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SPECIAL STUDY

DEATH VALLEY SCOTTY

and

SCOTTY'S CASTLE

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INTRODUCTION

The intention of this study was to supply background information on Walter E. Scott (Death Valley Scotty) and Albert M. Johnson, and to provide an evaluation of the historical significance of the complex of structures known as Scotty's Castle, as well as its principal occupants.

This study summarized the life and activity of Death Valley Scotty and Albert M. Johnson, and it gives sufficient historical background information for management and planners to make decisions on the development of Scotty's Castle. Detailed information on these two will be forthcoming in a biography which has been written by Hank Johnston. I have read about three-fourths of the manuscript (all that was completed at the time) and have seen the documentation on which it is based. There is more than enough information in this soon-to-be-published book to satisfy the interpretive needs at the Castle. Consequently, I have felt that it is not necessary to duplicate the work of this book, which unquestionably will be the definitive work on the subject.

During the course of research for this study I had the fine assistance of a number of people. I am especially grateful to Hank Johnston who was completely generous in letting me use his manuscript and the research documents he has unearthed over the years. He and I spent several weekends at the Castle, going over the grounds and discussing

buildings and their former occupants; it was invaluable to me in understanding the structures and the people. I am also grateful to Mr. Martin DuBovay, the last architect on the Castle, who consented to spend a weekend at the castle so that Historical Architect Robert Simmonds and I could question him about what went on there. It was an enjoyable and enlightening experience. District Ranger Wayne Schulz and Interpretive Specialist Dorothy Shalley were most helpful and generous with their knowledge and time.

Death Valley Scotty--The Great American Satire

Death Valley Scotty was a satire on the American, particularly the western American. He possessed and exemplified every crude trait that has been ridiculed in the American character, and, with the exception of one, he did not display any of his virtues. But the one virtue he did have was the sense of humor, which perhaps is the American's most distinctive virtue.

From the vantage point of time one looks at Scotty not with revulsion, but with affection. He served a useful purpose then and now. During his life he entertained people and at times made them laugh. Today from the historical perspective he illuminates his times and gives insight into the people of his era. He was representative of the phoniness and ballyhoo of the period. Scotty, in essence, was in the tradition of and typified the great American showman. He was a lineal descendent of the ballyhoo artist P. T. Barnum and an heir of the first great modern American showman, Buffalo Bill Cody.

Virtually all his life Scotty ran a show, and the producer, director, and star of that show was Death Valley Scotty. Everyone else was a supporting player acting out an insignificant role. Then and now the

average person cannot visualize any other character in the play except Scotty. In a number of his escapades his wife was involved, but it comes as a surprise to most people that Scotty was even married, and that he had a son is unknown to practically all. It wasn't that Scotty attempted to hide anyone, it was simply that he cast such a huge shadow that other people around him were obscured.

Scotty's image loomed large, but like most of show business it was a false image, possessing no substance. Although his reputation was that of the rugged western individualist, he was actually far from that; he was a welfare case on the dole. It just happened that his support was not the federal government, but a capitalist with immense wealth.

As with any show on Broadway, Scotty needed financing for his act. Since Scotty had no money, he turned to others. Unlike a Broadway show, Scotty's show was generally successful, but it produced no return on the investors' money. Consequently, Scotty's play required a special kind of investor: one who expected laughs instead of money as return on his investment.

In finding an angel for his unusual play, Scotty was lucky, for after one false start he quickly and accidentally stumbled onto just the right

person. The false start was his first angel who did expect a return, but his second backer bankrolled him through most of the play, and even extracted him from his difficulties with the first angel. And in his old age, long after the death of his backer, Scotty could live splendidly, sit in the sun and greet the many people who came to see the fabled Scotty's Castle in Death Valley--he could be the showman to the end.

In the case of Death Valley Scotty, truth is an elusive thing--so elusive that one doubts it ever existed. Truth was tinsel, falseness, myth, lies, deceit, romance, fantasy, sham, pretentiousness, ostentation, boastfulness, and,yes, adventure, albeit generally of less than a legal nature.

Until recently[1] there were few things that could have been said about Scotty that could be accepted as the gospel, and yet all the stories that

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1. For several years Hank Johnston, author of a number of books on California history, has been looking into the story of Death Valley Scotty. He has examined court records, contemporary newspapers, lawyers' files, land records, and other documentary sources. Moreover, he has interviewed people involved in Scotty's escapades. He is now completing a book based on this research, and when it is published it will be the best and only decent biography of Death Valley Scotty. Mr. Johnston has been generous in letting me and others in the National Park Service examine the completed portion of his manuscript. In addition, he has let me use all of his research material, and many things cited herein come from his collection.

