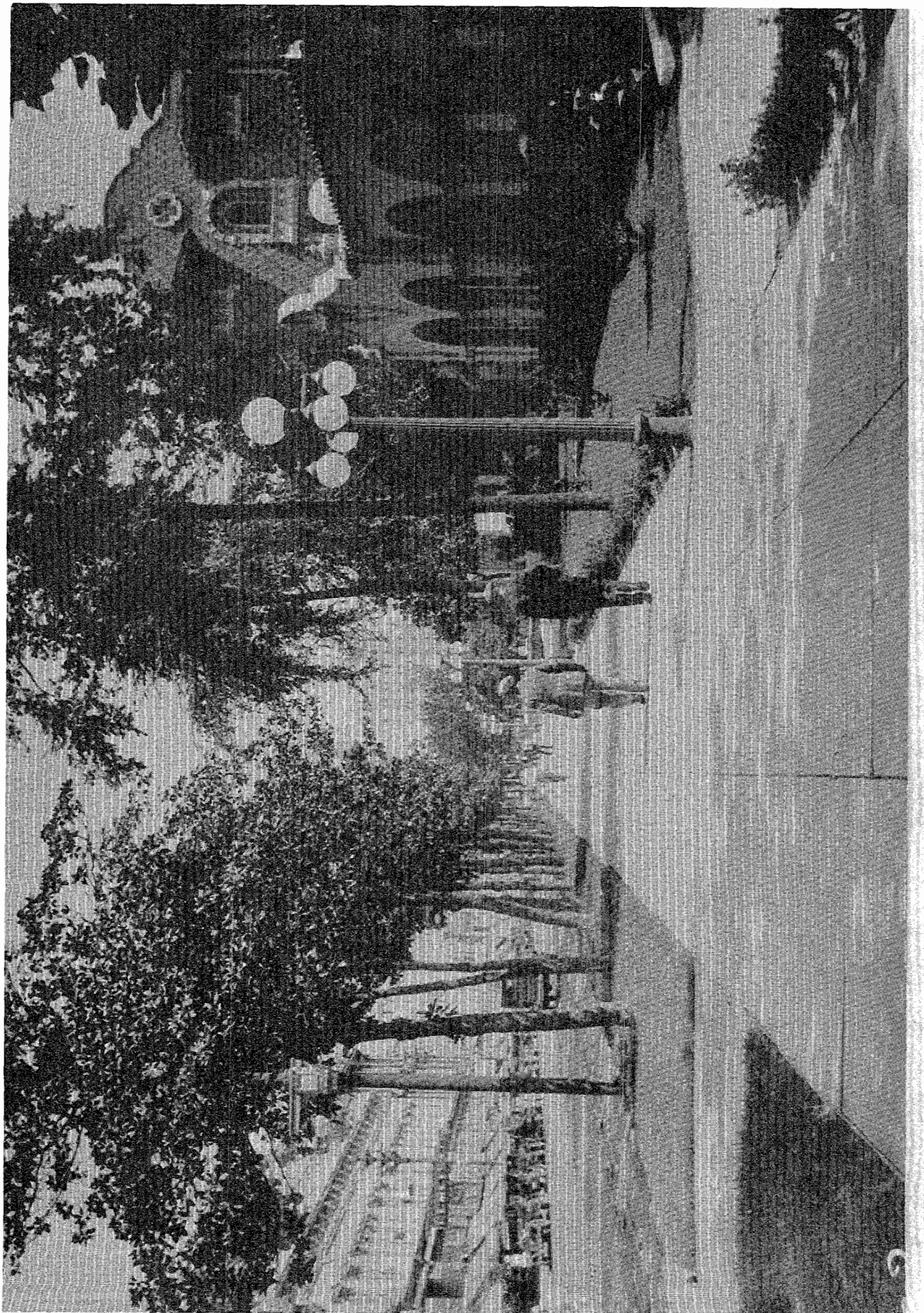
