

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Presidential Sites Theme

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Camp Hoover  
other names/site number Camp Rapidan

### 2. Location

street & number Shenandoah National Park  not for publication  
city, town Graves Mill  vicinity  
state Virginia code VA county Madison code VA-113 zip code 22721

### 3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>4</u>	<u>16</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>16</u>	<u>11</u> structures
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>23</u>	<u>27</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Government/Summer White House

Domestic/Camp

Recreation and Culture/Outdoor Recreation

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture/Outdoor Recreation

Government/Retreat

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Rustic Camp

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone/boulders

walls wood/weatherboard

roof Asphalt

other Stone/Fieldstone Fireplaces

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

At the headwaters of Virginia's Rapidan River, secluded among the hemlocks at the base of Fork Mountain, is what remains of the retreat developed between 1929 and 1932 as a "summer White House" for U.S. President Herbert Hoover. Of "Camp Rapidan's" 13 original buildings, three still exist, as do trails, stone bridges, man-made trout pools, a stone fountain, a massive outdoor stone fireplace and other resources that contribute to an understanding of the camp's original function, appearance, appeal and significance.

Originally built on a 164-acre parcel owned by Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover, the camp is now within the boundaries of the Shenandoah National Park. The extant buildings are maintained by the National Park Service. As requested by Herbert Hoover when he deeded the camp to the State of Virginia in 1932, it is administered and equipped as a summer weekend retreat for the President of the United States. Located 100 miles southwest of Washington, the camp's lodging facilities can accommodate up to 20 persons. When not being used by the President, the camp's facilities are made available on a rental basis to members and staff of the President's Cabinet and the U.S. Congress. For the benefit of park users exploring the area on foot or on horseback, the grounds surrounding the buildings are marked with a system of informational signs, maps and photographs that interpret the camp's historical significance. One weekend a year, the National Park Service hosts public tours of two of the three surviving cabins -- The President (Site Plan "A", building No. 1/Contributing Resource No. 1), and The Prime Minister (Site Plan "A", building No. 6/Contributing Resource No. 6). The Creel (Site Plan "A", building No. 3/Contributing Resource No. 3) is not included because of the extent of its interior modernization.

The boundaries stipulated in and surveyed for this nomination combine natural topographic features (Mill and Laurel Prongs) and edges that mark a diminishing concentration of contributing resources. In addition to the three existing buildings, the boundaries encompass 20 resources that contribute directly to the camp's significance as a presidential retreat during the Hoover Administration (1929-1933). These are shown on Sketch Map 7-A. Adjacent to the three existing cabins are two contributing resources -- a four-tiered stone foundation (Contributing Resource

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D N/A

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

VII-H Political and Military Affairs,  
The Great Depression and the  
New Deal (1929-1941)

1929-1933

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Hoover, Herbert Clark

Architect/Builder

Hoover, Lou Henry/U.S. Marine Corps

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

What remains of the Hoovers' Camp on the Rapidan offers more than a "Hoover Slept Here" significance in its direct association from 1929 to 1933 with the lives of President Herbert Hoover and First Lady Lou Henry Hoover. The tranquility afforded by the camp's surroundings -- the liquid lullabye of Laurel and Mill Prongs as they flow together to form the headwaters of the Rapidan River only a stone's throw from the deck of the President's cabin -- persists today. Their Rapidan Camp speaks to the value the Hoovers, both geologists, placed throughout their lives in natural surroundings as a spiritual resource (Historic Photo 8-A). "The joyous rush of the brook, the contemplation of the eternal flow of the stream, the stretch of forest and mountain all reduce our egotism, soothe our troubles and shame our wickedness," Herbert Hoover wrote in 1930.<sup>1</sup>

While Herbert Hoover considered the camp a source of spiritual renewal, his personal physician credits Camp Rapidan with allowing the President and Mrs. Hoover to remain healthy throughout their White House years. "The Camp made it possible, I feel as a physician, for President and Mrs. Hoover to come through a very arduous four-year Presidential administration period without any serious physical impairments," Admiral Joel T. Boone wrote in a reflection on the retreat. "Without the Rapidan Camp, now more specifically referred to as the Hoover Camp, President and Mrs. Hoover could hardly have left official life without any serious ailments."<sup>2</sup>

For both Herbert and Lou Henry Hoover, the Rapidan Camp served as an oasis from the political firestorms that surrounded the Hoover Administration's efforts to deal effectively with a failing world economy. As a presidential retreat, the Hoovers' camp is the forerunner of the modern-day "summer White House" concept. It was the "Camp David" of its day; in fact, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt established his Shangri-La retreat in Maryland's Catoctin Mountains (now known as "Camp David") after his first and only visit determined that the terrain surrounding Camp Rapidan, which the Hoovers had deeded to the State of Virginia in 1932 for use by future Chief Executives, was too rugged to accommodate FDR's physical disability. The last President to make use of the camp was Jimmy Carter, who spent a weekend in May, 1979, with his wife, Rosalynn, and his daughter, Amy.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Herbert Clark Hoover, A Remedy for Disappearing Game Fishes (New York: Huntington Press, 1930), p. 33.

Joel T. Boone, preface to Herbert Hoover's Hideaway, Darwin Lambert, author (Luray, VA: The Shenandoah Natural History Association, Inc., 1971), p.x.

Darwin Lambert, Herbert Hoover's Hideaway (Luray, VA: The Shenandoah Natural History Association, Inc., 1971), p. 13.

Herbert Clark Hoover, The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover 1920-1933: The Cabinet and The Presidency (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1952), p. 322.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Herbert Hoover Presidential Library

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 106 acres

UTM References

A 17 7262110 4262910  
 Zone Easting Northing

C 17 7249410 4263320  
 Zone Easting Northing

B 17 7258150 42613310  
 Zone Easting Northing

D 17 7246180 42613690  
 Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary of Camp Hoover is shown as the dotted line on the accompanying map entitled sketch map 7-A

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes buildings, building sites, structures, road and trail systems, man-made trout pools and natural features that have historically been part of Camp Hoover and that maintain historical integrity. Edges mark the limits of the concentration of historic features.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Tom Walsh/Assistant Director date 11/6/87  
 organization Hoover Library Association telephone (319) 643-5327  
 street & number P.O. Box 696 city or town West Branch state Iowa zip code 52358

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No. 4/Photo No. 7-A) and a 16-foot fieldstone fireplace (Contributing Resource No. 2/Photo No. 7-B) -- that deserve special mention, as both were focal points of the camp. Site Plan "A" indicates the proximity of each to the existing cabins. The fountain, the key element in an elaborate rock garden, and system of rock-lined trails, (Historic Photo No. 7-C) designed by Lou Henry Hoover, was the visual centerpiece of the camp. The fireplace, the scene of both casual and diplomatic discussions, was a social centerpiece of the camp (Historic Photo No. 7-D). Other contributing resources illustrate the distribution of the original 13 buildings and speak to the camp's early appearance and uses, especially the Five Tents site (Contributing Resource No. 11) and the trail (Contributing Resource No. 9) that still connects the site with the main camp, which is the best preserved and most substantial of the surviving pathways. A variety of other remnants scattered throughout the camp, particularly barbeque pits and privy foundations, are remnants of the period between 1948 and 1958, when the camp was maintained for use by the National Capital Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America. These have been classified for purposes of this nomination as non-contributing resources, as they have no direct association with the camp's use as a presidential retreat. The locations of all 27 non-contributing resources are shown on Sketch Map 7-B. In 1960, following a decade of Boy Scout usage of the camp, all but the remaining three cabins were demolished due to their deteriorated condition.

Field surveys undertaken in July and October of 1987, show there are sufficient existing remnants of other camp buildings -- foundation stones, fireplace footings, chimney stacks, mortared stairways, etc. -- to pinpoint the exact locations of all the camp's original buildings. Existing stone walls mark roadways and a once-extensive network of trails used by the Hoovers and their many guests for riding and hiking. Surviving bridges, cascades and trout habitats illustrate the importance of the two natural streams (Mill and Laurel Prongs) and one man-made waterway (Hemlock Run) to the original atmosphere, appearance and uses of the camp (Historic Photo No. 7-E).

Period floor plans and historical photographs show the three existing one-story wooden buildings are representative of the building style and construction technique used for all 13 original camp buildings. All three are "shoehorned" in among trees and rocks to minimize disturbance of the natural site. Consequently, the post and beam construction techniques used by U.S. Marine Corps crews in building these and other buildings within the camp, involved setting posts on existing rocks or relocated rock footings (Photo No. 7-F). There being no leveling of the land, floors are level with the highest point of each building site, with decks extending out from the structures. Wooden studs, joists, open wooden roof trusses and roll roofing were used in constructing these three cabins. None had ceilings or interior wall sheathing. The exteriors are sided with a shiplap type single sheathing. Cabins are

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equipped with stone fireplaces -- two in "The President" -- and are not insulated. Each was built with a bathroom and equipped with hinged supplemental windows for optimum fair-weather exposure to the surrounding terrain. Then, as now, the style of construction would be termed "rustic camp" -- simple, unpretentious and blending into the natural environment.