Mr. Johnston has recently brought out a handbook entitled The Man and the Myth: Death Valley Scotty. It is essentially a summary of his larger book and is now far and away the best and most accurate publication on Death Valley Scotty ever to come out.

had been written over the years about Scotty had some element of the truth in the traditional sense. Perhaps that is why Death Valley Scotty was such a great satire--he was a distorted and exagerated version of reality, but each of the stories told about him had a kernel of truth in it.

Scotty--Early Life

Walter E. Scott came into this world at Cynthiana, Kentucky on September 20,1872.[2] He early exhibited an independent spirit, leaving home about the age of twelve and pointing his nose west. His destination was Nevada to whence his brothers had moved to work as cowhands.[3] He too worked as a cowhand on Nevada ranches, and about 1884 he wound up in Death Valley, reportedly working as a waterboy for a boundary survey. Afterwards he worked for the Harmony Borax Works at Furnace Creek where he was a swamper on a 20-mule team hauling borax from the plant to the railhead.[4]

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2. Photostat of Death Certificate in possession of Walter Webb, former manager of Scotty's Castle. In a sworn statement of February, 1940, Scotty said he was 67 years old. Typescript of Bureau of Internal Revenue, hearing on Walter E. Scott in 1940, copy in files of Death Valley, N. M., hereafter cited as Internal Revenue Hearing, 1940.

3. Bourke Lee, Death Valley Men (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1932), p. 52; C. B. Glasscock, Here's Death Valley (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, c. 1940), pp. 119, 190, 191. He may have worked as a cowhand in Montana about this time. See Lee, Death Valley Men, pp. 53, 78.

4. Hank Johnston, Death Valley Scotty: The Man and the Myth (Yosemite, Calif.: The Flying Spur Press, c. 1972), pp. 7-8.

He labored at other jobs in California, and in time he turned to cowboy work. During this period he sharpened his skills as a horseman. In fact he became so good that he caught the eye of a scout for the Buffalo Bill Cody Wild West Show who signed Scotty on as a cowboy performer. Scotty was with the show from 1890 to 1902 and during that time toured Europe and the United States. He was never one of the name performers, rather just a cowhand doing branding and roping and riding exhibitions and filling in when large numbers were needed to create a scene.[5]

Death Valley Scotty--Miner

In 1900 Scotty met and married Ella Josephine Millius, who clerked in a New York candy store. That winter and the next he and his bride spent in Colorado, where Scotty worked in mines learning the business. At one of these mines the superintendent gave Mrs. Scott two ore samples so she could show her friends in New York.[6] These two pieces of rock later launched Scotty on his "career".

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5. Ibid., pp. 8-9. Another book quotes Scotty as saying he was "with Buffalo Bill for five years, until he closed the show." See Clarence E. Milligan, Death Valley and Scotty (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1942), p. 125. Generally speaking, the least reliable source on Death Valley Scotty is Death Valley Scotty.

6. Johnston, Death Valley Scotty, pp. 9-10.

In 1902 Scotty had a falling out with Buffalo Bill and left the show at the opening of its New York season. Unemployed and without funds to support himself and his wife, two thoughts crossed Scotty's mind: the two ore samples in his wife's possession, and a New York banker, Julian M. Gerard, whom he had met some five years before.

Scotty took the ore samples to Gerard and told him they were from a mine in Death Valley. The mine, Scotty said, was "situated about one hundred and thirty miles southwest of Fenner on Santa Fe R. R. and about five hundred yards east of what is known as Burro Trail running to Alkali Spring, which is about a quarter of a mile from the mine." Scotty claimed to own the mine with one John Berryman, and the two received from Gerard $100 "and other valuable considerations." This latter item, according to Mrs. Scott brought the total cash Scotty received to $1500.[7]

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7. Internal Revenue Hearing, 1940, and Johnston, Death Valley Scotty, p. 12. Johnston has pointed out that 130 miles southwest of Fenner would be just about in San Bernardino, Calif. which is over 100 miles south of the southern tip of Death Valley. T. S. Palmer, ed., "Place Names of the Death Valley Region in California and Nevada," mimeograph copy in Library, Western Region, NPS, does not list an "Alkali Spring" or a "Burro Trail."