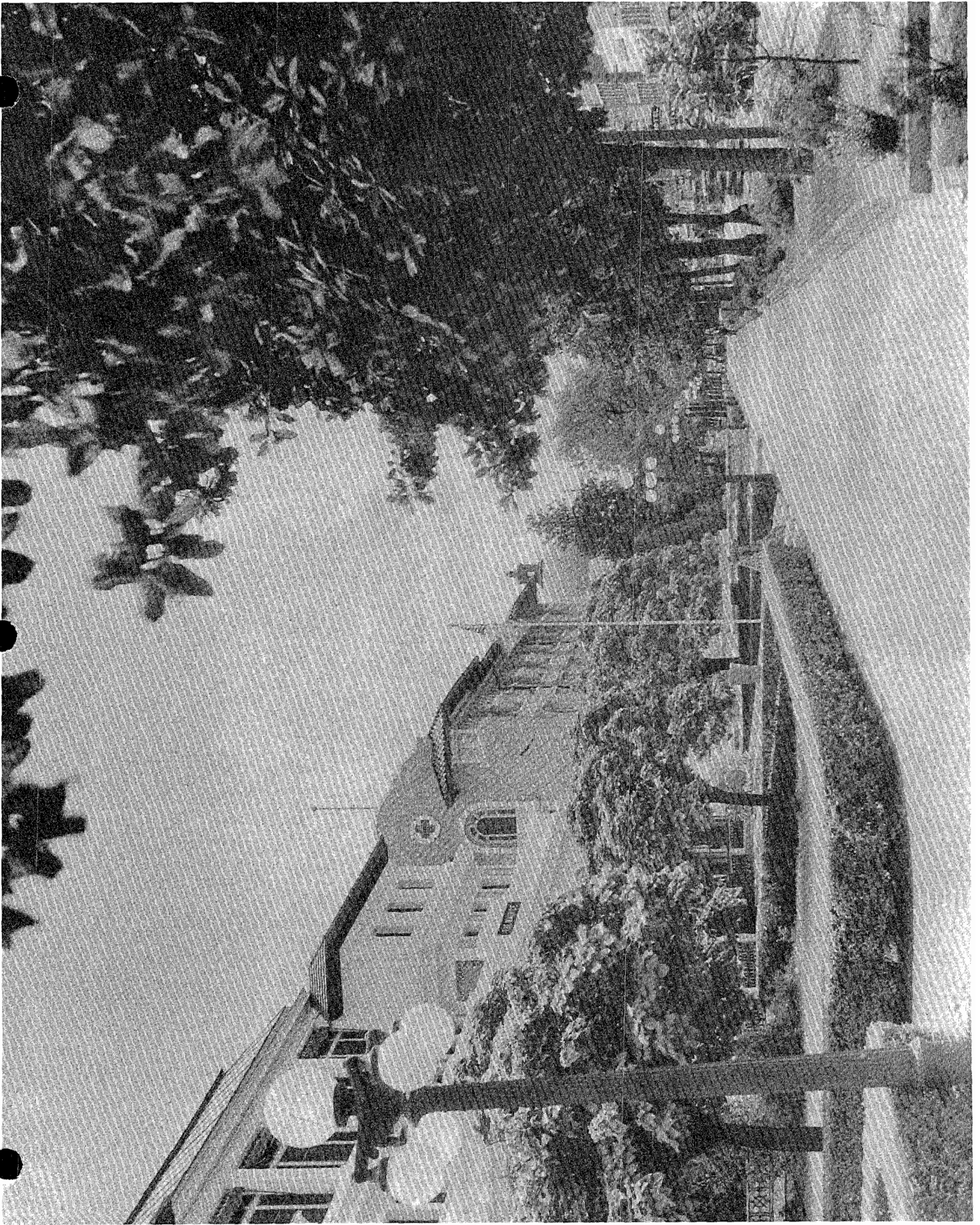