On-site inspections by William J. Wagner, AIA, and his detailed analysis and comparison of historical plans, photographs and drawings indicate the extent to which each of the existing cabins has been altered over time. A summary of his findings, as illustrated by his own measured drawings, follows:

"The President" (Site Plan A -- No. 1/Contributing Resource No. 1):

Built in 1929, the main structure of "The President" is original and should be so considered. The one-story frame structure was built as an 18-foot by 72-foot rectangle, with a 18-foot square wing along the northwest elevation. Drawings 1-1929 and 1-1932, which are based on early floorplans and historical photographs, illustrate the original floorplan, room sizes and details as well as changes to the structure that occurred during its use by the Hoovers. Those changes included the addition of a bathroom in conjunction with the conversion of a screened sleeping porch into an enclosed bedroom (note that in Historic Photo 7-G you can see through the back wall of the room on the right, which was later converted into a second enclosed bedroom) and the expansion and reconfiguration of the layout and elevation of the cabin's decks. Drawing 1-1987 shows the existing floorplan, room sizes and details. A comparison of drawings 1-1987 and 1-1932 indicate the two significant exterior changes that have subsequently occurred. During a 1960-63 remodeling, one of the cabin's two bathrooms was eliminated to facilitate the addition of a kitchen, with the northeast wall of the dining room altered to provide access to the kitchen. Also, the deck on the cabin's southeast elevation has been reduced in size from its 1932 configuration, while the southwest deck has been eliminated entirely. On-site inspection indicated only minimal replacement of roof sheathing and exterior drop siding. The foundation has undergone some reinforcement, and deck flooring is obviously not original.

"The Prime Minister" (Site Plan A - No. 6/Contributing Resource No. 6):

The cabin known as "The Prime Minister" was built in 1929 in conjunction with naval disarmament talks at the Rapidan Camp involving British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald. This single-story, "L"-shaped frame building included a 32-foot by 14-foot main section and a 13-foot by 15 1/2-foot wing along the western elevation. Drawings 6-31 and 6-87 indicate original and existing details. A comparison of the

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drawing shows alterations over time, including relocating during the 1960-63 remodeling of the cabin's bathroom from the short wing along the southwest of the building to a new 7-foot by 8.5-foot room located further to the southwest. The existing bathroom is modern and is lined with interior wall materials. It appears the walls of the original bathroom may have been lined with drop siding and the wainscot raised. Another 1960-63 alteration involved extension of the roof along the southeast facade to provide protection for firewood storage and a back door. The cabin's original deck has also been removed.

"The Creel" (Site Plan A -- No. 3/Contributing Resource No. 3)

Built in 1929 and named for the wicker baskets popular with trout fishermen for storing their catch, this single-story, L-shaped structure consists of a 31-foot by 17.5-foot main section and a 14.5-foot by 14-foot wing on the building's west elevation. The original and existing details of this cabin are shown in drawings 3-31 and 3-87, respectively. The structural system used in construction is similar to that used for "The President" cabin, except that areas between the supporting posts on the exterior walls have been filled in with random stone and mortar. In 1969, in anticipation of a visit by President Richard Nixon, The Creel was equipped as a communications center. In the process, the cabin was insulated and the ceilings and walls panelled. That work has not damaged the historic structure and could be easily removed and restored to original appearance. In general, the exterior of this cabin has not changed over time, except for the original rustic railing being replaced by sawn members.

The following description of contributing structures and sites is based on field surveys conducted in July and October of 1987 by Jim Jacobsen and Tom Walsh. Numbers used to identify each contributing resource are keyed to Sketch Map 7-A, which identifies the locations of these contributing resources:

2. Exterior Fireplace: Located 50 feet northwest of "The President" cabin (No. 1), this fieldstone fireplace with stone base was a social centerpiece of Camp Hoover, used frequently as an outdoor meeting place.
4. Stone Fountain: Located between the Mess hall site (No. 40) and "The Owl" cabin site (No. 39), this tiered mortared stone fountain consists of four concrete-lined concave tiers. It was the focal point of Lou Henry Hoover's rock and flower garden.

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5. Big Rock Falls: Located on Mill Prong at the northern boundary of the nomination area, this natural waterfall was a visual attraction that was visited by the Hoovers and guests at the camp.

7. Springhouse: Located on Mill Prong, a few hundred yards downstream of Big Rock Falls (No. 5), this gabled frame structure is a single-story structure square in plan constructed of materials that match those used in constructing the camp buildings. Iron pipes, remnants of which exist along the trail from the access road to the south, carried water from this site to the camp.

8. Man-made Troutpools: Located on Mill Prong between the Bailey Bridge (No. 24) and Big Rock Falls (No. 5), these three stone dams constructed by combining natural boulders with exposed bedrock were built by Herbert Hoover and his guests to improve Mill Prong as a habitat for trout.

9. Trail to "Five Tents": Beginning west of the circular drive at camp center, this trail continues west to the "Five Tents" building site (No. 11). It is the best developed of the surviving pathways. It consists on the east end of two well-constructed sets of mortared steps with side walls. Two original electric light fixtures remain mounted on trees at points where the trail turns.

10. Stone side walls along "Five Tents" trail: These unmortared stone sidewalls reflect the highly developed nature of this hiking trail, which was often used at night by Lou Henry Hoover in taking guests to the "Five Tents" clearing, where they could view the moon rising over nearby Fork Mountain.

11. "Five Tents" building site: Located 400 feet west of the circular drive at the camp center and 200 feet northwest of the ford over Laurel Prong, this is the only former building site sufficiently preserved for interpretive purposes. On-site is the only surviving chimney stack of razed buildings. This site includes a massive fieldstone chimney with imprints from building clapboard, exhibiting a different mortaring technique (much exposed mortar, rubble construction) than other extant chimneys. This chimney centers the building plan, which includes a massive semi-circular stairway that curves away from a central landing, mortared stairs with side walls on the west end and simpler steps and concrete pad on the east end. A drainage ditch wraps around the north (rear) of the site. This was the camp's first building site and is readily interpreted by surviving elements (especially by the clapboard imprint on the chimney front, which indicates the height of the building).



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12. Hemlock Run Sluice Gate: Located at the point of the diversion from Laurel Prong that supplies the flow of Hemlock Run, this sluice gate consists of two concrete piers (18" x 24" x 3" above ground level) cuts for sluice gate. This structure is set 10 to 15 feet back from a Laurel Prong "dam," which is not a discernible entity, but part island, part berm with no evidence of stonework. Hemlock Run at this point is an excavated channel, lined with unmortared stonework and running above the level of Laurel Prong. Continual repairs of this area have eliminated any possibility of measureable integrity, but stream and gate can be associated. This resource is the most interpretable component of man-made Hemlock Run, a key aesthetic component of Camp Hoover.

13. Hemlock Run Bridge: The first bridge downstream of the Hemlock Run sluice gate (No. 12), this is a simple mortared arched bridge over the stream. It appears to be original and has no sidewalls. It is significant due to its association with the construction of Hemlock Run.

14. Stone Slab Bridge, Hemlock Run: Located 50 feet downstream from the Hemlock Run Bridge (No. 13), this bridge consists of one single slab of stone set across Hemlock Run, marking the point where the hiking trail turns east and crosses the run at the point due west of the ford and island on Laurel Prong (No. 15). It is an element in the extant trail system and is associated with the original development of Hemlock Run.

15. Ford and Island, Laurel Prong: Located halfway between the Hemlock Run Sluice Gate (No. 12) and the junction of Mill and Laurel Prongs, the island is about 15 feet below the bluff level to the north. Horses for camp visitors were brought across Laurel Prong at this point and taken to the hitching area below Five Tents. The portion of the road from the stables site (No. 45) to the camp, beginning at Laurel Prong and continuing to the north, is included in the nomination boundary.

16. Road to Stables and Marine and Cabinet Camps: This road terminates below the "Five Tents" building site (No. 11), cross Laurel Prong at the Ford and Island (No. 15) and continues east and south of the Prong to the stables site (No. 45). It is apparently an early local road that can still be followed by horse or on foot. It was used to deliver horses to the camp from the stables and was likely used as a bridle trail as well. It forms the southern terminus of the area known to have been directly associated with the camp.

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17. Mounting Block: Located south of the east-west road which runs from camp center south of the "Five Tents" building site (No. 11), this mounting block is at the base of the trail leading from the road to "Five Tents" on a pathway which parallels the road. A large mortared stone rectangular raised platform with stairs on the east end, it lies just north of the pathway. Apparently a mounting platform for horse riders, it lies 75 feet east of the hitching post and road to the Ford and Island at Laurel Prong (No. 15). It has sufficient scale, association and integrity to be a contributing resource that can help to visually interpret horseback riding as an aspect of camp life.