Money in hand, Scotty hurried west, leaving his wife to follow two months later. He must have been a persuasive salesman, for it was with the greatest reluctance that Gerard was to give up the idea that Scotty indeed had a rich mine. Over the years Gerard clung to Scotty with the tenacity worthy of a healthy wood tick.

In the desert Scotty spent a lot of time in the saloons of Barstow and Daggett, and not a great deal of time in Death Valley. Nor, according to one witness, did he buy any mining equipment. Nevertheless he wrote Gerard about the fabulous ore he was finding, of how hard he was working, and of the unbearable heat; he often closed his letters with a request for money. And Gerard kept sending him money. By the spring of 1905 Gerard had reached the conclusion that he had been flimflammed. But, by then he had sunk $10,000 into the rathole that Scotty called a mine.[8]

Scotty probably gave Gerard's defection little concern, for the previous fall he had landed another fish. In November 1904 Obadiah Sands of Chicago and Walter Scott entered into an agreement "to start and keep a prospecting outfit in the Death Valley and Funeral Range country until

8. Johnston, Death Valley Scotty, p. 15.

Dec. 31st, 1905." They were to share equally the costs of and profits from this venture. This agreement obviously was the means whereby Sands was to fulfill a contract he had entered into several weeks earlier with Edward A. Shedd and Albert M. Johnson to prospect and locate mines in Death Valley.[9]

Scotty--Publicity Hound

Not long before he met Johnson, Scotty began his search for publicity. He did outlandish things to attract notoriety. Newspapermen thought he was good copy, and they embellished the stories Scotty told. Scotty began in Los Angeles. He visited the town regularly and loudly announced that he was wealthy, having a rich mine in the desert. He flashed his money, here offering to pay for a cigar with a $100 bill, and there producing a thick roll of bills with the outside bill being of a very large demonination. Scotty would announce he was in town to spend money and when it ran out he would go to his desert mine for more. In 1904 and

9. Internal Revenue Hearing, 1940. In Aug., 1905, Shedd and Johnson secured in writing a 2/3 interest in Sands' portion of the agreement with Scotty. And in April 1909 Sands sold to Johnson the remainder of his agreement with Scotty as well as his interest in the agreement between himself and Shedd and Johnson. See Agreement, Obadiah Sands with A. M. Johnson, dated April 22, 1909, and certification of Obadiah Sands, dated Aug. 3, 1905, both in Ibid.

1905 articles appeared about him in the Los Angeles papers. He hit the national news once in early 1904 in Philadelphia, Penn. when he announced that someone had stolen a bag of gold dust valued at $12,000 from his pullman car. But he acted unconcerned, telling the newspaper reporter, "'There's plenty more where that came from.'"

Perhaps the most enduring publicity act he engaged in occurred in 1905 when he chartered a train to take him from Los Angeles to Chicago. On a hot day in the first part of July 1905 Scotty arrived in Barstow with considerable money which he made no attempt to hide. He said he wanted to go to Chicago, and he chartered a special train to carry him to Los Angeles, where he found news of his desires had preceded him. At The Santa Fe Railroad Office he repeated his wishes and said he wanted to get to his destination by the fastest means possible and punctuated his remarks with a generous display of cash. The railroad was quick to see the publicity value of the trip and cooperated with Scotty. Scotty plunked out $5,500 in cash with the stipulation that the special would beat the previous record time to Chicago which was 52 hours. Scotty later said, or implied, the trip cost much more, at one point saying $100,000.[10]

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10. Glasscock, Here's Death Valley, pp. 194-195; Earl C. Driskill, Death Valley Scotty Rides Again (1967), p. [60].

On July 9, 1905, the Coyote Special stood on the tracks at the Los Angeles station waiting to depart at 1:00 p.m. A crowd of people gathered, and Scotty finally arrived. Pushing his way through the gathering, he mounted the engine and shook hands with the engineer. He made a short speech to the crowd and disappeared into the pullman, in which were his wife, railroad representatives, and a newspaperman assigned to write the story of the trip. The train departed on schedule and headed to San Bernardino, then, with the aid of an auxiliary engine, over Cajon Pass to Barstow, and on the Needles where the train arrived after a little over seven hours. The train then speeded across Arizona, through New Mexico, up Kansas and on to Illinois, arriving in Chicago at 11:54 a.m. on July 11. The Coyote Special made the 2,244 mile run in forty-four hours and forty-four minutes, a new record.

