

# Architectural Plans and Visions: The Early HABS Program and Its Documentation of Vernacular Architecture

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Of fundamental importance to the origins and evolution of the Vernacular Architecture Forum and its focus on fieldwork as a necessary component to understanding historic architecture is the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), formed in 1933 to document America's architectural heritage.[1] The idea of creating a national archive of architectural documentation had been germinating for quite some time. In fact, the American Institute of Architects' (AIA) Committee on the Preservation of Historic Buildings had first endorsed a national survey with the intent of "securing records of structures of historic interest" in 1918, but to no avail.[2] The onset of the Great Depression provided the opportunity in the form of a federal make-work program to be administered by the National Park Service (NPS). HABS was one of many cultural programs initiated during President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal administration and the first significant boon to historic preservation at the national level.[3] The creation of the program was motivated in part by the perceived need to mitigate the effects upon American history and culture of rapidly vanishing architectural resources. According to the original HABS proposal:

> Our architectural heritage of buildings from the last four centuries diminishes at an alarming rate. The ravages of fire and the natural elements, together with the demolition and alterations caused by real estate 'improvements' form an inexorable tide of destruction destined to wipe out the great majority of the buildings which knew the beginning and first flourish of the nation. The comparatively few structures which can be saved by extraordinary effort and presented as exhibition houses and museums or altered and used for residences or minor commercial uses comprise only a minor percentage of the interesting and important architectural specimens which remains from the old days. It is the responsibility of the American people that if the great number of our antique buildings must disappear through economic causes, they should not pass into unrecorded oblivion.[4]

As the first federal preservation program, HABS implemented on a national scale the examination of historic architecture previously undertaken only on a limited, local, or regional basis. HABS methodology clearly was informed by previous attempts to draw and photograph American architecture, such as the *White Pine Series* of architectural monographs, published bimonthly from 1914 to 1940. Before HABS, architects interested in historic American buildings had been creating documentation that consisted largely of drawings and photographs with little or no historical text. One good example is the effort by the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA to draw and photograph local landmarks for the "Old Philadelphia Survey" in 1930. These drawings were later donated to the program and copied onto HABS drawing sheets. An exemplary individual effort is Eleanor Raymond's drawings and photographs of a selection of Pennsylvania's eighteenth-century vernacular houses and outbuildings in her book entitled *Early Domestic Architecture of Pennsylvania* (1931). Other important projects were the 1932 Western Pennsylvania Architectural Survey, led by Charles Stotz (later HABS district officer for Dist No. PA-4), and the Architect's Emergency Committee's series entitled *Great Georgian Houses of America.*

The impulse to draw historic structures, as well as to form HABS, was further motivated by the Beaux Arts and Colonial Revival movements. The Ecole des Beaux Arts, the French National School for the Arts, had long influenced training in the United States as well as abroad. Students of the Beaux Arts were encouraged to study historical precedents in order to understand the various styles and their potential for use in modern design. Architectural history had not yet been established as a discipline separate from that of architecture, and thus many in the profession were considered architect-historians.[5] The Colonial Revival movement likewise helped foster an appreciation for the study and emulation of colonial era design. The movement also spawned the formation of numerous local or regional organizations in an attempt to preserve colonial history. Most notable was William Sumner Appleton's Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities founded in 1910 to promote New England's history

through architectural and material culture collections. Also highly significant was the Rockefeller-funded restoration of Virginia's colonial capital at Williamsburg, which began in 1927.

While HABS was founded on older traditions of measured drawings and architectural photography, the program sought to include historical information and building analysis to produce a comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and publicly accessible record. The three components of HABS recording—measured drawings, large-format, black-and-white photographs, and historical reports—were intended to work together to create a complete picture of an individual structure.[6] Also comprehensive was the building selection which ranged in type and style from the monumental and architect-designed to the utilitarian and vernacular and included a representative sampling of the vast array of regionally and ethnically derived American building traditions. As the original proposal proclaimed, the HABS collection was to embody "a complete resume of the builder's art."[7] Equally important, the survey established a standardized approach to architectural study and documentation, thus contributing fundamentally to the understanding of these undertakings as professional rather than merely a leisure-time activity.[8] Through their bulletins and circulars, the HABS' administrators laid out everything from philosophical justification and criteria for selection, to drawing technique and report-writing format. Within the standards established from Washington, D.C., the program drew its great strength from its grass roots approach; state or regional recording teams were led by district officers each of whom brought his or her own perspective and experience to their HABS work.[9]

The early HABS program is recognized for its detailed measured drawings, but very few know about its rigorous research and methodology or of the program's larger vision (fig. 1). A primary goal was the identification of all structures of architectural and historical significance, with the hope that eventually all of them would be recorded. Selecting those most important to actually be recorded in the limited time available required a sort of triage. The chief consideration was the degree of endangerment.[10] In addition to the interdisciplinary recording of individual sites, each district officer was tasked with writing an "Outline Summary" that placed the region's architectural forms within their own appropriate contexts.[11] In an era that pre-dated architectural history programs, or even academic architectural vocabularies, these narratives attempted to define buildings not just stylistically, but also through their component parts in order to identify the defining characteristics of local architectural forms. The information gleaned from one structure could then be compared with the next in order to achieve a general understanding of the region's architectural development. The Outlines thus became the mechanism for compiling information about the larger selection that was missing from the individual HABS building reports. The guidelines' emphasis on the "character" and the "arrangement and development of architectural features" such as typical plans, elevations, roofs, openings, and chimneys, is also an acknowledgment of the vernacular nature of colonial era building forms which defied stylistic classification.

Realizing the cumulative value of this information, the HABS administrators decided by 1936 to compile these reports and publish them as the *Outline of the Development of Early American Architecture*. An unprecedented undertaking, it was among the first attempts to articulate a broad perspective of our nation's architectural development. Unfortunately, this goal was never realized within the context of the HABS program. Although not part of the formal collection, some of the research became the basis for later publications, including a series of HABS state catalogs.[12] Assistant director Thomas Waterman channeled much of the research that might otherwise have appeared in the HABS volumes into publications such as *The Mansions of Virginia*.[13] Without the interpretation that could have been provided by a larger contextual piece, or an understanding of the methodology behind building selection, the results of the early surveys appear as a seemingly haphazard collection of drawings and photos. For this reason, the early HABS program appears limited in scope, when in reality it was overly ambitious. The following is a look backward at the early surveys, the purpose of which is to reveal something of the intentions of the first HABS administrations and recorders and of the state of architectural documentation in its fledgling years.

Thomas C. Vint, Chief Architect the NPS Branch of Plans and Designs in Washington, D.C., served as the chief administrator for HABS from its beginning 1933 until his retirement in 1961.[14] As the technical branch of the federal conservation bureau, its work included the preservation of historic structures.[15] Vint is probably best remembered for his preservation-minded approach to park planning and his efforts to develop master plans for all NPS parks, natural as well as historical. Born in Salt Lake City, Utah, he grew up in Los Angeles, California. Like many architects in the employ of the National Park Service, Vint was a westerner, trained in land-

*Fig. 1. An example of the detailed HABS drawings created during the early survey. Transverse section, McIntire Garrison House, York County, Maine. (Joseph Depeter, HABS, 1937)*

scape design. He graduated from the landscape architecture program at the University of California at Berkeley in 1920. He spent a semester at the Ecole de Architecture, University of Lyon, and later studied city planning at the University of California, Los Angeles. Vint joined NPS in 1922 as an assistant landscape engineer for Yosemite National Park, where he was involved in the design of some of the park service's first rustic-style buildings as well as in the development of landscape plans. In 1927 he was appointed Chief Landscape Architect of NPS and headquartered in San Francisco. By the early 1930s his offices moved to Washington, D.C., in order to better oversee the development of new historical parks in the east such as Colonial (Virginia), Salem Maritime (Massachusetts), and Hopewell Village (Pennsylvania), as well as the many

battlefield parks, historic sites, and monuments transferred to NPS from the War Department, in 1933.