18. Stone Bridge, Hemlock Run: Located between the "Ishbel's" cabin site (No. 38) and the "The Prime Minister" cabin (No. 6) on Hemlock Run, this mortared stone bridge of flagstone and cut stone is a well-preserved component of the Hemlock Run waterway. It has sidewalls, end-steps and a single central support with two jack arches over the run.

19. Bridge, Hemlock Run: Located north of "The Prime Minister" cabin, this bridge is similar in design to the Stone Bridge (No. 18) and is the easternmost and final downstream bridge over Hemlock Run. It is set into the mortared sidewalls of the channel and is just upstream of the Hemlock Run Falls (No. 21). It is a well-preserved component of the original Hemlock Run waterway.

20. Stone-lined Channel, Hemlock Run: Beginning some 200 feet upstream from Hemlock Run Falls (No. 21), this channel is lined with mortared stone and, farther upstream, unmortared stone. The locations of several wooden bridge sites can be discerned along the channel. It is a surviving original component of the Hemlock Run waterway.

21. Hemlock Run Falls: Located 150 feet upstream from the mouth of Hemlock Run, this large boulder was incorporated into Hemlock Run below the bridge (No. 19) to form a picturesque falls. The falls was a key visual component of the heart of the camp and the junction of Mill Prong, Laurel Prong and Hemlock Run near "The President" cabin (No. 1).

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22/22A. Stone Walls/Bridge along Entrance Road: The best remaining examples of the loose stone walls that lined the approach road to the camp lie west of the junction of the original access road and the new access road to the Big Meadows area. Ranging in height from 12 to 18 inches, these walls are representative of the original appearance of the camp, when all roadways and trails were lined with such sidewalls. The mortared stone bridge is located on the original access road about 100 yards southeast of the roadway junctions and 200 yards northwest of the East Gate (No. 23).

23. East Gate: This crude welded metal gate is on the old Criglersville Road at the boundary of the Shenandoah National Park. As it is the only gate of its type within the Shenandoah National Park, it is believed to be an original feature of Camp Hoover. It swivels to block traffic and locks on the northeast side of the road. It is sufficiently intact to mark the formal entrance to the camp. It marks the eastern terminus of the nomination boundary.

The following description of non-contributing structures and sites is based on field surveys conducted in July 1987 by Jim Jacobsen. Numbers used to identify each contributing resource are keyed to Sketch Map 7-B, which identifies their locations.

24. Bailey Bridge: Located over Mill Prong at the north end of the camp, this World War II era metal Bailey bridge post-dates the Hoover era.

25. Site of unnamed building: Located 75 paces from the road on the horse trail to Big Rock Falls (No. 5), this site includes only fragments of roofing and an electrical ground stake. No integrity or measureable remains.

26. Site of "Filipino's Quarters": Located north of the road along the horse trail to Big Rock Falls (No. 5), this site includes the largest extant mortared stair set of all the razed buildings. The two-sided semi-circular stairway has a flat landing and curves toward the west, away from the present trail. These stairs apparently connected the trail or ground level with a deck and were located on the east end of a long rectangular building that set east-west. Roofing materials, pipes and electrical ground stakes can be found in the area, which lacks integrity and sufficient remnants for association with themes.

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27. Boy Scout privy site: Located east of the "Five Tents" building site (No. 11) and north of the trail, this site consists of a 10'8" x 4'4" concrete pad with a rectangular hole across one end. The pad is 4" to 5" thick and has post supports that are either sunken into the concrete, or raised (using metal cans as forms) with metal ties. Post-dates Hoover era.
28. Access Road: Located west of the "Five Tents" building site (No. 11), this is a well-graded access road with some stone retaining walls. This was apparently a service/construction road which accessed Five Tents and leads to the Spring House/Reservoir (No. 29). No measureable integrity.
29. Spring House/Reservoir: Located 400 yards west-southwest of the "Five Tents" building site (No. 11), this site includes two concrete spring housings that were recovered recently and a larger, raised concrete housing that appears to be either original to the Hoover era or an earlier period. This site is much disturbed by the recent addition of a 5,000-gallon reservoir to the south. This site lies outside the district boundary.
30. Culvert Crossing, Hemlock Run: Located on the Road to Stables and Marine and Cabinet Camps (No. 16) and 100 feet north of the ford, these two metal culverts of indeterminate age are buried under the road. Probably post-date Hoover era.
31. Concrete Pad: Located on the Road to Stables and Marine and Cabinet Camps (No. 16) and 50 feet northwest of Culverts (No. 30), this 10' x 10' pad is set in the road and recessed around the perimeter to hold wooden, horizontal framing. Possibly the foundation for some type of gatehouse associated with horseback riding. Although possibly a Hoover-era structure, it lacks sufficient integrity to be considered a contributing resource.
32. Steps: These six mortared steps connected the path from the "Trail's End" cabin site (No. 33) with the road to the north. They are associated with a non-extant bridge that was located immediately south over Hemlock Run. Very overgrown and difficult to distinguish from surrounding terrain.
33. "Trail's End" cabin site: Located just northwest of the point where Laurel Prong takes a sharp turn to the south, this site is well marked by 10 corner post supports, a concentration of mortar (northeast corner) and a mortared stone step that led to a south deck. Two large trees and one large stump, in an east-west row, mark the apparent southern line of the long-razed cabin. Insufficient integrity to contribute to the theme.

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34. Pumphead and pipe: Located on the north bank of Laurel Prong, where the prong takes a sharp turn to the south, this site includes a 10-inch pumphead with four swivel turnscrew tighteners, a 3-inch pipe that enters the pumphead from Hemlock Run below. Also includes 15 to 20 feet of pipe that was apparently part of a system used to remove water from the run. Date unknown.
35. Boy Scout privy site: Located 50 feet south of "The Slums" cabin site (No. 36), this structure is identical to the structure described as No. 27. Post-dates Hoover era.
36. "The Slums" cabin site: Located midway between the circular drive at camp center and the southward turn of Laurel Prong, the remnants on this site include a mortared stoop base on the west end and two mortared bases (possibly fireplaces), one centered on the north side, the other on the southeast end. Also, one electrical ground rod, five pile bases and a clump of mortared stone. Insufficient integrity.
37. Boy Scout privy site: Located southeast of "The Slums" cabin site (No. 36) and halfway between same and "Ishbel's" cabin site (No. 38), this structure is similar in construction as those described as Nos. 27 and 35, except south end collapsed, concrete pad on stone foundation, studs recessed into pad, which measures 5' x 12'. Post-dates Hoover era.
38. "Ishbel's" cabin site: Located 75 feet west of "The Prime Minister" cabin (No. 6), remnants on this site include nine pile stone supports, a mortared stair base on the south end and an apparent fireplae base at the center of the east side. Insufficient integrity to interpret associated themes.
39. "The Owl" cabin site: Located 50 feet southeast of "The Creel" cabin (No. 3), the only remnants on this site are a mortared stone curved retaining wall that was once located beneath a southeast deck and a few surface pile support stones. No integrity.
40. Mess Hall site: Located 50 feet northeast of the circular drive at camp center, there are no discernible surface remnants of the building where the Hoovers and their guests gathered for meals. A square, mortared stone base with a concave impression in its top is located northeast of the building site and was possibly a barbeque associated with the building. Lacks integrity sufficient to interpret linkage with associated themes.

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41. Town Hall site: Located 175 feet west of "The President" cabin (No. 1), there are no surface remnants of this meeting hall used by camp guests for social occasions. No integrity.

42. Office site: Located just west of Town Hall site (No. 41), there are no surface remnants of this small camp building. No integrity.

43. Wooden Bridge, Mill Prong: Located northeast of "The President" cabin (No. 1), this bridge is a recent replacement, although it resembles the original bridge. Abutments include a mortared stone base on the north end and a bolder base on the south end. The structure consists of two log stringers with 2 1/2" planking. The bridge is 18 feet long, has a 2-foot railing with buttjoints and angled outside supports joined to 4" x 4" boards which project beyond the bridge deck. Post-dates Hoover era.

44. Boy Scout barbeque pit: Located on the south side of the access road, 100 feet east of the point where the path from "The President" cabin (No. 1) joins the road, this site consists of a 12' x 12' concrete pad and adjacent pad, possibly a picnic area. A raised barbeque pit bisects the pad, with raised sides and remnants of a smokestack on the west end. Raised post supports are at the corners and equally spaced on all sides. Post-dates Hoover era.