This stunt, for it can be called little else, brought a shower of publicity onto Scotty, and it was an enduring publicity that was to be brought up from time to time through the years in various newspaper articles. But, interestingly enough, the man who paid for the ride, E. Burden Gaylord, a Los Angeles real estate operator, did not profit from the stunt.[11] Scotty's shadow was too large; it could even hide a promoter.

11. Frank Newton Holman, Record Breaking Run of the Scott Special (Yosemite: Flying Spur Press, c. 1972).

Scotty and Johnson

In November 1904 Scotty and Obadiah Sands traveled west to engage in prospecting. The two didn't stay together long, for Scotty abandoned Sands in Goldfield and headed for Los Angeles. Sands then returned to Chicago, and shortly afterwards he and Shedd withdrew from their business arrangement with Scotty. Johnson, on the other hand, was more intrigued than ever, especially after Scotty arrived in Chicago on the Coyote Special.[12]

It would appear that Scotty was sending up a lot of smoke about his rich mines and little substance, and Albert M. Johnson decided to journey west to meet with Scotty and actually view the mines. Arriving in Los Angeles in October 1905, Johnson met with Scotty and was intrigued and mystified by him. Johnson wrote, "Scott is such an uneasy fellow and so shrewd too that you don't know half the time whether he is just talking or is telling you something. He is good company though and a nice fellow to be with. He has them all guessing though, me with the rest."

12. Johnston, Death Valley Scotty, p. 22.

In light of the fact that we know today that Scotty did not have a mine, Johnson's description of Scotty's activities is a beautiful description of the flim-flam man in action. Johnson said:

> As near as I can get at the situation, Gerard has hired a number of men to spy on Scott and locate his mine. Scott, I believe, has or states he has some kind of a contract with Gerard although when I was in New York Gerard would not show it to me and Scott always says he will but never has done it so I don't know what it is but whatever it is Scott says Gerard has failed to send him money when he needed it terribly and instead of coming out himself and going in with Scott or sending out a man to represent him to go in with Scott he has sent men out to spy him and follow him and try to work on his confidence and he says some of these men have stated they would find the mine and locate it for Gerard. The result has been that Scott has lost confidence in Gerard and dislikes him and has set himself to work to outwit him. I am afraid in their quarrel they will let the days slip by until the property is open for location and I understand there are a number of parties from here looking for the mine in the hopes they can find it and if it has not been legally located or is open for re-location to locate it themselves. Scott would rather lose it all I guess than have Gerard get hold of it and told me if Gerard got it he would kill himself.

Johnson was hooked, and not long afterwards, on November 6, 1905, he grub staked Scotty to the tune of $1,800. At the same time he obtained Scotty's power of attorney, probably with the intention of cleaning up the mess with Gerard.[13]

13. Internal Revenue Hearing, 1940. Scott was supposed to take Johnson at this time into the Funeral Mountains to the Knickerbocker mines, but he, of course, didn't.

Scotty's "Partner"--Albert M. Johnson

Albert M. Johnson until just recently has been somewhat of an enigma, especially in his relationship to Scotty. In personality the two men were opposites. Scotty was flamboyant, irreligious, outgoing, profane, undisciplined, self-centered, and eschewed work in the conventional sense. Johnson, on the other hand was quiet and shy, hardworking, a devoted husband, ~~highly~~ devoutly religious, a successful business man, a teetotaler, and wealthy.

Born in the same year as Scotty, Johnson was the son of a successful businessman in Oberlin, Ohio. He graduated from Cornell University in 1895 with a degree in mining engineering. Four years later he was on a trip to Colorado with his father to inspect mines when the train they were riding became involved in a wreck near Fairplay, Colorado. His father was killed instantly while he suffered a severely broken back. This injury kept Johnson immobile for eighteen months. Slowly his health recovered, but he was left with a stiff left leg, a hump on his back, and semi-paralyzed excretory organs.[14]

14. Johnston, Death Valley Scotty, p. 22; Interview between Martin DuBovay and Ross Holland, et al. at Scotty's Castle, circa June, 1972, hereafter referred to as DuBovay Interview, 1972. In one of my many talks with Hank Johnston he told me that he had discussed Johnson's accident with medical men and described the injuries. The doctors concluded that in all likelihood the injuries left Johnson impotent.

After he recovered, Johnson moved to Chicago and went into business with a friend of his father's, E. A. Shedd. In time the company acquired the National Life Insurance Company of the United States, and soon thereafter Johnson concentrated his energies on that company, eventually becoming its president. He was quite successful in his business endeavors, and by the mid-1920's he had an income of over $1,000,000 annually.