Working with Thomas Vint were program director John P. O'Neill and assistant director Thomas T. Waterman. A University of Notre Dame-trained architect who had worked in Chicago for David Adler, O'Neill took care of the day-to-day activities.[16] He coordinated the funding efforts between the WPA and the individual states that were crucial to the continued work of the HABS surveys and prepared the necessary progress reports. He also maintained regular correspondence with district officers, gently prodding and praising as needed in order to fulfill programmatic goals in a timely manner. When he began his five-year stint with HABS, O'Neill recently had returned from work at an archeological site in Mexico.[17] It is likely that this and other encounters helped sensitize him to the need for regional diversity within the HABS surveys. O'Neil was a strong proponent for the production of the Outline histories, as evidenced by his voluminous letter-writing campaign to encourage work in that area.

Thomas Waterman trained in the office of renowned Boston architect Ralph Adams Cram. From Cram, he learned the importance of understanding past architectural styles in order to better render new designs. Waterman acquired a passion for the preservation of endangered architecture from William Sumner Appleton at the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, who recruited him to assist in creating emergency documentation. As further preparation for his role in the newly created HABS program, Waterman also completed work at Colonial Williamsburg for the restoration architects Perry, Shaw, and Hepburn. Like most practicing architects during this era, Waterman had no formal degree, but he demonstrated exceptional competence as both an architect and historian.[18] Vint, O'Neill, and Waterman—along with a cadre of others brought in from the field to work in the Washington office, such as Dudley C. Bayliss, Frederick Nichols, and Delos Smith—were instrumental in realizing the initial proposal for the creation of HABS as outlined by NPS landscape architect Charles E. Peterson.

As author of the initial proposal, Charles Peterson has been credited with the founding of HABS, but he actually had a more tangential relationship with the early program. At the time Peterson wrote the proposal he had only recently come to work in the NPS Washington, D.C., offices as the deputy chief architect. He began his career with the park service in 1929, working in the western regional office in San Francisco, presumably under the direction of Thomas Vint. From 1930 to 1933, Peterson served as resident landscape architect in Yorktown, Virginia, where he was involved with the establishment of the newly created Colonial National Monument (designated as Colonial National Historical Park in 1936). The park was formed to preserve the remnants of Yorktown and Jamestown, two of colonial America's most important early settlements. Peterson's work there included planning for the scenic parkway linking these two sites with Colonial Williamsburg. Peterson developed close relations with his counterparts working at Colonial Williamsburg, all of whom were motivated by the desire to study and preserve early architectural forms as a means of understanding our past. The influence of that experience upon Peterson is clearly reflected in his insightful proposal for the formation of HABS.[19] After submitting the proposal, however, Peterson quickly went on to other NPS projects. Although he remained in Washington through 1935, he was not among those administering the HABS program. From 1936 to 1948, Peterson was in St. Louis, Missouri, where he served as senior landscape architect for the mitigation of the old waterfront area in preparation for the development of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial.[20]

To assist HABS administrators with the formation of general policy the Secretary of the Interior appointed a seven-member National Advisory Committee. With four members from the architectural profession and three from the historical and civic professions, the committee comprised a balanced representation of individuals or organizations already concerned about or involved with the recording of historic structures. Chief among them was Dr. Leicester B. Holland, Chairman of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Committee on Preservation of Historic Buildings, and Chief of the Fine Arts Division of the Library of Congress. In 1930, Holland created the Pictorial Archives of Early American Architecture and would become the first archivist of the HABS collection. Other committee members were influential regional architects and preservationists including John Gaw Meem, of Santa Fe, New Mexico; William G. Perry, of Boston, Massachusetts, the principal architect of the restoration of the colonial capitol at Williamsburg, Virginia; Albert Simons, of Charleston, South Carolina; and Thomas E. Tallmadge, of Chicago, Illinois, the author of the 1927 publication, *The Story of Architecture in America.* Those within the historical profession included Dr. Herbert E. Bolton, Professor of History at the University of California and past president of the American Historical Association; Mrs.

Harlan James, Executive Secretary of the American Civic Association; and Dr. Waldo G. Leland, Executive Secretary of the American Council of Learned Societies. The stated purpose or "advantage" of the HABS plan was to provide relief to one of the professions most negatively affected by the economic downturn caused by the Great Depression.[21] However, members of the Advisory Committee were among those in the architecture and preservation communities who had lobbied for years for just such an opportunity.

Although general management came from the Washington, D.C., office (in consultation with the advisory committee), the program operated through district officers and their regionally based field teams (fig. 2).[22] The officers (and some of those among their staff) were architects whose Beaux Arts training and practice centered upon a detailed understanding of historic building traditions.[23] As Beaux Arts architect-historians, HABS district officers were expected to be equally proficient at producing historical reports and measured drawings.[24] While some early HABS survey teams did include trained historians such as New Jersey's Walter E. Rutt, most of the writing fell to the district officers. Their nomination by the local AIA chapters was, in fact, based on prior experience with historic architecture. For example, the district officer for Pennsylvania Dist. #1, Joseph Simms, previously co-authored a guide for architect practitioners of the Colonial Revival entitled *Old Philadelphia Colonial Details* (1914); and in the fourth district, Charles Stotz was responsible for the 1932 Western Pennsylvania Architectural Survey. Massachusetts district officer Frank Choteau Brown regularly contributed articles on colonial houses illustrated with drawings similar in format to those of HABS to the *White Pine Series*. Louisiana's Richard Koch renovated several major plantation houses, and was a member of the Vieux Carre Commission, an early example of both historic district designation and design review.

As is implied by the title Historic American Buildings Survey, the process began as district officers conducted field reconnaissance aimed at identifying the structures within their district that were of historical and architectural interest (fig. 3). For each of these structures, they prepared an index card. These cards served the dual purpose of creating a

*Fig. 2. A HABS team measuring the Kentucky School for the Blind in Louisville. (Theodore Webb, HABS, 1934)*

*Fig. 3. Map of sites recorded during the 1930s Louisiana survey prepared by the team for presentation in their Outline Report. (HABS).*

national list of significant structures and setting goals for the recording program. As stated in NPS Bulletin No. 15, "The importance of this index cannot be overestimated since it will most completely fulfill the functions for which the present survey is intended and will form an invaluable basis for any future program."[25] All told, the survey created cards for about seven thousand structures nationwide, about half of which received at least one photograph and a third of which had been measured and drawn by the close of most New Deal programs in 1941.[26] The cards included brief historical notations that sometimes took the form of small sketch plans, making them a valuable supplement to the formal collection.[27] They also included bibliographic references to previous documentation in an attempt to avoid duplication of efforts. These references became the basis for eliminating buildings from selection by HABS. For example, the work of Henry Chandlee Forman in recording the early architecture of Tidewater Maryland precluded many of those structures from inclusion by HABS beyond, perhaps, a single photograph. Likewise, structures considered protected by virtue of their institutional or governmental ownership were not measured and drawn, although they still received an index card—and in some cases, a photograph or two. An example is Baltimore's National Historic Landmark, Homewood, owned and maintained by Johns Hopkins University; it has only recently been fully recorded (fig. 4). This methodology helps explain some of the seemingly inexplicable omissions from the collection, such as Washington's Mount Vernon, which remains to this day undocumented by HABS.