45. Stables site: Located 150 feet east of the junction of the original access road and the Big Meadows access road, this site includes remnants of a long rectangular plan of at least two buildings -- a horse stable and Marine Corps vehicle garage. Remnants include stone and concrete foundation walls, roofing materials, car fender and construction rubble. No integrity.

46. Marine Barracks site: Located northeast of the road junction, there are no visible remnants, according to local sources. Not investigated. No integrity and not within district boundary.

47. Shed: Located east of Bailey Bridge (No. 24) at Mill Prong, north of camp, this small storage shed is at the base of the trail on the east side of Mill Prong. Post-dates Hoover era.

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48. Spring Cover: Located east of the Stables site (No. 45), on the south side of the Criglersville Road, 100 feet from the East Gate (No. 23) and 30 feet from the road. This structure is a poured concrete box, with a boulder partially incorporated into it, with upper edges recessed to support a wooden cover. This well-preserved structure is a remnant of what was apparently a support system for the Marine Corps facilities east of Camp Hoover. Outside district boundary.

49. Cabinet Camp: Located southeast of East Gate (No. 23) on Criglersville Road, on private property. These four cabins, all of matching materials and style to those used at Camp Rapidan, were constructed privately by Hoover Administration associates, not as part of the original camp. Not within district boundary.

50. Natural Boulders: Located in proximity to "The President" cabin (No. 1) and "The Prime Minister" cabin (No. 6). 11 major surface boulders constitute primary landscape components within the focal point of the camp. In combination with the towering hemlock trees, they formed a key part of the historical appearance of the camp. Influenced cabin placement and design, although they pre-date the Hoover era by perhaps millions of years.

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Furnishings: Some furnishings original to The President Cabin and to the entire Camp, as well as period pieces and reproductions, are positioned in The President Cabin according to photographic evidence of the appearance during Hoover's time. In The President Cabin there is a mixture of original furniture with additions of Mission Oak; for example, the dining table is a reproduction while the chairs are original to some of the Camp buildings. This mixture of original, period, and reproduction furniture includes beds, tables, and chairs in both The President Cabin and The Prime Minister Cabin.



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The camp's association with the Hoovers is hardly casual. Its location was hand-picked by Herbert Hoover in the spring of 1929 while on a horseback survey of the upper Rapidan terrain. Even before a site was selected, Lou Henry Hoover had a clear idea of what was required: "My husband's idea was to have a camp down on one of the three-covered flats beside a stream or at the junction between two streams," Lou Henry Hoover wrote in a January 27, 1929, letter that pre-dates the site selection expedition. "He likes to be near enough to hear the water murmuring. A spot might be found where part of the camp would be down there and part of it a hundred or so feet higher on one of the broad benches giving a distant view."<sup>3</sup> In his Memoirs, Herbert Hoover credits Lou Henry Hoover with the layout and design of the camp's simple, rustic buildings and grounds.<sup>4</sup> A four-tiered stone fountain (Illustration No. 8-A) remains today as a reminder of an elaborate Camp Rapidan rock garden described in the October 7, 1929, edition of The Washington Herald as "Mrs. Hoover's pride and joy...She has spent much time restoring the land to its original leafy state, bringing rare shrubs, vines, ferns and flowers from the White House."<sup>5</sup>

Although the Rapidan Camp surrounded Herbert Hoover with opportunities to forsake the demands of his office, he often brought along his work and, at times, his White House associates for weekend working vacations at the camp. "I have discovered that even the work of government can be improved by leisurely discussions of its problems out under the trees where no bells or callers jar one's thoughts," he said in greeting his new mountain "neighbors" in an August 17, 1929, speech at the Madison County, Virginia, Courthouse.<sup>6</sup>

Fishing was the one form of recreation Herbert Hoover pursued throughout his life. While the trout streams that flow through Camp Rapidan provided an occasional diversion for the President (Historic Photo 8-B), Hoover said in his Madison County Courthouse speech that he considered fishing as "an excuse to return to the woods and streams with their retouch of the simpler life of the frontier from which every American springs."<sup>7</sup> As well as offering diversions from work, Camp Rapidan seemed also to help the President work more effectively. "I never saw him play cards at the camp, or work on jigsaw puzzles which were popular there, or pitch horseshoes," Admiral Boone recalled. "The time he actually spent fishing was small...After brief fishing or sometimes a nap or a walk in the invigorating air he would plunge with a new energy into urgent work...He might recess a policy conference, go off fishing for

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a short while, then get going again with the conference, usually having worked out some key problem...The loveliness of the place captivated people, though they had their different ways of enjoying it. Sometimes the President would sit quietly for many minutes, smoking his pipe, listening to the stream or fire."<sup>8</sup>

Throughout the Hoover Administration, Camp Rapidan was the backdrop for policy debates and political strategy sessions. A story in the June 12, 1932, edition of The New York Times claims that the specifics of the Republican tariff bill of 1930 were hammered out at Camp Rapidan. During the summer of 1931, as he worked toward a balanced federal budget, Herbert Hoover summoned each of his department heads, one by one, to a series of weekend conferences at the camp. World attention was focused on the camp in October 1929 when British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald and his daughter, Ishbel, spent a week at Camp Rapidan in cabins built specifically for their use. During their stay, Herbert Hoover and Ramsay MacDonald held a now-legendary discussion of naval disarmament during which, it was said, they dismantled the navies of the world while perched at opposite ends of a fallen tree trunk.

That legendary tree trunk may in fact have been one of the logs arranged in front of the camp's outdoor fireplace (Illustration 8-B and Historic Photo 8-C).<sup>\*</sup> Like the Mess Hall, where together camp guests took their meals, sometimes outdoors (Historic Photo 8-D), the fireplace was a gathering place, with logs pulled around the hearth to facilitate open-air debate. Like the four-tiered, rock garden fountain, the fireplace remains today as a focal point of the camp.

Ramsay MacDonald was only one of many distinguished visitors to the camp during the Hoover Administration. The guest register for Camp Rapidan during the Hoover Administration reads like a "Who's Who" of the era, including such notables as Thomas A. Edison and Winston Churchill. Colonel Charles Lindbergh and his wife, Ann Morrow Lindbergh, were frequent guests of the Hoovers. Charles Lindbergh, like Herbert Hoover, enjoyed trout fishing. "Lucky Lindy" was frequently the winner of the camp's horseshoe pitching contests. He was also among the guests who, according to humorist and columnist Will Rogers, were recruited on occasion by Herbert Hoover to stack rocks along Mill Prong to form pools as habitats for trout (Illustration 8-C). Remnants of those dam-building outings along Mill Prong still exist between Big Rock Falls and the confluence with Laurel Prong.

\* Same as Historic Photo 7-C

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The Hoovers' decision to build Camp Rapidan has also been credited with initiating the construction of the previously proposed Skyline Drive. Horace Albright, the National Park Service director during the Hoover Administration, recalls an early-morning 1930 horseback ride with the Hoovers that brought the group to the summit near Big Meadows. "The President motioned me to come up alongside of him," Horace Albright recalled. "He told me that these mountains were just made for a highway, and 'I think that everybody ought to have a chance to get the views from here. I think they're the greatest in the world, and I've been nearly everywhere in the world.'"<sup>9</sup> The President suggested work begin as soon as possible and told Horace Albright to have impoverished local farmers use their own tools to build the road, rather than relying on crews of outsiders using heavy equipment.

Historian Darwin Lambert, in a 1979 essay entitled "The Rapidan Facet of Herbert Hoover," extends Camp Rapidan's significance and impact to an expansion of conservation efforts during the Hoover Administration. "The camp had a spirit or atmosphere conducive to tender concern for both humanity and nature -- in quite a few individuals, as in Hoover and his wife, for the people-earth combination in a sense now often called ecological," he wrote. "The effect of the camp spread through the Hoover Administration into other conservation matters, working its charm toward saving the scenic values of Niagara Falls (treaty with Canada approved by the Senate in 1930); toward tighter control of oil leases on public lands and more efficient use of water for power, irrigation and navigation; toward reduction of overgrazing on western ranges and reclamation of wasteland; toward planning the great St. Lawrence waterway (treaty with Canada signed in 1932); toward protecting U.S. forests (more than 2 million acres added to the national system); toward launching the Hoover Dam project on the Colorado River; and toward bringing a 40% increase in the national park system, including addition of Carlsbad Caverns, Canyon de Chelly, Death Valley, and the Great Smokey Mountains (linked with Shenandoah, which was brought within reach, though not officially established, during Hoover's term)."<sup>10</sup>

This National Register nomination -- and National Historic Landmark study -- is submitted on behalf of those who concur with Darwin Lambert's view of the historical significance of Camp Rapidan: "The evidence is ample, I feel sure, to support the feeling I have long had -- that the Rapidan facet of Herbert Hoover was significant

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in his personal life and in his Presidential decisions, policies and accomplishments; that focus on this often-ignored facet helps confirm Hoover's lasting contributions to humanity and earth; and that Camp Hoover was, is and will remain a spiritual resource of meaning and value to America and the World."<sup>11</sup>

NOTES:

1. Herbert Clark Hoover, A Remedy for Disappearing Game Fishes (New York: Huntington Press, 1930), p. 33.
2. Joel T. Boone, preface to Herbert Hoover's Hideaway, Darwin Lambert, author (Luray, VA: The Shenandoah Natural History Association, Inc., 1971), p.x.
3. Darwin Lambert, Herbert Hoover's Hideaway (Luray, VA: The Shenandoah Natural History Association, Inc., 1971), p. 13.
4. Herbert Clark Hoover, The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover 1920-1933: The Cabinet and The Presidency (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1952), p. 322.
5. Washington Herald, 7 October 1929.
6. Washington Post, 18 August 1929.
7. Ibid.
8. Darwin Lambert, "The Rapidan Facet of Herbert Hoover," an essay appearing in Herbert Hoover Reassessed (U.S. Senate Document No. 96-63, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981), p. 27.
9. Lambert, Herbert Hoover's Hideaway, p. 56.
10. Lambert, "Rapidan Facet," p. 28.
11. Ibid.