Before his accident, Johnson married Bessie Morris Penniman, of Walnut Creek, California, a classmate at Cornell. She was devoutly religious with fundamentalist beliefs. She and Johnson sponsored and supported revivalist movements of the hellfire and damnation type. Mrs. Johnson was given to preaching herself, and while the Castle was being built she and her husband held religious services on Sunday and all hands, including Scotty, were required to attend. Martin Dubovay remembered these services where Mrs. Johnson preached:

> She always talked of Jesus' return. That was the main thing; Jesus' second coming on the earth and she would go through the gates and the diamond studded gates would open and the crowd would come out and carry her in on their shoulders. Triumphal return of Jesus. That would be the end of all sins and everybody would be happy. She was pretty fundamentalist, and Mr. Johnson would be sitting

with us, nodding in agreement. Scotty would be sitting in the congregation grimacing.[15]

There could not have been two more disparate personalities than Scotty and Johnson, but in 1904 they began a relationship--and perhaps friendship--that was to last until one of them died. Financially it was a one-way proposition--Johnson giving and Scotty receiving. Money may have been the tie that binds. In the eighteen months after their first meeting nearly $18,000 passed from Johnson to Scotty, some of it for such things as small doctor bills for him and Mrs. Scott.[16]

At Johnson's urging Scotty went to New York in early 1906, around January, to attempt to settle with Gerard. This attempt was unsuccessful, and Scotty stopped back by Chicago to see Johnson, in April 1906.

Between Scotty's trip to New York in January and his visit with Johnson in Chicago in April he returned to California to engage in the

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15. Johnson, Death Valley Scotty, p. 23; DuBovay Interview, 1972. Johnson himself, too, had a reputation for piety. Horace Albright said that in 1934 he and several other NPS officials were invited to dine at the Castle. When they sat down at the dining room table, Mr. Albright started to pick up his napkin when Scotty reached over and took his arm in an "iron grip", saying, "Albright, put that napkin down. We have to listen to Johnson pray. You know, he is as religious as hell." And Johnson proceeded to give a long, involved blessing.

16. Statement of account, Oct. 1905 to May 1906, in Ibid. Between Dec. 1904 and Nov. 1905 Scotty received from Johnson over $2,500, but this money appears to be connected with the agreement Johnson and Shedd had with Obadiah Sands. See cash paid Walter Scott, Dec. 20, 1904 to May 28, 1907, in Ibid.

Battle of Wingate Pass and star in a play about himself in San Francisco.

In early March 1906 he seems to have relented and agreed to take two men knowledgeable in metal mining--A. W. St. Clair or Sinclair and Daniel E. Owen--to his mine. These two men represented an eastern mining group that was interested in investing in Scotty's mine if they could see it.

Scotty led quite a party into the desert. It consisted of his brothers, Bill and Warner, a Dr. Jones (who, according to accounts, was actually Albert M. Johnson), the two mining experts, A. Y. Pearl (who was trying to interest the eastern group in Scotty's mine), and one or two others.

Before leaving on the trip Scotty had arranged with Bill Keyes, a legitimate miner in Death Valley and later resident-character of Joshua Tree National Monument, to fake an ambush of Scotty's party. They had agreed beforehand that if something went awry, Scotty would take the party on to Keyes' mine and claim it was his. Something went awry, but hardly as Scotty, in his wildest moment, could have imagined.

Keyes and an associate arrived at the ambush point early. They decided to kill the time by killing a bottle of whiskey they brought with them. The result was that by the time Scotty and his group arrived at Wingate Pass, the two men were reasonably well oiled. They began

firing at the advancing party and unintentionally one of the bullets struck Warner Scott in the groin. This accident panicked Scotty, and his bellows of rage pretty well gave away the plot. The party hastily returned to Daggett where charges and counter charges reverberated through the desert air to be picked up by the newspapers and given a wider circulation. The Sheriff took off after Bill Keyes and his partner, and issued a warrant for Scotty's arrest.[17]

Scotty--Actor

Scotty hurried to Seattle to open his play. The play, entitled "Scotty, King of the Desert Mine" and written by Charles A. Taylor,