HABS administrators justified the program and set standards and procedures through the dissemination of bulletins and circulars. HABS Circular No.1 explained the need for the program and also described the broad range of

*Fig. 4. Index card for Homewood House, Baltimore, Maryland. (Delos Smith, HABS, 1940)*

building types to be recorded, including those that had not previously "engaged the especial interest of the architectural connoisseur," such as Native American structures, the "hewn log cabins of the early pioneers," and buildings in old mining towns. Officials based final selection on architectural integrity and ability to exemplify a particular type, period, or pattern of development, with special priority assigned to those "in imminent danger of destruction" (fig. 5).[28] Bulletin No. 4 laid out the procedures for a systematic approach to measuring and drawing so as to ensure accuracy, uniformity, and efficiency. HABS staff recorded measurements and other pertinent data in field notebooks to serve as verification of the accuracy of the final product. Officials asked the architects to include written details in their field notes and to be particularly attentive to differences that distinguished the original structure from later modifications; however, no "conjectural restorations" were to be made. The goal was to illustrate the structure's "exact present condition."[29]

Taking an equally scientific approach to report writing, the histories initially were limited to essential information. As

*Fig. 5. Woodlawn Plantation, Assumption Parish, Louisiana; example of an endangered building that was a top priority for early recording. (Richard Koch, HABS, 1937)*

indicated in Circular No. 1, "Only the briefest resume of facts is necessary in each case. Long accounts of genealogical matter and sentimental mythology have no place in the program."[30] As a result, the historical reports tended to be very brief. A later bulletin provided a list of questions to be asked of the building's occupants, which by February 1935 had evolved into Bulletin No. 40's "Outline of Written Report" providing the basis for the current and expanded HABS history format. This original outline asked for owner, date of erection, architect, builder, present condition, number of stories, materials of construction, other existing records, and additional data, but did not call for a significance statement or architectural context. Report writers were encouraged to seek out information from local historical societies and other repositories, and many did just that.[31] As with the drawings, the ability to verify the information was essential; sources were to be given in all cases except where the author "is himself vouching for the facts described."[32]

The development of historical context and building analysis, while covered in a cursory manner in the individual building reports, was largely the role of the "Outline Summaries," each of which was to form a chapter in one of six volumes organized by region to include: New England, the Mid-Atlantic, the South, Mid-West, Southwest, and the Pacific Coast. These volumes were to draw upon the experience and research of the teams to produce "a careful and authoritative preliminary study of early American architecture."[33] As outlined in Bulletin No. 54, the reports began with the geographic, cultural, and historical development of each region, as they related to the formation of the built environment. Included in the discussion were patterns of settlement and influences such as the religious and ethnic backgrounds of the local

*Fig. 6. Taylor-Cunningham House, Lauderdale County, Alabama, an example of the ubiquitous dog-trot house type. (Alex Bush, HABS, 1935)*

population. Many outlines also address the origins and diffusion of architectural styles. For example, one compared the Whitley House in Lincoln County, Kentucky, to the "houses of old Virginia" and cited its use of a central-hall plan and Flemish-bond brickwork.[34] The emergence of Greek Revival in Alabama is attributed to the influx of settlers from regions of the East Coast and sections of the Tennessee Valley.[35] According to the Virginia Outline, the ubiquitous log-constructed Dog-Trot house type (also referred to in various regions as the Dog-Run or Opossum-Run) that was formed by joining two separate one-room cabins with a central, covered passage, originated there, where it spread south and west, clear to Texas (fig. 6),[36] Landscapes were sometimes recorded as well, including city squares, private gardens, and even cultural landscapes. Richard Koch and his team based in New Orleans undertook extensive documentation of the Vieux Carre's public squares and the buildings that fronted them; Koch's efforts were notable in that they consisted largely of historical reports rather than drawings. Massachusetts conducted an early precursor to the recently formed Historic American Landscapes Survey, documenting a series of colonial gardens, as well as producing larger studies such as the documentation of the early fishing harbor of Lobster Cove in Annisquam (fig. 7).

The Outlines then called for an analysis of the development of local architecture as defined within three broad categories: "Primitive," "Transitional," and "Formal."[37] These categories now seem naive in their presumption of an evolutionary process from the vernacular to the high style, rather than the simultaneous and sustained presence of both. It reflects a lack of information and understanding about the character of any local architecture. In fairness, a look at the bibliographies included in the outline reports reveals how few works of architectural history were then available. A number of states could boast individual works of architectural history or—more frequently—folio volumes of drawings and photographs.[38] The bulk of available information was on the