Figure 40. The removal of the last cooling towers (not visible in the photograph) during the 1950s was the only major change to the buildings of Bathhouse Row after the late 1930s.

Arkansas History Commission.







APPENDIX: MEMORANDUM ON OWNERSHIP  
OF RESERVATION BATHHOUSES FROM 1888  
UNTIL 1891 (from National Archives,  
Record Group 79, Entry 1, Box 12)

[copy]

Memorandum of Ownership of Reservation  
Bath Houses at Hot Springs

---

OLD HALE  
1888

A.B. Gaines	3/4	Hot Springs
Ed Hogaboom	1/8	Hot Springs
Geo. W. Buckstaff	1/8	Wisconsin

1890

A.B. Gaines	1/8	Hot Springs
C.B. Platt	3/8	New York
M.C. Tombler	3/16	Hot Springs
L.H. Roots	1/8	Little Rock
Geo. H. Buckstaff	1/8	Wisconsin
John Martin	1/16	Minnesota

1891

Arrangement in Escrow

M.C. Tombler	2/8	)	To A.B. Gaines, Hot Springs
Geo. Buckstaff	1/8	)	
C.B. Platt	3/8	)	L.H. Roots, Little Rock.

---

LAMAR  
1888

A.B. Gaines	3/4	Hot Springs
Ed Hogaboom	1/8	Hot Springs
Geo. H. Buckstaff	1/8	Wisconsin

1890

A.B. Gaines	1/8	Hot Springs
L.H. Roots	1/8	Little Rock
C.B. Platt	3/8	New York
Geo. H. Buckstaff	1/8	Wisconsin
M.C. Tombler	3/16	Hot Springs
John Martin	1/16	Minnesota

Arrangement in Escrow

1891

C.B. Platt	3/8	)	
A.B. Gaines	1/8	)	To M.C. Tombler
Geo. Buckstaff	1/8	)	Hot Springs
L.H. Roots	1/8		

---



## RAMMELSBURG

1888

A.B. Gaines	1/2	Hot Springs
Ed Hogaboom	1/4	Hot Springs
Geo. H. Buckstaff	1/4	Wisconsin.

1890

M.C. Tombler	3/16	Hot Springs
A.B. Gaines	1/8	Hot Springs
L.H. Roots	1/8	Little Rock
C.B. Platt	3/8	New York
Geo. H. Buckstaff	1/8	Wisconsin
John Martin	1/16	Minnesota

1891

## Arrangement in Escrow

M.C. Tombler	2/8	)	
A.B. Gaines	1/8	)	To Geo. H. Buckstaff
L.H. Roots	1/8	)	Wisconsin
C.B. Platt	3/8	)	

## MAGNESIA

1888

A.B. Gaines	3/4	Hot Springs
Ed Hogaboom	1/8	Hot Springs
Geo. H. Buckstaff	1/8	Wisconsin.

1890

A.B. Gaines	1/8	Hot Springs
L.H. Roots	1/8	Little Rock
C.B. Platt	3/8	New York
Geo. H. Buckstaff	1/8	Wisconsin
M.C. Tombler	3/16	Hot Springs
John Martin	1/16	Minnesota

1891

## Arrangement in Escrow

M.C. Tombler	2/8	)	To Henry Boswell
A.B. Gaines	1/8	)	New York.
L.H. Roots	1/8	)	
Geo. H. Buckstaff	1/8	)	
C.B. Platt	3/8	)	

[copy]

HORSE-SHOE

1888

A.B. Gaines	3/4	Hot Springs
Geo. H. Buckstaff	1/8	Wisconsin
Ed Hogaboom	1/8	Hot Springs

1890

M.C. Tombler	3/16	Hot Springs
A.B. Gaines	1/8	Hot Springs
L.H. Roots	1/8	Little Rock
Geo. Buckstaff	1/8	Wisconsin
C.B. Platt	3/8	New York
John Martin	1/16	Minnesota

1891

Arrangement in Escrow

M.C. Tombler	2/8	)	To R.B. Woodward
A.B. Gaines	1/8	)	New York.
L.H. Roots	1/8	)	
Geo. Buckstaff	1/8	)	
Chas. B. Platt	3/8	)	

---

INDEPENDENT

1888

A.B. Gaines	1/4	Hot Springs
G.G. Latta	1/4	Hot Springs
S.W. Fordyce	1/4	St. Louis,
Ed Hogaboom	1/8	Hot Springs
Geo. H. Buckstaff	1/8	Wisconsin

1890

C.B. Platt	3/16	New York.
A.B. Gaines	1/16	Hot Springs
G.H. Buckstaff	1/16	Wisconsin
G.G. Latta	1/4	Hot Springs
S.W. Fordyce	1/4	St. Louis
M.C. Tombler	3/32	Hot Springs
John Martin	1/32	Minnesota
L.H. Roots	1/16	Little Rock

1891

Arrangement in Escrow

M.C. Tombler	2/16	)	
C.B. Platt	3/16	)	To C.E. Maurice
G.H. Buckstaff	1/16	)	and
L.H. Roots	1/16	)	C.G. Converse
A.B. Gaines	1/16	)	Hot Springs
S.W. Fordyce	1/4	)	
G.G. Latta	1/4	)	

[copy]

NEW RECTOR

1888

A.B. Gaines	1/2	Hot Springs
H.M. Rector	1/2	Little Rock

1890

A.B. Gaines	1/4	Hot Springs
C.B. Platt	1/4	New York
H.M. Rector	1/2	Little Rock.