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17. Johnston, Death Valley Scotty, pp. 28-30. The comical aspects of the aftermath of the affair were reflected in a newspaper article that appeared in late March: ". . . Sheriff Ralphs of San Bernardino County and his party have reached and raided the abandoned camp of Walter Scott ('Scotty') in Death Valley, and there found and took possession of plunder alledged by the officers to have been stolen from the Confidence mine, whose mill was plundered by bandits a year or so ago. The officers in pursuit of Keys and Pearl came upon 'Scotty's' camp [in Scotty's Canyon] Sunday morning . . . . The further statement is made that Keyes warned by Pearl of the Sheriff's approach, made a midnight escape last Saturday over one of the wildest portions of the Funeral Range, which skirts Death Valley. Sheriff Ralphs, it is declared, will endeavor to prosecute Pearl on the charge of aiding a fugitive to escape." San Francisco Call, March 30, 1906.

opened at the Grand Opera House on Mission Street. The author said, eyes undoubtedly piously averted heavenward, the play was a "'plain, unvarnished tale, as related to me by this now famous "man of the earth," and contains the story of his discovery of the wonderful desert mine.'" The play was what later became known as a "shoot-em-up." A week after the battle of Wingate Pass the play appeared in San Francisco. The San Francisco Call's reviewer later said, "I lost count of all the people (Scotty) shoots in the play . . . ." The play had all the cliches of the western: the prostitute with the heart of gold, a maiden tied to a stake whom Scotty rescues, Scotty appearing on the scene when a child is about to be harmed by the villains, and Scotty shooting unerringly at his enemies. There were also a few surrealistic touches such as Scotty chasing a villain down Broadway in New York with purebred Malemutes, and the unconquerable desert miner astride his favorite mule "Slim"; it is difficult today to conceive a leading man cutting a very heroic figure astride a mule. Scotty's famous journey to Chicago aboard the Coyote Special was included. According to the play, it cost "our hero" $55,000 to charter the train.

Scotty as an actor left something to be desired, but his mere presence seemed to over-shadow his shortcomings as a thespian. "He has

more to shoot than to say in the play," said the drama critic, "but when he does say things you can hear him. In fact, you could probably hear him without going to the theatre. His dramatic methods are rather young, but he acts the role for pretty much what it is worth, and he shoots as well as Kubelik plays. He always fills the eye, being bluff and big, and Remington[18] as to rig down to a noble red tie." In view of this evaluation and a company of competent actors, the Call's critic, though giving a tongue in cheek review, considered the performance "a big stage success," and recommended everyone see it, mainly for its preposterousness.[19]

In the meanwhile, Johnson decided to attack the Gerard problem from another angle. He had Scotty sign over to him 2/3 interest in the Knockerbocker group. He and Gerard were to have joint ownership. Johnson thought that with such an arrangement, and as a principal, he would be in a position to bargain with Gerard.[20]

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18. Frederick A. Remington, the western artist.

19. San Francisco Call, March 26, 1906. The author perhaps realized Scotty's shortcomings as an actor and kept his lines few and short. In the first act Scotty had one four-word line.

20. Statement, April 27, 1906, in Internal Revenue Hearing, 1940. At the same time Scott sold to Johnson's wife, Bessie, a 1/3 interest in the Knockerbocker group for $2,000. It would thus appear that Scotty no longer owned any part of the Knockerbocker group, if it even existed.

It seems that Johnson was buying Scotty lock, stock, and hind parts. On this trip to Chicago, Scotty sold to Johnson for $1,000 all of his mining equipment and six mules, "all of which can be found at my former mining camp on the Death Valley slope of the Funeral Mountains, and at Barstow, California." And Johnson apparently wanted sole ownership, for the next month he persuaded Shedd to bow out of any transaction he was involved in with Scotty.[21]

In May 1906 Scotty took off on another--and more direct--tack to get rid of Gerard. He unilaterally cancelled "all of my contractural relations and all other relations with said Julian M. Gerard, written, spoken or implied, of every nature, kind and description whatsoever, including any and all grub-staking contracts." Johnson took the document to New York and personally delivered it to Gerard on May 25, 1906.[22]

Location of the principal group of claims, the Knickerbocker group, lapsed, and less than a week after Scotty renounced his "relations" with

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21. Sales agreement, Walter Scott with Albert M. Johnson, April 27, 1906, in Ibid. In May, 1906 Johnson purchased a half interest Scotty had bought from Bill Keyes of all Keyes' claims in the Funeral Mountains. Scotty said he did not have a bill of sale because he had given it to A. Y. Pearl "for purposes of identification so that Keyes would know that he came from me." Scotty wrote Pearl in Boston to send the bill of sale to Johnson.