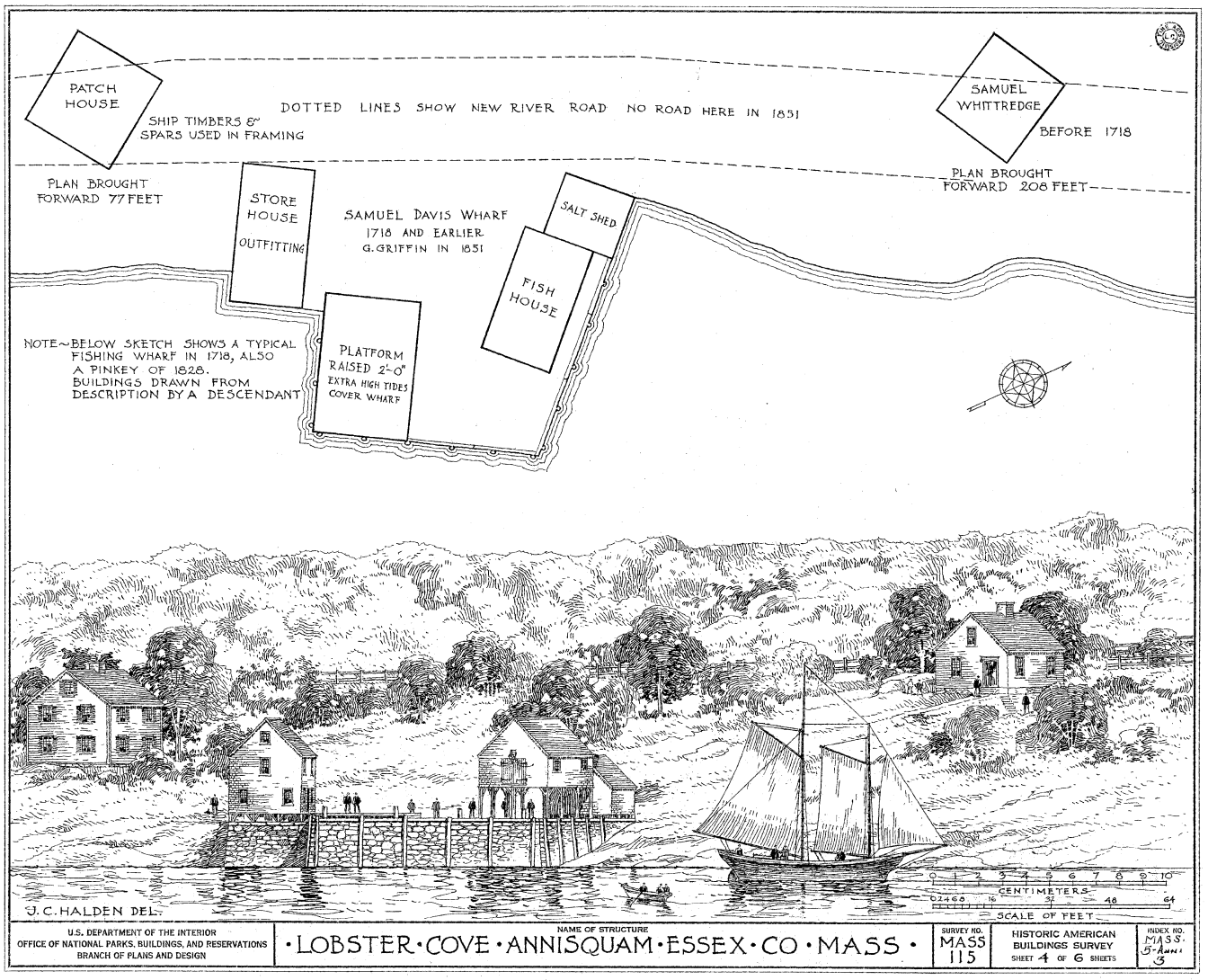


*Fig. 7. Cultural landscape drawing of the early fishing community of Lobster Cove, Essex County, Massachusetts. (J.C. Halden, HABS, 1935)*

olonial architecture of New England and the Mid-Atlantic region.

Only a handful of books were then available regarding architecture on a national scale, such as: William Rotch Ware's *The Georgian Period* (multiple volumes, 1898-1902); Fiske Kimball's *Domestic Architecture of the American Colonies and Early Republic* (1922); and Thomas E. Tallmadge's *The Story of Architecture in America* (1927).[39] Important architectural journals or series were much cited in the bibliographies including the *White Pine Series* of architectural monographs; the *Quarterly Magazine of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities*; and the work of the Architect's Emergency Committee's *Great Georgian Houses of America* (1933). Also appearing in the bibliographies were architects' pattern books, such as works of Asher Benjamin.[40] The diversity of resource types cited also suggests that no clear methodology had been developed for research in architectural history. While some district officers relied on these extant published works, many more turned to regional histories for source material. Others depended largely on newspaper archives and oral histories for information. Very few cited the primary source materials that have become the standard of today's architectural research. Nonetheless, the Outlines reveal keen observation and the ability to recognize regional building forms in the field such as the galleried houses of Louisiana, the "wing" or "butterfly" houses of northwest Pennsylvania, the hewn timber houses of Oregon, and the

*Fig. 8. Stevens House, Crawford County, Pennsylvania, a regionally specific vernacular building identified by HABS as the "butterfly" house type. (William Bulger, HABS, 1936)*

patterned brick houses of New Jersey, to name only a few (fig. 8). It is evident that the district officers attempted to represent their region's unique history, although with varying degrees of success. Circumstances, such as the decisions to overlook structures that had received prior documentation or to give priority to endangered buildings sometimes skewed the resulting selection.[41]

Authors also discussed in the Outlines the "character and arrangement" of each individual architectural feature or building element, including plans, elevations, roofs, chimneys, stairways, mantels, moldings, and other details in order to obtain a general understanding of regional forms. This analysis was repeated with each successive period of development, so that a general picture of the architecture of the times could be ascertained. Both the common and exceptional were noted. Lacking the vocabulary needed to apply labels, drawings were sometimes used to record various features. A figure page illustrating sketches of Massachusetts house types, for example, depicts many of what are now commonly understood forms, such as the Cape Cod and the Saltbox, but they are identified by the owner's names instead of the house type (fig. 9). Other illustrative sheets compare such elements as early plan types, molding profiles, and porch configurations.

Clearly HABS founders intended to advance beyond the mere emulation of old forms of documentation to place the structures within the context of larger patterns of architectural development and to begin to create building typologies.[42] So important was a comprehensive approach to chief architect Thomas Vint that he insisted the Outline Summaries address all typical and significant forms whether or not they were among those actually recorded by HABS. The intent was that the volumes be informative rather than illustrative. The essays rather than the drawings and photographs were to be the focus.[43]

*Fig. 9. This page labeled "Colonial Buildings," which appeared in the Massachusetts Outline report, depicts early New England house types. (J.C. Halden, HABS)*

HABS administrators argued:

> Not only has the survey preserved the form of many important and historic buildings for posterity, but also it has produced and brought together such a wide range of subjects in every part of the country that for the first time it is possible to begin to realize the richness of the field of early American architecture . . . . The variety and extent of the HABS records in the Library of Congress and the first comprehensive outline of the history of American architecture are the two features which will make the Survey of permanent and increasing value.[44]

There was a strong sense among the district officers as well that the outline reports were an important step in promoting the study and appreciation of their state's historic architecture. The foreword to the outline for New Jersey, for example, states, "It is our hope that this chapter will develop sufficient interest to make it possible to write a complete book on New Jersey making real and living the stirring events which formed the background of much of our architectural development and teach us a proper appreciation of our rich heritage."[45]

A 1939 exhibition held at the Department of the Interior Museum featured a layout of the proposed *Outline of the Development of Early American Architecture*. Ultimately this ambitious manuscript never was published (fig. 10). The enormity of the task was just too great, and perhaps the exercise was premature, considering the state of the field of architectural historical study. Already charged with project management and drawing tasks, many district officers found the process of information gathering and report writing overwhelming; therefore, much of it was left uncompleted as New Deal funding for HABS dwindled on the eve of American's entry into World War II. In fact, the historical data could not be assembled and verified prior to the publication of the first catalog of HABS work, published in 1938. As a result no ref-

*Fig. 10. The HABS program and its "Outline of Architecture in the United States," as featured in a 1939 exhibition at the Department of the Interior Museum. (WPA, National Archives)*

erence to history or data appears, despite the Library's Chief of the Division of Fine Arts and HABS Advisory member, Leicester B. Holland's introduction, which states: "With each completed record there is also a page of data, giving the present ownership, condition, name of builder, and date of building where known."[46]

While the HABS administrators were unable to establish an ideal program that would both efficiently record and interpret America's architectural heritage, what they produced manifests significant intent and purpose. Instead of focusing on history and interpretation, many HABS architects saw as their main objective the creation of a database of primary source materials; thus they mined historic buildings for architectural motifs to be used for restoration and Colonial Revival design projects. In fact, the attention to detail within the HABS drawings sets is striking (fig. 11). And, perhaps even more than economic relief, HABS administrators touted the program's educational work as of great benefit to the architects and draftsmen they employed. As was stated among the reasons for continuing the program:

> This [benefit] is not only in knowledge of the early structures themselves and of their architectural details, but also in draftsmanship and an improved ability in designing both in the Colonial styles and others because of a closer knowledge of the functions of the different parts of the building and a sense of proportion which the early architecture of this country possessed to a remarkable degree, and which is brought home to the field workers through the measurements and drawings which they make.[47]

*Fig. 11. "Elevation of South Entrance," Cutts Mansion, York County, Maine. A HABS sheet of measured and drawn details capturing elements of colonial-era architecture. (Ernest F. Spaulding, HABS, 1936)*