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Washington Herald, 7 October 1929.

Washington Post, 18 August 1929.

Darwin Lambert, "The Rapidan Facet of Herbert Hoover," an essay appearing in Herbert Hoover Reassessed (U.S. Senate Document No. 96-63, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981), p. 27.

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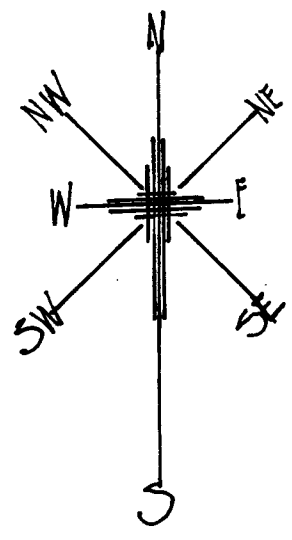
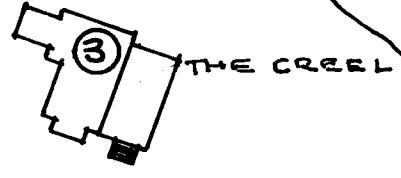
Presidential Sites Theme

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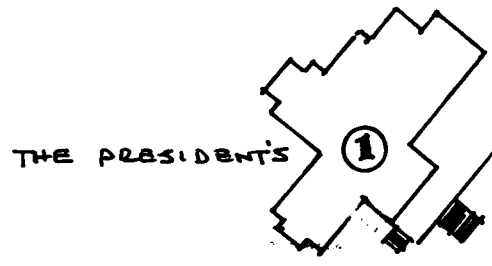
Section number 10 Page 1

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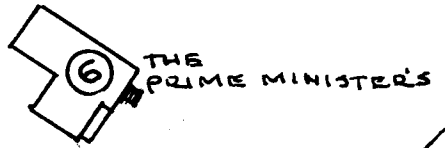
○ FOUNTAIN



HEMLOCK RUN  
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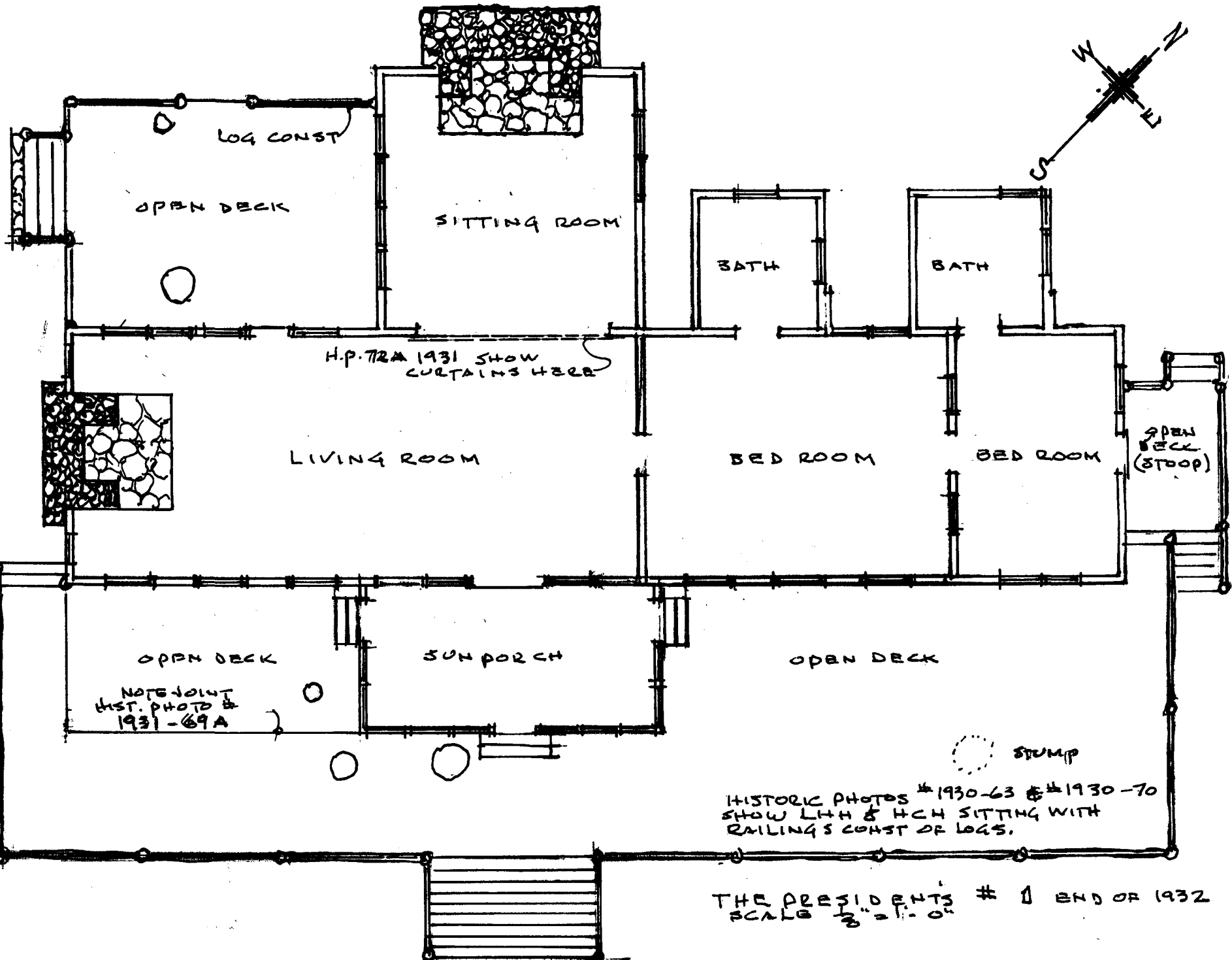
EXISTING  
STONE  
BRIDGES

