



Oertel System of Graduated Exercise



Dr. Max Oertel was born in Germany in 1835. Early in life he suffered an accident which resulted in a deformity of his thoracic spine. In successfully coping with this problem he became a doctor and developed a system of exercise for strengthening the heart muscle. His idea was adopted here and regarded as a valuable adjunct to the thermal waters.

Good for the Heart

Oertel noted that those with weak hearts could gradually strengthen their hearts and live fuller lives by walking in the mountains over prescribed courses. The idea was perfected at several European spas: Baden- Baden, Ischl, Merano, Bozen- Greis, etc.

Hot Springs, always aspiring to rival or surpass what was available in Europe, developed its courses on roads and trails. The terrain courses at Hot Springs were patterned after the summer course at Reichenhall. When it was completed here in 1914 automobiles were still excluded from the mountain roads, but horses and hikers managed to use them compatibly.

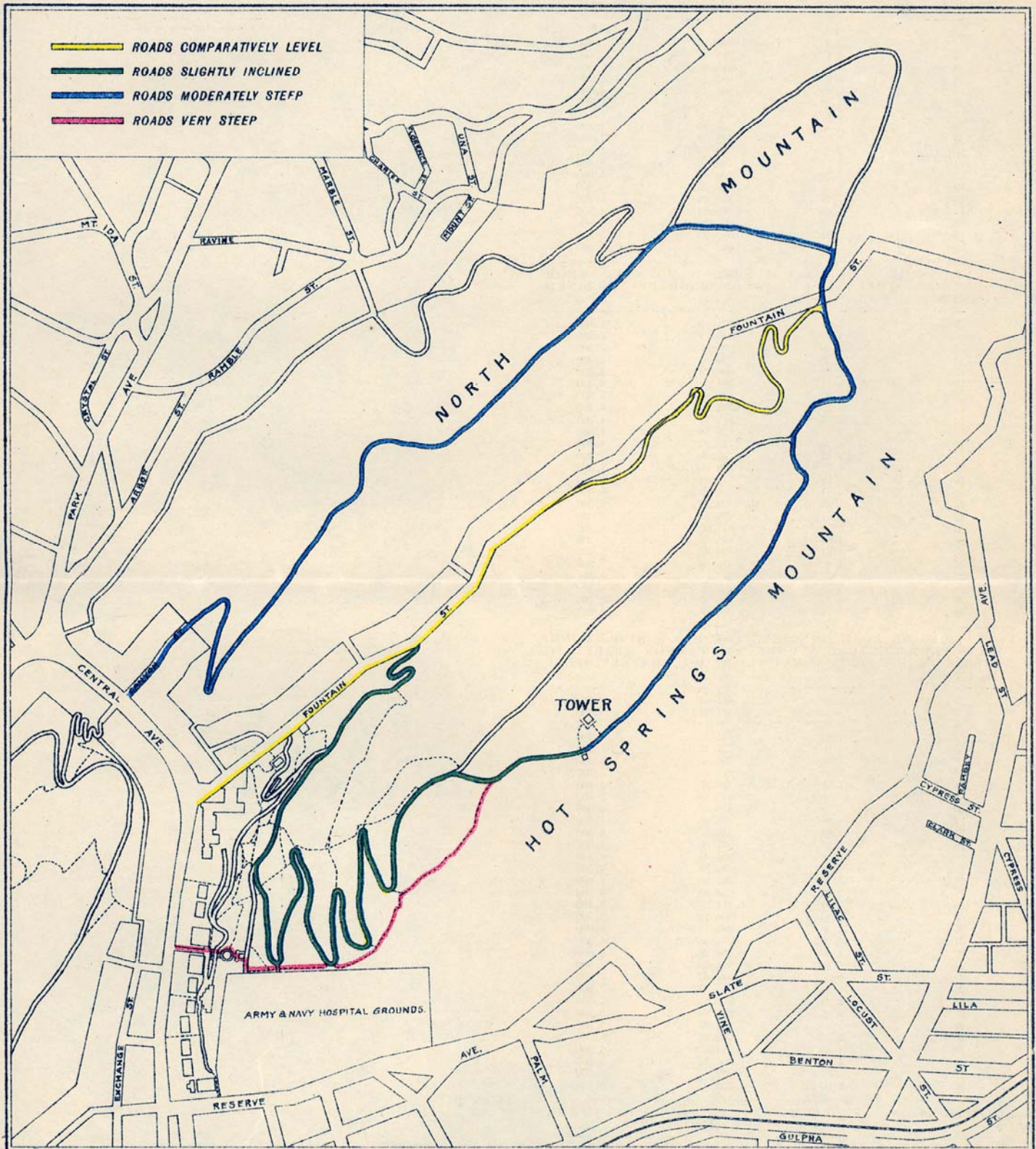
The Color Code

Four courses were designated with concrete markers placed at intervals to be covered in a specific time. Each route was designated with a different color. The easiest trail was yellow. Next were the green and blue, each gradually more strenuous. Then there was the trail for making a strong heart stronger—the Red Trail.

Valid Today

The concept of gradual exercise and conditioning is still valid. You can try the most difficult, the Red Trail, at a slower pace than was once prescribed. It happens to be one of the common routes to the top of Hot Springs Mountain and the Hot Springs Mountain Tower.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR



MAP OF A PORTION OF THE U. S. GOVERNMENT RESERVATION, HOT SPRINGS, ARKANSAS.
 FOR USE IN CONNECTION WITH OERTEL SYSTEM OF GRADUATED EXERCISE.

ENGRAVED AND PRINTED BY THE U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