The Colonial Revival movement was responsible for numerous local and regional historical efforts during this era, but what was needed were approaches to addressing our heritage that were national in scope. As the tripartite agreement that formalized the relationship between HABS, the AIA, and the Library of Congress in 1934, points out: "The scattered surveys that have heretofore been made through efforts of local organizations and individual enthusiasm have yielded heterogeneous results, with considerable duplication, and have been of little practical value to the general public." As the agreement claimed: "A comprehensive and continuous national survey is the logical concern of the Federal Government"(fig. 12).[48] In arguing for the validity of the HABS program, the agreement also cited the need for models on which to base restorations in order to avoid controversial projects such as the recreation that had just taken place at Wakefield, the birthplace of George Washington. This issue was becoming more and more relevant to the work of the National Park Service; just prior to the founding of HABS, Executive Order 6133 consolidated all military parks, battlefields, and national monuments under NPS management, thereby increasing its holdings of historic property fourfold.[49] Another major step towards a national policy of preserving places for public use came in 1935 with the passage of the Historic Sites Act, which called for the preservation of America's national significant historic sites, buildings, objects, and antiquities. Proponents of the act cited the pioneering work of HABS. It is likely not a coincidence that the Act specifically mentions the collection and preservation of drawings, photographs, and other data, and the surveys of historic buildings and sites.[50] The implementation in 1956 of a ten-year program to improve NPS facilities and infrastructure, known as Mission 66, provided the opportunity to formally reestablish the HABS program. While focused on the construction of newly conceived visitor centers, the program also provided funding for the preservation and rehabilitation of historic sites, especially those acquired as new NPS National Historic Sites. HABS could provide the documentation needed to do

*Fig. 12. The 1930s Massachusetts survey team at work on measured drawings in the field office. (HABS)*

that. With Thomas Vint as both Chief of NPS Planning and Design, and a member of the steering committee that oversaw all Mission 66 proposals, it is not surprising that a permanent staff dedicated solely to HABS work was eventually assembled. Finally, the 1966 National Preservation Act, and the creation of the National Register of Historic Places, significantly increased public involvement in the preservation process and provided unprecedented financial support for state and local programs and for historic site surveys. Interestingly, the 1966 Act provided similar justification for its establishment, as had the HABS program a few decades earlier, citing our vanishing architectural heritage and the vital need to preserve a legacy of our culture for future generations. The Act deemed it "necessary and appropriate" for the federal government to provide support and financial assistance to both private agencies and individuals, and to state and local governments undertaking historic preservation initiatives.[51]

Much has changed in HABS, and in architectural studies in general, since the pre-World War II era. When Modernist dogma overran Beaux Arts principles, it generated a divide between architecture and architectural history. Subsequently the establishment of architectural history programs independent of design education led to an increase in the depth and breadth of historical research regarding buildings and landscapes. In addition, a variety of federal, state, and local preservation programs emerged to identify and preserve historic resources, leaving HABS to focus more closely on its core mission: producing and making available documentation of significant architectural resources. In this way HABS assists in many preservation initiatives. Current efforts to index its collection will make it easier to study aspects of America's built environment. The index will allow researchers to query by building "classification," "element," or the value-added category, "culture," to address every aspect of a site, some of which early recorders never imagined would be of interest. As the first federal preservation program, HABS sowed the seeds for many of the strategies still used today such as survey, registration, and sensitivity to context. Despite the discrepancy between the original vision and the ultimate achievement of the early collection, HABS has made valuable contributions to the study of architecture through its publicly accessible database of primary materials, the development of standards for comprehensive documentation, and the introduction of a perspective that is national in scope.

**Acknowledgements**

This paper resulted from extensive archival research undertaken in preparation for a symposium about HABS sponsored by the American Institute of Architects in honor of its seventieth anniversary. In formal papers, HABS historians each examined a different aspect of the program's history and significance in the fields of education and historic preservation. Thanks thus are due to my colleagues Lisa P. Davidson, James A. Jacobs, Martin J. Perschler, and Virginia B. Price, all of whom willingly shared their thoughts and research.

**Endnotes:**

[1] The original HABS experiment, funded by the Civil Works Administration, was intended to last only three months, from mid-November 1933 to mid-February 1934 and was to include all but six states in the Northwest, where extreme winter temperatures precluded the necessary fieldwork. In April 1934, an exhibition of the HABS work at the "U.S. National Museum" in Washington, combined with the lobbying efforts of the HABS administrators, led by Thomas Vint, helped raise awareness for HABS. As a result, the National Park Service, the Library of Congress, and the American Institute of Architects agreed jointly to continue the work of HABS, thereby laying the groundwork for a lasting endeavor. Meanwhile, the individual state surveys applied for Emergency Relief, and Public Works Funds that enabled work to continue in some areas until 1941.

[2] American Institute of Architects, *Proceedings of the Fifty-First Convention,* 1918 (Washington: AIA, 1918), 19. Quoted in Wilton Claude Corkern, "Architects, Preservationists, and the New Deal: The Historic American Buildings Survey, 1933-1942" (Ph.D. diss., George Washington University, 1984), 7-8.

[3] Including the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), the Civil Works Administration (CWA), and the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the New Deal programs had a profound and lasting effect on natural and cultural resources. Designed to provide employment while serving the public good, the projects ranged from public works such as the construction of park infrastructure, trails, and recreational facilities to cultural enrichment projects responsible for the production of public art, literature, and the establishment and cataloging of archival collections. When the CWA was created on November 8, 1933, a call went out to all federal agencies encouraging them to propose projects to put to work the nation's unemployed. National Park Service (NPS) landscape architect Charles E. Peterson was among those to respond, submitting a proposal for a four-month initiative to mobilize up to a thousand architects nationwide to record

historic architecture. Although HABS began as a CWA initiative, the program was continued through the efforts of individual states with the support of funds from the WPA.

[4] HABS, Bulletin No. 1, *Fiscal and Administrative Procedure,* 27 December 1933. Unless otherwise cited, HABS Bulletins and Circulars consulted for the purposes of this article are from the reference library of the HABS/HAER/HALS Office, Washington, D. C.

[5] From the establishment of the first American architectural program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1865 through the 1930s, students were encouraged to study historical precedents in order to understand the various styles and their potential for use in modern design. The founder of MIT's architectural program, William Robert Ware, wrote a curriculum that depended as much on history as on design. He thus prescribed the training needed for the day's architect-historians. This term has been used to refer to a select group of scholarly architects who conducted design work but who also wrote architectural histories during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was these individuals, including Ralph Adams Cram, William Robert Ware, Fiske Kimball, A.D.F. Hamlin, and Talbot Hamlin who dominated American architectural scholarship through their groundbreaking publications. See Keith N. Morgan and Richard Cheek, "History in the Service of Design: American Architect-Historians, 1870-1940," in *The Architectural Historian in America; Studies in the History of Art* 35, ed. Elisabeth Blair MacDougall (Hanover and London: National Gallery of Art, Washington, distributed by University Press of New England, 1990), 61-75. Morgan and Cheek identify William Robert Ware as the author of the influential *The American Vignola* (1901), and his nephew, William Rotch Ware, as editor of the multi-volume *The Georgian Period,* beginning in 1898. Ralph Adams Cram, according to Morgan and Cheek, was among the most prolific of the architect-historians, writing on topics relating to American as well as European architectural forms. Also very influential were A.D.F. Hamlin, and his son Talbot Hamlin, who were responsible for numerous publications, beginning in 1898 with A.D.F.'s *A Textbook of the History of Architecture.*

[6] In reality, much of the HABS documentation of individual sites does not consist of all three components. Some of the HABS architect-historians were more comfortable with report-writing than others. The most comprehensive state surveys were those that included a professional historian on the team. Perhaps the best example of this was the early New Jersey survey, for which documentation of almost every site contained all three elements. Photography is the component best represented. As district officers saw HABS funding coming to an end, they made a concerted effort to see that photographs, at least, were part of site documentation.