22. Ibid.

Gerard, he was offering to relocate them for Johnson. He claimed Gerard no longer had any interests in the claim, but in order "to avoid litigation" Scotty proposed taking only one-third interest and giving two-thirds interest to Johnson and Gerard "for your joint benefit." Obviously the hand of Johnson was guiding the actions of Scotty. At the same time Johnson was buying him, for on the same date Scotty sold Johnson "a half interest in all claims, mining locations and mining properties hereafter discovered, acquired or located by me, or by any one acting for me in Inyo or San Bernardino Counties, California," Scotty also sold him all the claims and properties he then owned.[23] And in the following August Scotty, for back debts to Johnson, turned over to him "all my interest in all claims, mining locations and mining properties which I now have. . . ." And in November he announced that he was abandoning all claims he had located in Inyo and San Bernardino Counties and that they were open for relocation. But in February of 1907 he sold to Johnson for $5,000 cash all his "mining claims, locations and mining property" in San Bernardino and Inyo Counties. At the same time he also sold Johnson any mining locations, claims, and properties he might secure in the succeeding five years.

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23. Ibid.

Having exhausted San Bernardino and Inyo Counties as potential for raising grubstakes, Scotty raised his sights and sold to Johnson for $25,000 a half interest in all his mining properties in the states of California and Nevada. He also promised to settle within forty days out of his half interest his difficulties with Gerard. These mines, according to Scotty, were located "in the Tin Mountain district about 6 miles south of Tin Mountain Summit on the Death Valley slope about 2 miles north of Lost Wagon in Inyo County, California."[24]

With the tenacity of a leech, Gerard clung to his agreement with Scotty, and he was not about to be put off by some piece of paper from Scotty that renounced the agreement. Scotty and Johnson recognized Gerard's dogged determination to hold one, and on Aug. 9, 1907, Scotty entered into another agreement with Gerard. Gerard was to receive 22½% interest in a "rich mine of tellurium ore." In exchange for this new agreement Gerard consented to forget "any claims which he, the said Gerard, has or may have against the said Scott on account of any and all previous conveyances, assignments, bills of sale, and grubstaking agreements, and for all moneys which the said Gerard has heretofore advanced

24. Ibid. At this time, June 1907, Scotty was staying at the Southern Hotel in Rhyolite, Nevada.

to the said Scott. . . ." Gerard was not getting something for nothing, because the agreement further stipulated that he was to pay any expenses of litigation that may arise.[25]

Scotty purchased in September 1907 a number of horses and mules or burros in Techatchapi and branded them SCOT. These animals were purchased with money from Johnson and consequently belonged to Johnson who about this time employed Alfred MacArthur at a salary of $125 per month to prospect for him in Inyo and San Bernardino Counties.[26] MacArthur, a young employee in Johnson's office, had actually been sent west to gain Scotty's confidence and find the location of the mine. Moreover, he received from Johnson the horses Scotty had bought along with Johnson's camping equipment that was in Death Valley.[27] MacArthur's efforts--Scotty probably divined the purpose of the young man--proved fruitless and he returned to Chicago without Scotty's confidence or the location of his mine.

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25. Agreement between Julian M. Gerard and Walter Scott, dated, Aug. 19, 1907, Ibid.

26. Statement of Walter Scott dated Oct. 5, 1907; Agreement of Alfred MacArthur, Chicago, Jan. 11, 1908, both in Ibid.

27. Agreement, A. M. Johnson with Alfred MacArthur, dated Jan. 15, 1908, Ibid; Johnston, Death Valley Scotty, p. 33.

As a result of MacArthur's experience, Johnson decided to put Scotty on the back burner for awhile, and reduced drastically the money he sent to Scotty. Between 1908 and 1911 he sent Scotty a little over $500, and from 1912 to 1915 only $145.[28] This was a bad period for Scotty. His chief money source was drying up, and he engaged in at least two outright criminal activities.

His first endeavor involved high-grading ore in Goldfield. He was, according to him, a silent partner in three assay offices in the town, and these offices received the ore that the miners smuggled from the mines in their clothing or lunch pails.[29]

His second act was the most humiliating, for he was caught and had to confess to his status. He sold his name to a group of stock swindlers. The swindlers announced that they had bought Scotty's fabulous mine for $1,000,000, and they were going to develop it. They began selling stock in the "Death Valley Scotty Gold Mining and Development Company". All the publicity caused a doctor, whom Scotty owed a sizeable bill, to sue the

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28. "Monies Furnished Walter Scott," dated July 11, 1940, Internal Revenue Hearing, 1940.