1891

A.B. Gaines	1/4	) To M.E. Fellows, New York
C.B. Platt	1/4	
H.M. Rector	1/2	

---

BIG IRON

1888

Dr. A.S. Garnett: The whole interest up to  
January 17, when he sold 1/2 to George E. Lemon for \$15,000.

1890

A.S. Garnett	1/2	Hot Springs
George E. Lemon	1/2	Washington, D.C.

1891

A.S. Garnett	1/2	Hot Springs
George E. Lemon	1/2	Washington, D.C.

---

PALACE

1888

S.W. Fordyce	1/2	St. Louis
L.H. Carhart	1/2	Texas

1891

S.W. Fordyce		St. Louis
L.H. Carhart		Texas

[copy]

OZARK  
1888

Geo. G. Latta

Hot Springs

1890

Geo. G. Latta

1/4

Hot Springs

S.W. Fordyce

1/2

St. Louis

Chas. E. Maurice

1/4

Hot Springs

1891

In Escrow

S.W. Fordyce

)

To G.G. Latta

Chas. E. Maurice

)

Hot Springs

SMITHMEYER  
1888 and 1890

Geo. H. Lemon

The whole interest

1891

W. Buck Taylor

Omaha

ARLINGTON HOTEL  
1888- 1890 -1891

S.H. Stitt

1/3

Hot Springs

S.W. Fordyce

1/3

St. Louis

A.B. Gaines

1/3

New York

## SUMMARY

1888

## In the Seven Bath Houses

Independent  
Horse-Shoe  
Magnesia  
Lamar  
Rammelsburg  
Old Hale  
Rector

A.B. Gaines owned and 1/3	34/8	Hot Springs Arlington Hotel
S.W. Fordyce  and 1/3 Arlington Hotel.	2/8	St. Louis
Ed Hogaboom	7/8	Hot Springs
G.H. Buckstaff	7/8	Wisconsin
G.G. Latta	2/8	Hot Springs
H.M. Rector	<u>4/8</u>	Little Rock
Total	56/8	7 Bath Houses

1890

A.B. Gaines	30/32	Hot Springs
C.B. Platt	74/32	New York
M.C. Tombler	33/32	Hot Springs
L.H. Roots	22/32	Little Rock
G.H. Buckstaff	22/32	Wisconsin.
John Martin	11/32	Minnesota
H.M. Rector	16/32	Little Rock
G.G. Latta	8/32	Hot Springs
S.W. Fordyce	8/32	St. Louis

[copy]

1891  
In Escrow

Old Hale	)	A.B. Gaines		New York
	)	L.H. Roots		Little Rock
Lamar		M.C. Tombler		Hot Springs
Horse-Shoe		R.B. Woodward		New York
Independent		C.E. Maurice		Hot Springs
		C.G. Converse		Hot Springs
Rammelsberg		Geo. H. Buckstaff		Wisconsin
Magnesia		Henry Boswell		New York
Rector	)	H.M. Rector	1/2	Little Rock
	)	C.B. Platt	1/4	New York
	)	M.E. Fellows	1/4	New York.
Big Iron	)	A.S. Garnett	1/2	Hot Springs
	)	Geo. E. Lemon	1/2	Washington
Palace	)	S.W. Fordyce	1/2	St. Louis
	)	L.H. Carhart	1/2	Texas
Ozark		G.G. Latta		Hot Springs
Smithmeyer		W. Buck Taylor		Omaha

C.B. Platt is Brother-in-law to A.B. Gaines

S.H. Stitt is Brother-in-law to A.B. Gaines

M.E. Fellows is Mother-in-law to A.B. Gaines

R.B. Woodward is businesspartner of C.B. Platt

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