[7] HABS Circular No.1: *General Information,* Civil Works Program, Dept. of the Interior, Office of the National Parks, Buildings and Reservations, December 12, 1933, Entry II, Bulletins and Circulars, 1933-1938, RG 515, National Archives, 2.

[8] Lisa Davidson kindly pointed out that prior to the creation of the federal preservation bureaucracy that began with HABS, documentation of historic architecture was undertaken largely as an avocation rather than as a paid endeavor.

[9] A "complete resume" was the stated objective, and most district officers did their best to comply. However, while subject to review by the Washington, D.C. office, responsibility for determining which architectural forms were most significant was left to the district officer. In some cases, their prior involvement in local preservation efforts is clearly reflected in the documentation produced for HABS. For example, the records for Louisiana were heavily weighted toward sites and structures located within the French Quarter of New Orleans where district officer Richard Koch was involved with a local preservation commission. The amount of attention given to Baltimore's endangered buildings likewise reflects the concerns of Maryland district officer John H. Scarff. The program established a cut-off date of 1865, indicating a bias towards early American architecture that likewise skewed the building selection. This was particularly true in the eastern regions. Western states like California and New Mexico also focused on early building forms such as Native American pueblos and Spanish missions. In other areas of the west and midwest, however, documentation encompassed the Victorian styles scoffed at by many architect-historians of the times. The district officer for Alabama culled through the images taken by the team photographer, removing all images of Victorian buildings before sending the documentation on to Washington (Robert Gamble, author of *The Alabama Catalog of HABS,* interview by author, Fall 2003.) In newer states where Victorian was the most prominent building style, this bias provoked opposition. HABS administrators eventually acquiesced. Priority for building selection also was to be given to endangered buildings and to those with no previous documentation. Factors such as proximity to the field office, availability of vehicles, accessibility, and other logistical factors also played an inevitable role in building selection.

[10] For more information about setting priorities for documentation, see: Lisa Pfueller Davidson and Martin J. Perschler, "The Historic American Buildings Survey During the New Deal Era: Documenting a 'Complete Resume of the Builder's Art,' " *CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship* 1, no. 1 (Fall 2003): 55-58.

[11] The outlines that were produced varied in length and quality, depending on the skill of the author. Many expressed concern over the quality of their essays. As Maryland district officer John H. Scarff admitted in his cover letter, "I am sending you herewith the 'Outline.' I hope you will like it. It at least taught me the difference between an Architect and an Historian. It is greatly to be hoped it is not below the average of the other districts." Letter, John H. Scarff to John P. O'Neill, 5 March 1937, "Outline" file, box 8 (Maryland), RG515, National Archives. In some cases, as with New Jersey, a professional historian, who was also a member of the survey team,

wrote the outline report. The guidelines provided an out for district officers who were not up to the challenge; as stated in Bulletin No. 54, 2: "Should a district officer feel that his experience has not qualified him to act as editor of his district chapter, there will be no objection to his placing data collected in the hands of whatever authority on early architecture of the district he and his advisory committee may select as best qualified to give the final review. The names of persons assisting, and a bibliography, will form a short foreward, written by the District Officer."

[12] HABS catalogs have been published for the following states: New Hampshire (1963), Massachusetts (1965), Wisconsin (1965), Chicago & other areas of Illinois (1966), Michigan (1967), Utah (1969), Maine (1974), Texas (1974), District of Columbia (1976), Virginia (1976) New Jersey (1977), Philadelphia (1876), Alabama (1987), Georgia (1982), Pennsylvania (2000), New Mexico (2001).

[13] Thomas Waterman was the author of the (draft) outline for Virginia.

[14] The program was kept alive through World War II and in the years that followed by donations to the collection, rather than through NPS-initiated recording projects. In the late 1950s, Thomas Vint and others successfully lobbied to have HABS resurrected as a fully staffed, permanent program, as part of the NPS Mission 66 initiative. As chairman of the steering committee and the architect of the initial planning efforts for Mission 66, his influence in the revival of HABS during this period is clear. Begun in 1956, Mission 66 was a program intended to bring all parks and park facilities and sites—including historic properties—up to standards in time for the fiftieth anniversary of NPS. Outdated facilities and a rise in the number of visitors were responsible for spearheading a ten-year program of comprehensive park development. For more information on Thomas Vint and his role as Chief Landscape Architect see: Ethan Carr, "The Noblest Landscape Problem: Thomas C. Vint and Landscape/Historic Preservation," (paper presented at Armon Hall at Wave Hill, Bronx, N.Y., April 1999; available online through the Cultural Landscape Foundation, Stewardship Through Education website, www.tclf.org/conf_papers).

[15] Historic American Buildings Survey, Circular No. 1, 12 December 1933, 3.

[16] According to a draft report on the Historic American Buildings Survey written in the 1930s for the American Civic Association, John P. O'Neill was formerly of the Carnegie Institution of Washington; HABS, General Correspondence file (Records of Charles E. Peterson), Box 1, RG 515, National Archives. According to their website, the Carnegie Institution was founded by Andrew Carnegie in 1902 to advance scientific study by bringing together "men and women with imagination and extraordinary dedication capable of working on the cutting edge of their fields," www.carnegieinstitution.org.

[17] Charles E. Peterson, "The Historic American Buildings Survey: Its Beginnings," in *Historic America: Building, Structures, and Sites,* ed. C. Ford Petross (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1983), 8-9.

[18] When former HABS photographer John Brostrup was asked what Thomas Waterman was like, he described a complex and intense personality: "Tom is hard to describe. He was dedicated to authenticity, to the purity of the duplication of forms, moldings, details as well as plans and elevations. He was a purist." Interview by author, 2002. For more information on Thomas Waterman see: Fay Campbell Kaynor, "Thomas Tileston Waterman: Student of American Colonial Architecture," *Winterthur Portfolio,* 20, nos. 2/3 (Summer/Autumn 1985): 103–147.

[19] In his essay for the fiftieth anniversary of HABS, Peterson reminisced about the work of the architects for Williamsburg and his association with them: "They [architects Perry, Shaw and Hepburn] began the graphic analysis of the distinctive Tidewater eighteenth-century style with the brilliant success still to be seen in their earliest work. It ranges all the way from wooden smokehouses in backyards to the great, reconstructed Governor's Palace. Careful study of the numerous antique structures still standing across the Tidewater country gave the architects a mastery of the local style. The relationship between the structures and measurements projected on paper became a highly developed subject. The drafting rooms were full of adventure and excitement and every junior architect was working on a book of his own. Though not a Rockefeller employee, I was working nearby and knew them all." Charles E. Peterson, "The Historic American Buildings Survey," 10-11.