WATERFALL

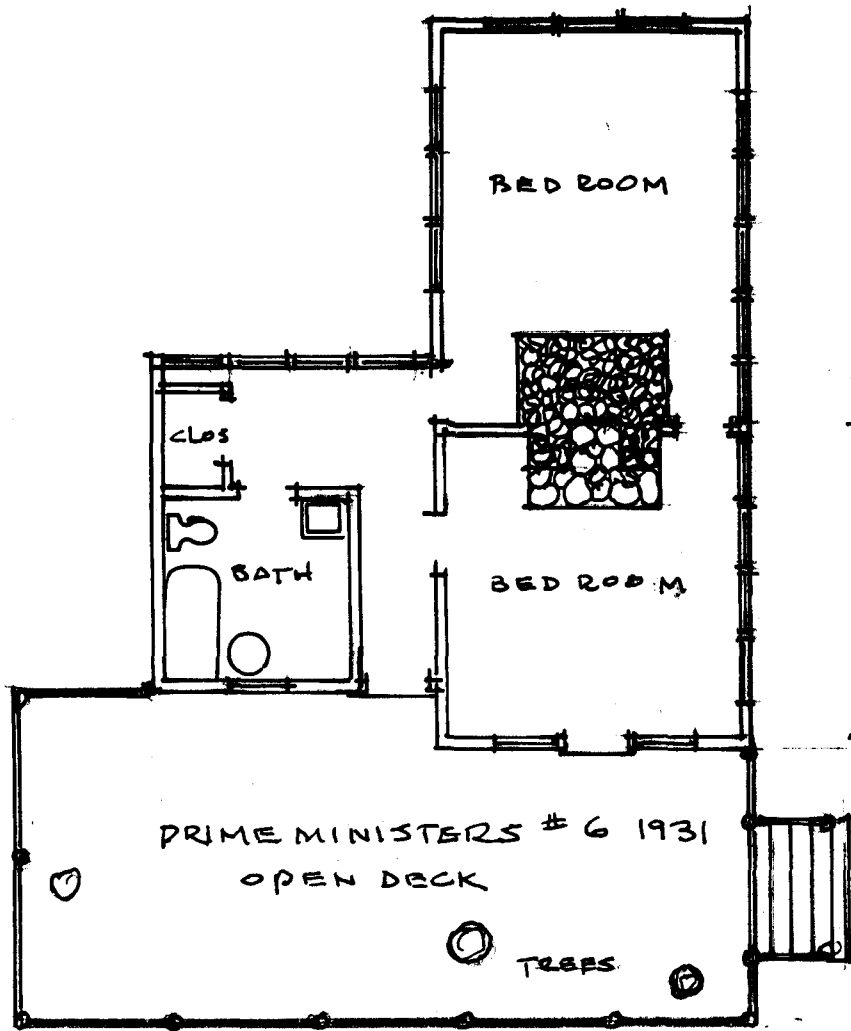


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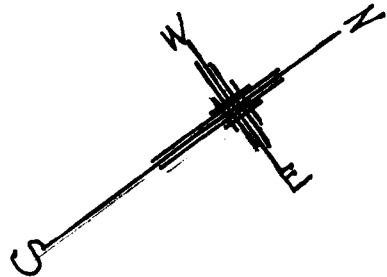
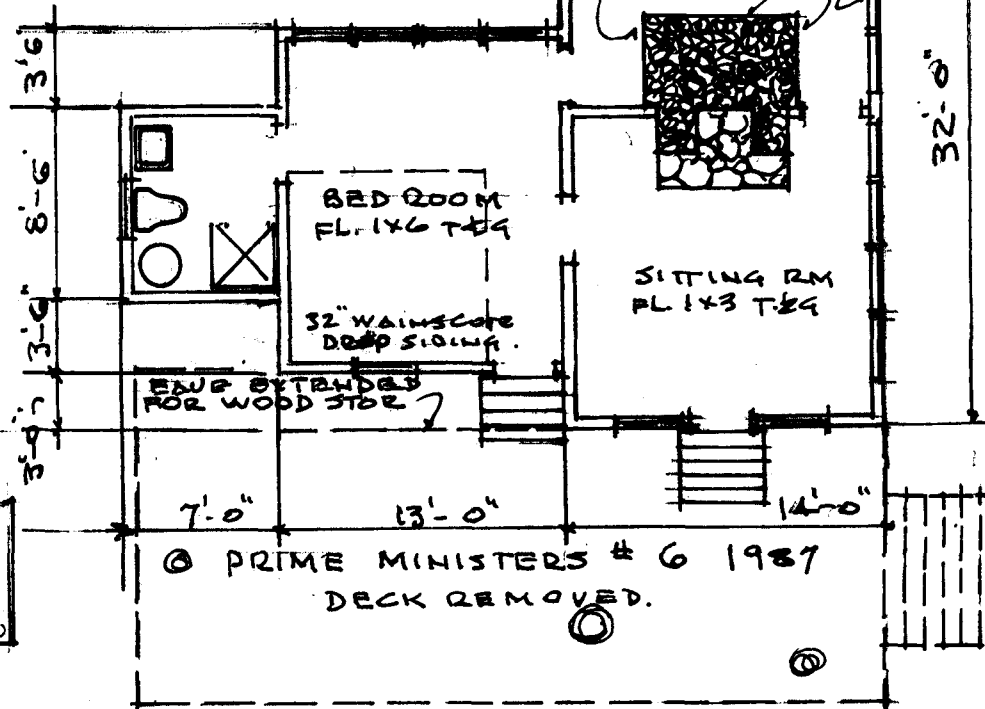
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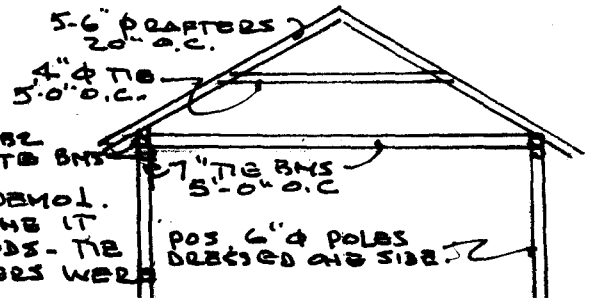
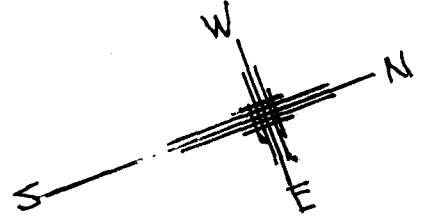
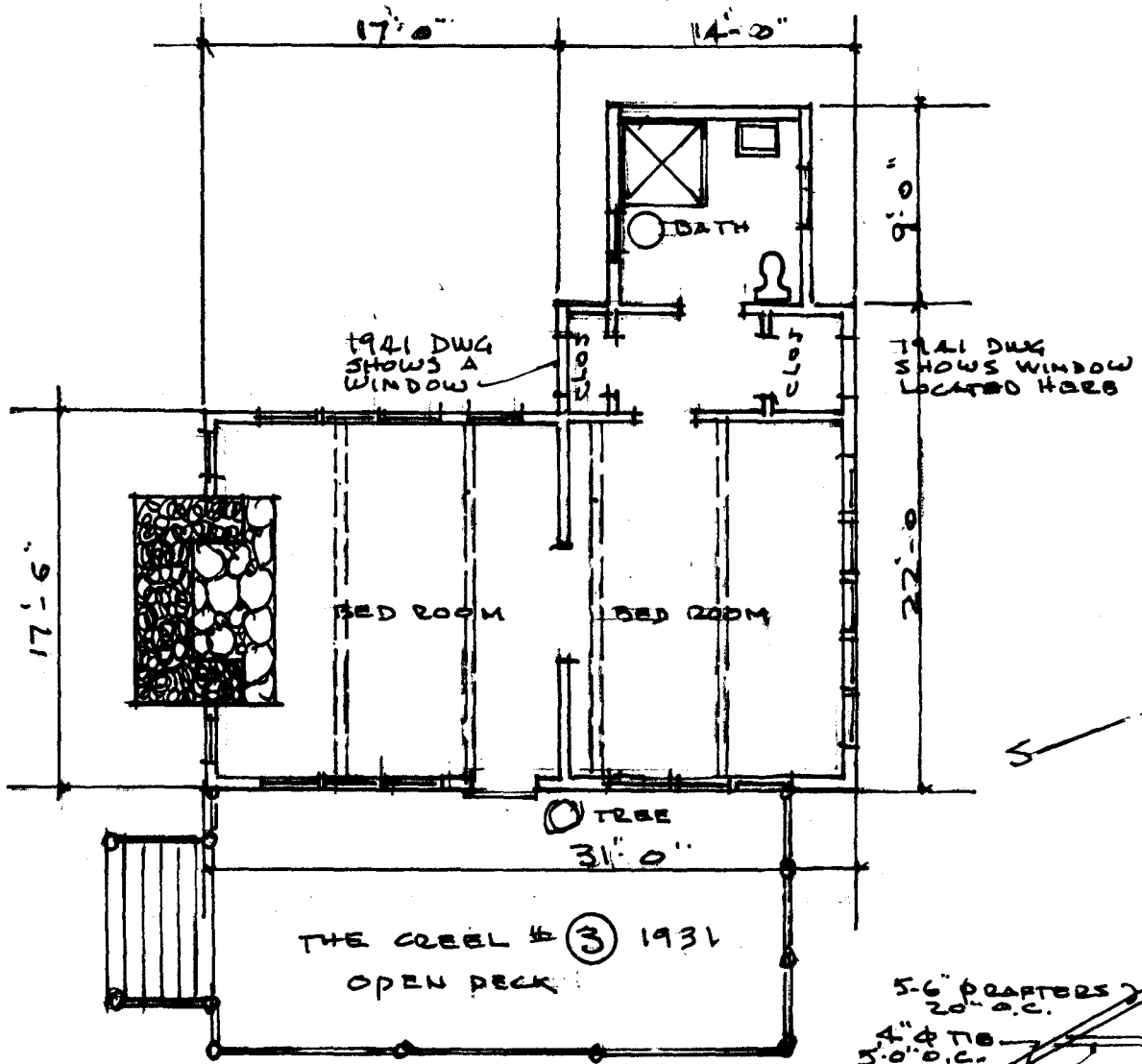