[20] Popular belief holds that Charles Peterson alone (or at least primarily) is responsible for the HABS program, both in creating and sustaining it over the years. This belief, however, belies the contributions of numerous individuals and organizations involved in the preservation movement who engaged in the exchange of ideas and participated in initiatives that led to the formation of HABS. Likewise, it discounts the work of HABS people responsible for developing the methodologies and guidelines as well as overseeing the program's operations on a day-to-day basis. In fact, there is no evidence within the records of HABS or the WPA to indicate that Charles Peterson played an active role in the administration of the program, nor in the development of its documentation standards, during the first two decades of its history. While Peterson did maintain an occasional correspondence with O'Neill and others on the Washington staff while on assignment in Missouri, he was not part of the operations. In fact, in a letter written from St. Louis to John O'Neill in July of 1936, Peterson asks, "Will you please put me on the mailing list of regular Historic American Buildings Survey advices?" presumably referring to the regular flow of bulletins and circulars. See Peterson to John O'Neill, 21 July 1936, Entry 7, State Organization Files, Box 11 (Missouri), RG 515, National Archives. Furthermore, in a letter dated 19 May 1937, O'Neill tried to convince Peterson to write the Missouri Outline: "The Missouri paper was found to be far short of the requirements of this analytical study. I am sending a copy of

the paper attached. You will readily see that it merely sketches some of the aspects of early Missouri architecture and omits much of the certain obvious important factors. I am also attaching a copy of our bulletin containing the schedule of the discussion which forms the framework of these papers [presumably, Bulletin #54 which provides the guidelines for the outline reports]. In searching about for a person who can speak authoritatively on this subject in Missouri to whom we could now turn, we all agreed that if you could find time the study could not possibly be in better hands. Please think it over and let me know if you can do it." Peterson declined the offer, to which O'Neill replied, "I was pretty disappointed you were not free to fall into the trap set for you on the preparation of a Missouri section of our outline of the Development of Early American Architecture . . ." Ibid., 25 October, 1937 (Missouri). While Peterson recommended sites that should be recorded for HABS in Missouri, other individuals served as HABS district officer in St. Louis. Between 1941 and 1956, HABS remained active only through donations to the collection and select NPS recording.

Peterson's most significant involvement with HABS occurred during the 1950s. He was one of a handful of NPS administrators lobbying for the program's successful reinstatement as part of the Mission 66 initiative and overseeing the production of drawings of new park acquisitions to HABS standards. Peterson came to Philadelphia in 1950 as resident architect for Independence National Historical Park, and from 1954 until he retired in 1962, he served as Supervising Architect of Historic Structures for the Eastern United States. Despite the efforts of senior administrator Thomas Vint (and others including the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments; and the Committee on Conservation of Cultural Resources) to revitalize the HABS program in the immediate post-war era, this did not occur until about 1956 as part of the Mission 66 initiative. Thomas Vint was on the steering committee for Mission 66, the duties of which included review of all proposals for projects related to the initiative, and thus his influence is manifest. What was likely the first official memorandum endorsing the program's reinstatement as part of Mission 66 was written on 30 March 1955 by Dick Sutton, Chief Architect, Washington, D.C., through Thomas Vint, to the Chairman of the Steering Committee for Mission 66. In it Sutton advocated a ten-year program that would consist of field offices located "adjacent to areas which contain historic buildings determined to be essential for inclusion in the survey, and a small group in the Washington [Sutton's] office." According to the proposal, these individuals would coordinate the work, review the material, and act as liaison between HABS, the Library of Congress, and the AIA. Memorandum from Dick Sutton, Chief Architect, HABS, through Mr. Vint, to Chairman, Steering Committee, Mission 66, 30 March 1955, Early HABS Administration, File Box 1, RG 515, National Archives. As an active member of the Society of Architectural Historians, Peterson arranged meetings within that organization to lobby for the reinstatement of HABS.

The proposal to reinstate HABS formalized and expanded upon an arrangement already underway within NPS to produce HABS drawings of sites newly acquired as National Historical Sites or within parks. In 1950 or 1951, the Eastern Office in Philadelphia began hiring second and third-year summer students to prepare drawings of these structures as a way of supplementing the work of their own architects tasked with the restoration. Included among the first such structures recorded are a number of buildings associated with Independence National Historical Park. According to a memorandum written by Dick Sutton, during the summer of 1951, a "squad of seasonal employees, under the leadership of Professor Campbell of Pennsylvania University made measurements and started drawings" of a number of structures in the vicinity including the Merchants Exchange and numerous residences. Memorandum from Dick Sutton to Dr. Porter, 16 January 1952, Records of the Chief of Planning, 1951-1968, Box 1, RG 515, National Archives. In 1959, Charles Peterson and Penelope Hartshorne, both of Independence NHP, supervised the drawing of the park's crown jewel, Congress Hall. Peterson provided general oversight from Philadelphia for other early summer projects operated in the field by various professors of architecture or other NPS architects including: Adams National Historical Site, in Quincy, Massachusetts, 1955, George C. Winterowd (Miami Univ.), supervisor; the Customs House at Salem Maritime National Historical Site, in Salem, MA, 1958, Ernest Connolly (Univ. of Illinois), supervisor; and also in 1957-58, Hopewell Village, PA, Norman Souder, NPS, supervisor; Gettysburg, PA., Prof. Henry C. Edwards, supervisor; and Fort McHenry, MD, Lee Nelson (Univ. of Illinois), supervisor. The summer program would later be expanded to include sites of national significance located outside the jurisdiction of NPS.

In the decades following his retirement from NPS in 1962, Peterson remained a friend of the program, conducting numerous letter-writing campaigns in its support when it seemed that the future of the program was uncertain.

[21] HABS, Circular No. 1, 12 December 1933, 3-4.

[22] Each state that sponsored a HABS field office, like the National HABS office, had a local advisory committee composed of members of the AIA, and civic and historical associations.

[23] While many who practiced architecture during that time received their training through apprenticeship rather than through formal education, those on the HABS teams had even less training. District officers complained frequently about the poor skills of their work force, suggesting that many should regarded as delineators rather than as architects. This situation was due in part to the fact that the better-trained architects were generally not among those on the official rolls of the unemployed. Massachusetts' district officer Frank Choteau Brown accused the WPA of "unloading" on the HABS program personnel who could not be placed elsewhere. See Davidson and Perschler, "The Historic American Buildings Survey During the New Deal Era": 59-60.

[24] James Jacobs, "Shifts in Architectural and Historical Education in the Twentieth Century and Their Effects on HABS Documentation," (paper presented at the American Institute of Architects, November 2002).

[25] HABS, "Bulletin No. 15: *Historic American Buildings Survey Index,*" 23 February 1934, 1. According to the bulletin, "This list will include all measured projects performed under the Historic American Buildings Survey, all structures suggested for consideration under that program, and all other structures which are deserving of permanent record for one reason or another." Attempts to revitalize the HABS program in the 1940s and 1950s were often presented in terms of needing to complete the survey begun by HABS in the 1930s. As Thomas Vint explained in 1958, "The subjects measured [by HABS teams in the 1930s] therefore were those within easy reach of where the unemployed persons lived. This was a major control on what buildings were measured and photographed. As a consequence, the program was not a complete national survey of historic buildings. Another control that was put on our program in the 30's was that any structure that was in good hands to preserve it would not be measured and emphasis was given to those structures that might be lost. As a consequence many of the important buildings in the Country were not included." Memorandum, Thomas Vint, Chief of Design and Construction to Members of the HABS Advisory Board, 27 January 1958, Records of the Advisory Board, General Correspondence 1953-1979, RG 515, National Archives.

[26] Former HABS photographer John Brostrup remembers being assigned by Delos Smith of the HABS Washington, D.C., office "to photograph buildings that they knew wouldn't be drawn, as they were running out of money," interview by author, November 2002.

[27] These cards are now available through the Library of Congress's on-line HABS collection as "supplement materials."

[28] HABS, Bulletin No. 3: *General Instructions,* 20 December 1933, 2.

[29] HABS, Bulletin No.4, *Measurements and Field Notes,* 22 December 1933, 5. Additional bulletins outlining drawing standards included: Bulletin No. 5, *Preparation of Record Drawings and Date,* 26 December 1933; Bulletin No. 17, *Check List for Correcting Final Drawings,* 25 January 1934; and Bulletin No. 21, *Cover Sheets for HABS Drawings,* 8 February 1934. The more comprehensive *Specifications for the Measuring and Recording of Historic American Buildings and Structural Remains,* based upon the bulletins was issued on 1 July 1935 and revised on 1 November 1935, and again on 1 January 1951. Despite the instruction to draw buildings exactly as they appear, some conjectural drawings were made, and ruined buildings made right again.

[30] HABS, Circular No. 1, 12 December 1933.

[31] A form letter was developed and sent out by Chief Vint briefly explaining the work of the HABS program and requesting information on the structures then listed. It was sent to the local historical society, regional library, or other known archive. Sometimes letters were sent to property owners or local historians. The results were mixed, often depending on the length of the list. Unfortunately the reliance on other sources for historical information often meant that the histories were limited, or worse yet, never completed.

[32] HABS, *Specifications for the Measurement and Recording of Historic American Buildings and Structural Remains,* 1 November 1935, 25.

[33] HABS, Bulletin No. 54, *General HABS Written Report,* 16 November 1936, HABS Files, WPA RG 69, National Archives.

[34] *Outline of the Development of Early American Architecture in Kentucky,* HABS State Files (Kentucky), "Outline" File, RG 515, National Archives, 15-16.

[35] E. Walter Burkhardt, *Development of Early American Architecture in Alabama,* 24 April 1937, HABS State Files (Alabama), "Outline" File, RG 515, National Archives, 28.

[36] Thomas T. Waterman, *The Outline of Early Virginia Architecture,* HABS State Files (Virginia), "Outline" File, RG 515, National Archives. "Dog-runs" were the vernacular house form most frequently identified by name. It was second only to log cabins as the most universally appearing so-called "primitive" building form.

[37] See HABS Bulletin No. 54, *General HABS Written Report,* 16 November 1936.

[38] Examples include: Joseph Everett Chandler's *The Colonial Architecture of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia* (1892); Emma H. Nason's *Old Colonial Houses in Maine* (1908); James M. Corner and Eric E. Soderholtz's *Examples of Colonial Architecture in New England* (1891) and *Examples of Colonial Architecture in New England Maryland and Virginia* (1892); John M. Hammond's *Colonial Mansions of Maryland and Delaware* (1914); Zephyrin Englehardt's *Mission and Missionaries of California* (multiple volumes, 1912-1916); L. Bradford Prince's *Spanish Mission Churches* (1915); Lewis A. Coffin and Arthur C. Holden's *Brick Architecture of the Colonial Period in Maryland and Virginia* (1919); John Frederick Kelly's *Domestic Architecture of Connecticut* (1924); George Fletcher Bennett's *Early Architecture of Delaware* (1932); and Henry Chandlee Forman's *Early Manor and Plantation Houses of Maryland* (1934).

[39] Other examples include: Harold D. Eberlein's *The Architecture of Colonial America* (1915); Joseph Jackson's *American Colonial Architecture: Its Origin and Development* (1924), and *Development of American Architecture, 1785–1830* (1926); and Howard Major, *Domestic Architecture of the Early Republic* (1926).

[40] According to Elisabeth Blair MacDougall in "Before 1870: Founding Fathers and Amateur Historians," books such as these that gave instruction regarding the correct use of classical forms were among the architecture publications most published in America between the 1790s and the 1870s. See p. 16 in *The Architectural Historian in America.* The use of early precedents by some HABS architects indicates that adherence to models of architectural style was their measure of architectural value.

[41] Interpreting what constituted the significant architecture of their region, some district officers showed preference for a particular form. Such was the case in California, where recording concentrated on Colonial-era Spanish missions. As the HABS program generally did not record buildings erected after 1865, the architectural selection, particularly in the middle western and western states, was limited. Many officers were able to provide a good sample, even if they could not articulate the reasons for the selection. Robert Gamble, author of *The Alabama Catalog,* stated that despite the tendency to focus on buildings that reflected their plantation era heyday, he was amazed by the depth and breadth of the overall building selection (interview by author, Fall 2003).

[42] Examples such as Joseph E. Chandler's *The Colonial Architecture of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia* (1902), Eleanor Raymond's *Early Domestic Architecture of Pennsylvania* (1930), and Philip B. Wallace's *Colonial Houses* contained drawings and/or photographs of prime architectural examples with little or no historical text. *The White Pines Series,* on the other hand, was unequaled in providing more comprehensive information.

[43] Thomas Vint stated in a letter to one of the district officers, "Regarding your query as to the scope and make-up of any publication resulting from the 'Outline' which we are preparing, no monumental reproduction of HABS drawings and photographs in connection with the 'Outline' has been contemplated, and I foresee no possibility that any will be. Your assumption that drawings and photographs called for in Bulletin No. 54 are to be merely illustrative of and supplementary to the text is entirely correct." Thomas C. Vint to Thomas E. Tallmadge and others, 26 February 1937, HABS States Files (Illinois), "Outline" Folder, Box 5, RG 515, National Archives.

[44] Memo reporting on the "Quality of Work: Evaluations," (author unnamed, but likely O'Neill, official director of WPA projects who was responsible for reports), 1937, "HABS" File, RG 69, National Archives.

[45] *Outline of the Development of Early American Architecture in New Jersey,* HABS State Files (New Jersey), RG 515, National Archives.

[46] This occurred despite a letter campaign by O'Neill to encourage district officers to get the information to him in time for publication. Leicester Holland of the Library of Congress was also concerned about the reliability of facts. He wrote: "We [at the Library] have made no effort, as a rule, to prepare authentic historical data, for the research necessary to do such a job properly is quite beyond the competence of our personnel, and it is better to make no pretense than to give a false impression of historical reliability." Leicester B. Holland, Chief, Division of Fine Arts, to Dudley C. Bayliss, Acting Chief of Planning, NPS, 27 October 1939, Records of the Chief of Planning, RG 515, National Archives. John P. O'Neill, comp. and ed., *Historic American Buildings Survey; Catalog of the Measured Drawings and Photographs of the Survey in the Library of Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1938), vi. The 1959 "Catalog Supplement," which aimed at bringing the 1941 catalog up to date, included the number of data pages for each structure. Unfortunately, it did not include a listing of data pages for the earlier work. As late as the 1980s, staff historians were completing Architectural Data Forms to accompany drawings and/or photographs made during the earlier years of the survey, and only then being transmitted to the Library of Congress.

[47] Memo (author unknown), HABS, "Need for the Program," 14 August 1937, HABS File, RG 69, National Archives.

[48] *HABS as a Permanent Plan,* HABS Bulletin #32, 6 April 1934.

[49] This move was something for which National Park Service director Horace Albright—who had a strong interest in history and preservation—had long lobbied secretaries of the Interior Department, and Presidents Hoover, and finally F.D. Roosevelt. See Corkern, "Architects, Preservationists, and the New Deal," 68-71.

[50] Corkern, "Architects, Preservationists, and the New Deal," 102. While the Historic Sites Act of 1935 is still being cited as the legal basis for HABS operations, in reality the focus of the newly formed Branch of Historic Sites and Buildings was on the acquisition, management, and interpretation of historical parks, and did not include the HABS program. However, the act and the need for architectural survey provided the justification for funding HABS as a number of mobile units for just that purpose, from November 1939 through the summer of 1941, when the New Deal project came to an end.

[51] Lisa Davidson, "Documentation in Context: A Look at the Development of HABS and the Historic Preservation Movement," (paper presented at the A.I.A., November 2002). For more information about the acts reference here, see National Park Service's Links to the Past website; Laws, Regs & Standards, www.cr.nps.gov/linklaws.htm.