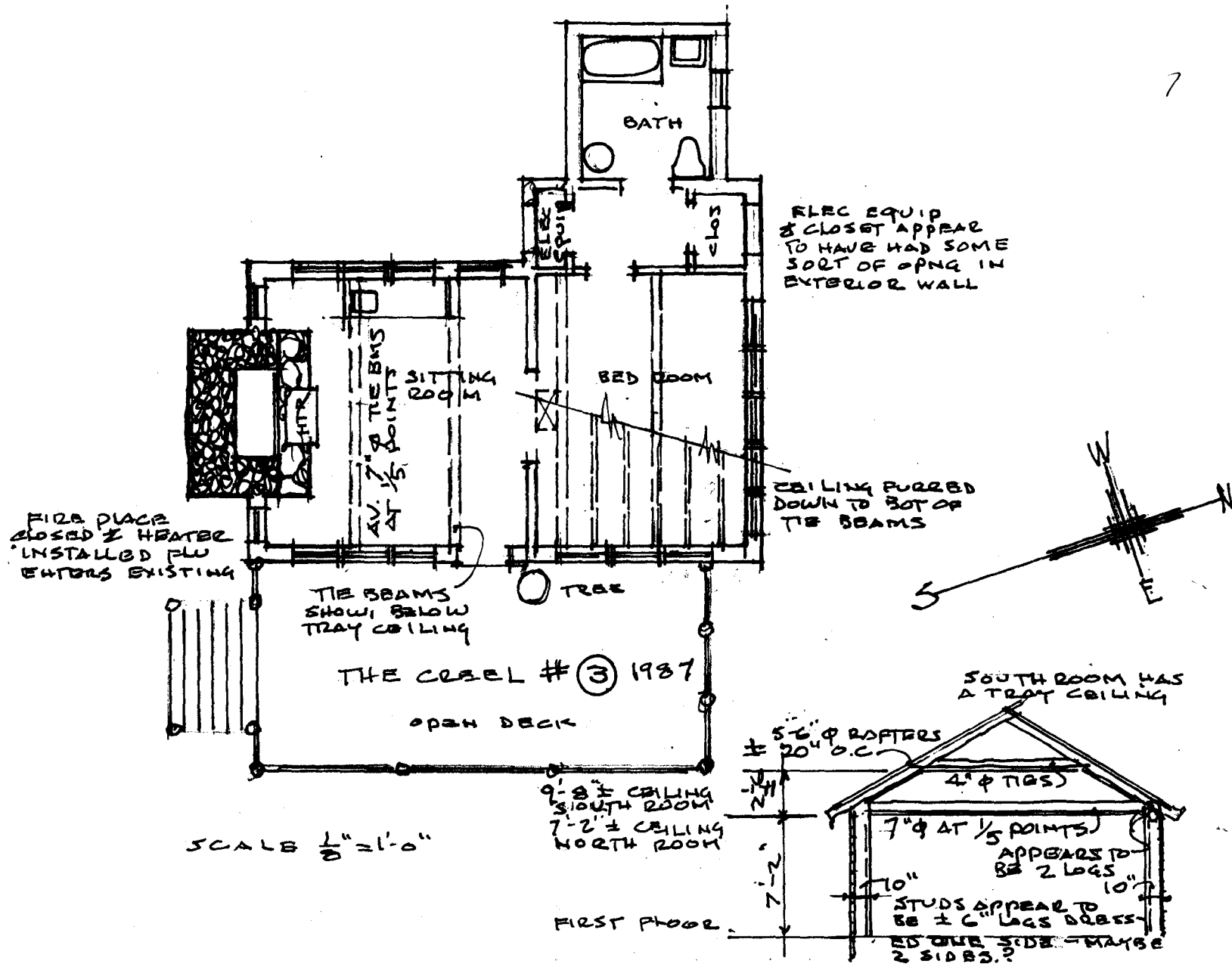
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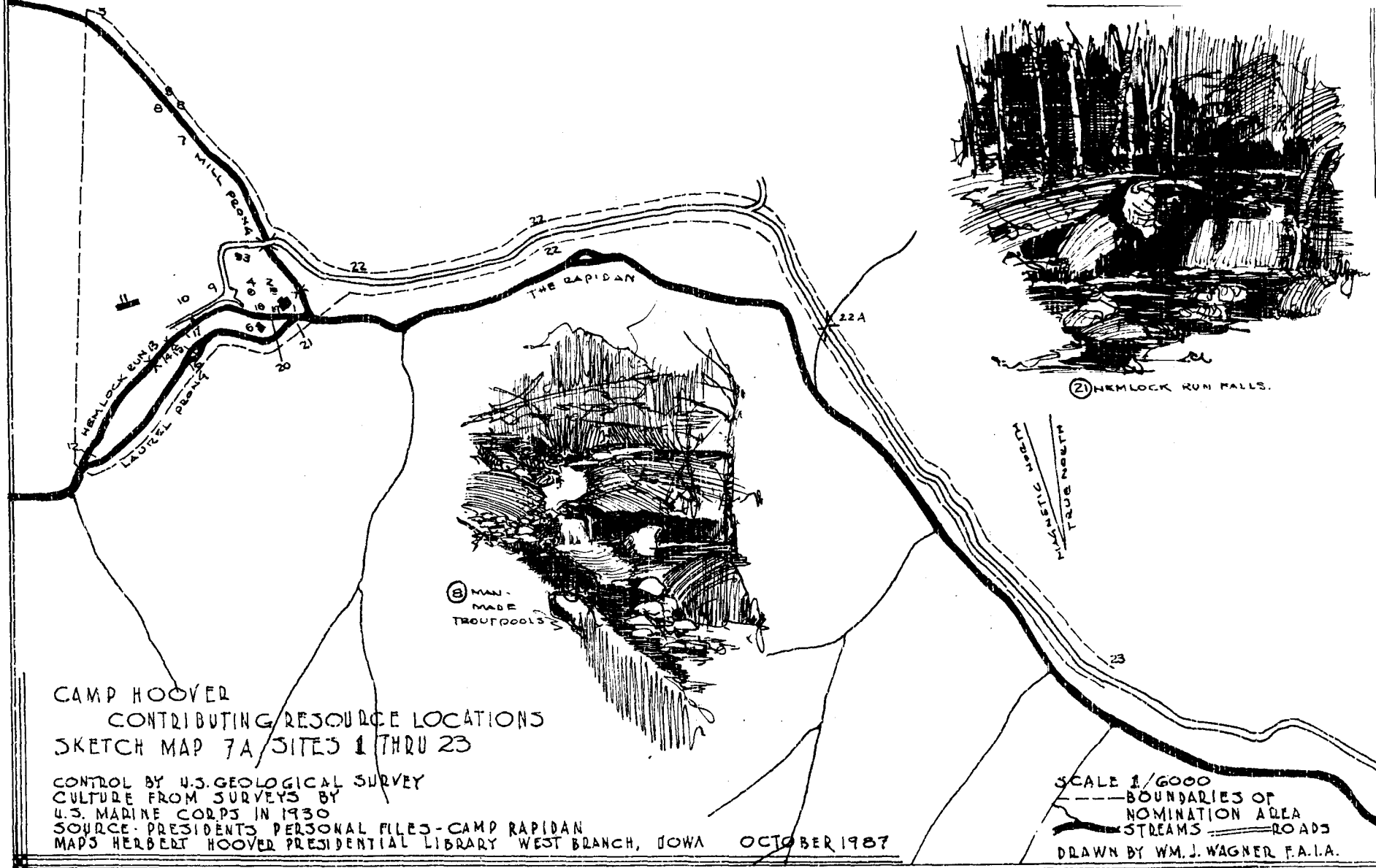
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**Key to Locations of Contributing Resources  
as shown on Sketch Map 7-A**

- 1. "The President" cabin**
- 2. Exterior Fireplace**
- 3. "The Creel" cabin**
- 4. Stone Fountain**
- 5. Big Rock Falls**
- 6. "The Prime Minister" cabin**
- 7. Springhouse**
- 8. Man-made Troutpools**
- 9. Trail to "Five Tents"**
- 10. Stone side walls along "Five Tents" trail**
- 11. "Five Tents" building site**
- 12. Hemlock Run Sluice Gate**
- 13. Hemlock Run Bridge**
- 14. Stone Slab Bridge, Hemlock Run**
- 15. Ford and island, Laurel Prong**
- 16. Road to Stables and Marine and Cabinet Camps**
- 17. Mounting Block**
- 18. Stone Bridge, Hemlock Run**
- 19. Bridge, Hemlock Run**
- 20. Stone-lined Channel, Hemlock Run**
- 21. Hemlock Run Falls**
- 22/22A. Stone Walls/Bridge along Entrance Road**
- 23. East Gate**



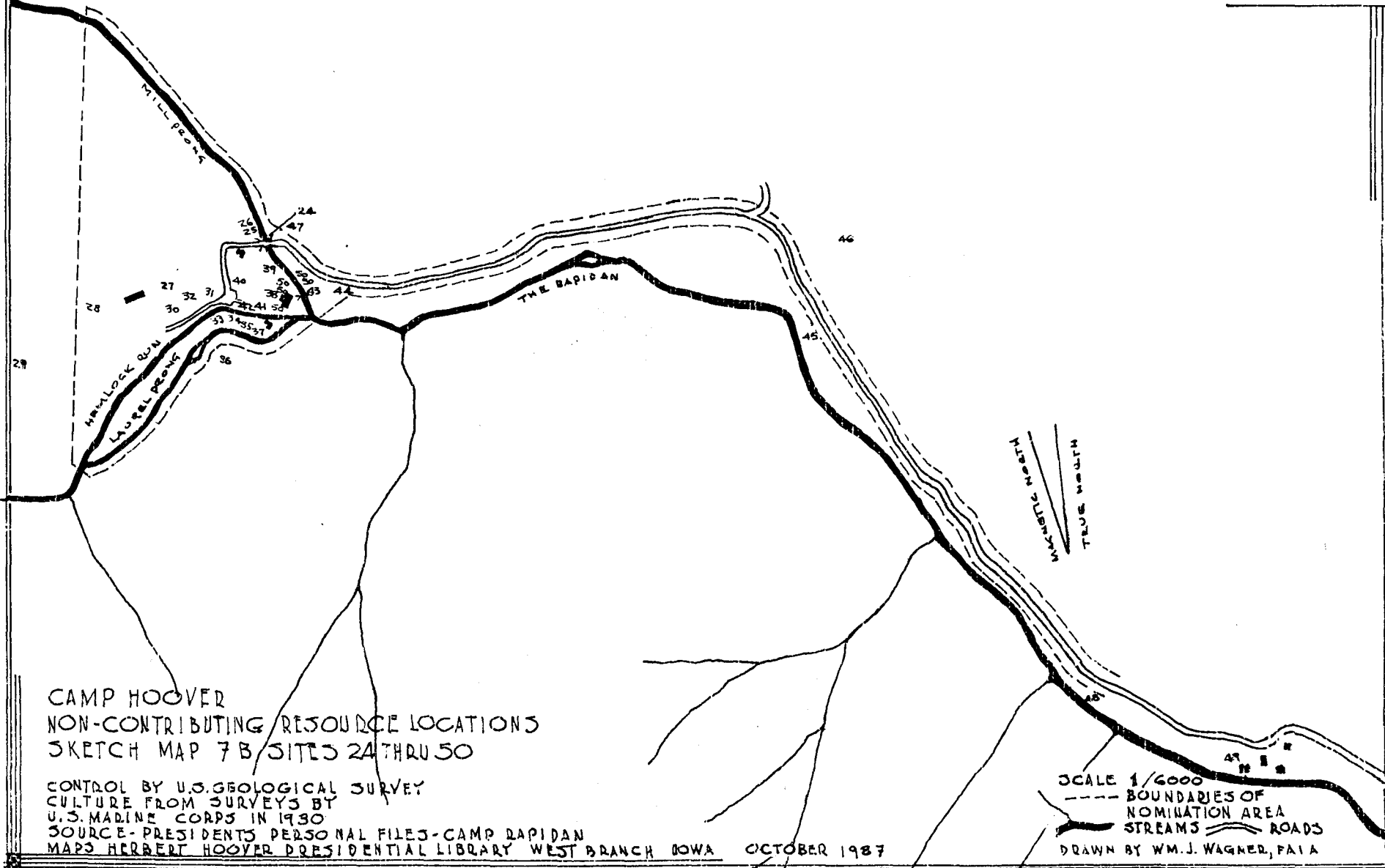
CAMP HOOVER  
 CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE LOCATIONS  
 SKETCH MAP 7A/SITES 1 THRU 23

CONTROL BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
 CULTURE FROM SURVEYS BY  
 U.S. MARINE CORPS IN 1930  
 SOURCE: PRESIDENTS PERSONAL FILES - CAMP RAPIDAN  
 MAPS HERBERT HOOVER PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY WEST BRANCH, IOWA      OCTOBER 1987

SCALE 1/6000  
 --- BOUNDARIES OF NOMINATION AREA  
 ——— STREAMS      ——— ROADS  
 DRAWN BY WM. J. WAGNER, F.A.I.A.

**Key to Locations of Non-Contributing Resources  
as shown on Sketch Map 7-B**

24. Bailey Bridge
25. Site of unnamed building
26. Site of "Filipino's Quarters"
27. Boy Scout privy site
28. Access Road
29. Spring Houses/Reservoir
30. Culvert Crossing, Hemlock Run
31. Concrete Pad
32. Steps
33. "Trail's End" cabin site
34. Pumphead and pipe
35. Boy Scout privy site
36. "The Slums" cabin site
37. Boy Scout privy site
38. "Ishbel's" cabin site
39. "The Owl" cabin site
40. Mess Hall site
41. Town Hall site
42. Office site
43. Wooden Bridge, Mill Prong
44. Boy Scout barbeque pit
45. Stables site
46. Marine Barracks site
47. Shed
48. Spring Cover
49. Cabinet Camp
50. Natural Boulders



CAMP HOOVER  
 NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE LOCATIONS  
 SKETCH MAP 7 B SITES 24 THRU 50

CONTROL BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
 CULTURE FROM SURVEYS BY  
 U.S. MARINE CORPS IN 1930  
 SOURCE - PRESIDENTS PERSONAL FILES - CAMP RAPIDAN  
 MAPS HERBERT HOOVER PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY WEST BRANCH IOWA

OCTOBER 1987

SCALE 1/6000  
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 DRAWN BY WM. J. WAGNER, FAIA

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PHOTO

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The following information related to photos of the 23 contributing resources described in Section 7/Description is the same for each photograph. Numbers assigned to these photographs correspond to the numbers used to identify their locations on Sketch Map 7-A.

- 2) Graves Mill, Virginia (Vicinity)
- 3) George Hoffman
- 4) July/October 1987
- 5) Shenandoah National Park archives, Luray, Virginia

Additional Contributing Resource Photo Information

Photo No. 1-A:

- 1) "The President" cabin/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: southwest

Photo No. 1-B

- 1) "The President" cabin/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: northwest

Photo No. 1-C

- 1) "The President" cabin/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: northeast

Photo No. 1-D

- 1) "The President" cabin/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: southeast

Photo No. 2:

- 1) Exterior Fireplace/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: north

Photo No. 3-A

- 1) "The Creel" cabin/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: west

Photo No. 3-B

- 1) "The Creel" cabin/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: south



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PHOTO

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Photo No. 3-C

- 1) "The Creel" cabin/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: east

Photo No. 3-D

- 1) "The Creel" cabin/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: north

Photo No. 4

- 1) Stone Fountain/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: north

Photo No. 5

- 1) Big Rock Falls/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: northwest

Photo No. 6-A

- 1) "The Prime Minister" cabin/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: northwest

Photo No. 6-B

- 1) "The Prime Minister" cabin/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: northeast

Photo No. 6-C

- 1) "The Prime Minister" cabin/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: southeast

Photo No. 6-D

- 1) "The Prime Minister" cabin/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: southwest

Photo No. 7

- 1) Springhouse/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: northwest

Photo No. 8

- 1) Man-made Troutpools/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: northwest

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PHOTO  
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Photo No. 9

- 1) Trail to "Five Tents"
- 6) Camera direction: northwest

Photo No. 10

- 1) Stone side walls along "Five Tents" trail/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: north

Photo No. 11-A

- 1) "Five Tents" building site/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: northeast

Photo No. 11-B

- 1) "Five Tents" building site/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: northwest

Photo No. 11-C

- 1) "Five Tents" building site/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: northesat

Photo No. 12

- 1) Hemlock Run Sluice Gate/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: northeast

Photo No. 13

- 1) Hemlock Run Bridge/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: northeast

Photo No. 14

- 1) Stone Slab Bridge, Hemlock Run/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction, northeast

Photo No. 15

- 1) Ford and Island, Laurel Prong/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: southwest

Photo No. 16

- 1) Road to Stables and Marine and Cabinet camps/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: southeast

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PHOTO

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Photo No. 17

- 1) Mounting Block/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: southwest

Photo No. 18

- 1) Stone Bridge, Hemlock Run/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: southwest

Photo No. 19

- 1) Bridge, Hemlock Run/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: northeast

Photo No. 20

- 1) Stone-lined Channel, Hemlock Run/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: east

Photo No. 21

- 1) Hemlock Run Falls/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: west

Photo No. 22

- 1) Stone Walls along Entrance Road/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: east

Photo No. 22-A

- 1) Stone Bridge along Entrance Road/Camp Hoover
- 6) Camera direction: northwest

Photo No. 23

- 1) East Gate/Camp Hoover
- 6) Photo direction: north