29. Earl C. Driskill, Death Valley Scotty Rides Again (c. 1955), pp. 28-31.

newly minted millionaire. The resulting court case caused Scotty to confess that he never had a mine, that his ride on the Coyote Special had been paid by E. Burdon Gaylord, that he had received only $200 for the use of his name in the stock swindle, and that he had never had more than $3,000 at any one time in his life. Indeed, he said, "'I never had any real money and I've lived on what I got from Johnson and Gerard, my grubstakers.'" There he was exposed to the world as a phony, and Scotty did the only thing he could; he went back into the desert, a 40 year old hasbeen con-man.[30]

Scotty Builds a Castle

At some point in time, certainly prior to 1915, Scott began living in the northern end of Death Valley at a section called the Lower Grapevine. And it was here that Albert Johnson visited him. Scotty's cabin was located about one-half mile northeast of Hunter's ranch (today known as Scotty's Ranch), apparently near what is now the old dried up reservoir/swimming hole.[31]

30. Johnston, Death Valley Scotty, p. 34.

31. Untitled map by E. T. Giles and apparently dated May 1 & 2, 1924, in collection at Scotty's Castle, Death Valley National Monument. This map also shows an Indian village adjacent to the Hunter Ranch.

Around 1915 Johnson began buying up the interests of various people on the Upper and Lower Grapevine. He acquired Hunter's ranch, now Scotty's Ranch, and the old Jacob Steininger Ranch, now the site of the present Castle ground. Johnson later stated that he bought the Upper and Lower Grapevine property from "Bev. Hunter, Fred Sayre and Old man West."[32]

Johnson and Scotty moved their camp to the Upper Grapevine where they lived in tents. At this time their camp apparently consisted of three tents and a wooden shack. Kennth Mullins, long time bookkeeper for Johnson, described this scene:

> Before the castle building was built the accommodations were three tents (wooden floors and sides above the boards). One was for his wife and one for him. The other was the cook tent. Scotty lived in his wooden shack.
>
> When Johnson was not there, he stored his personal belongings in a canvas that was placed in the

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32. "Gerard v. Scott et al.", in 128 Federal Reporter, 2nd Series (photo copy in files of Hank Johnston); and Albert M. Johnson and Bessie M. Johnson to Walter Scott, Death Valley Ranch, April 26, 1928 in Internal Revenue Hearing, 1940.

> top of one of the fig trees. He always kept ranch clothes and personal items at the ranch.[33]

According to Mullins Mrs. Johnson was not at all happy about "roughing" it; she felt the tents offered little protection from such desert creatures as spiders, scorpions, and snakes. So she prevailed upon her husband to put up more substantial structures.[34] Sometime in 1922 Johnson had lumber and other building materials shipped to Bonnie Claire where a truck picked it up and hauled it to the Upper Grapevine site. Two buildings were added first: a two-story stuccoed residence and a structure called variously a hall and a garage. By October 1922 a newspaper reported a new frame building, and another under construction, with a promise of more buildings "that will make the ranch a desert paradise."[35] The last statement probably came as a result of the reporter talking to Scotty.

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33. Kenneth Mullins to Henry N. Johnston, Evanston, Ill., Feb. 8, 1971, in files of Hank Johnston. Near the old reservoir/swimming hole on the Lower Grapevine property is a small structure that appears to be what is left of a tent of the type Mullins described. Little rags of canvas still cling to portions of the framing, or at least they did two years ago. Perhaps this was one of the actual tents that Johnson and Scott used on the Upper Vine, and it was moved to the Lower Vine to serve as a dressing room for those who swam in the reservoir.

34. Johnston, Death Valley Scotty, p. 36.

35. Newspaper clipping dated October, 1922, in files of Hank Johnston.

The residence contained two apartments upstairs and one downstairs. It was a flatroofed, rectangular structure, roughly 32 feet by 96 feet in size, and it contained indoor plumbing, a refrigeration plant, and a generating system. By October 1923 the two buildings were up, and Scotty was reporting that the complex was eventually "to consist of garage, living house, stable, building for employees and 20 portable four and five-room houses," as well as another garage and a mule barn.

Also during this period the ranch had chickens, turkeys, a fig orchard, grape arbors, and eight acres under cultivation. The orchard was located in front of what is now the motel unit, while the grapes were grown in the parking area behind the motel unit. The cultivated acreage seems to have included the land south of the stream that runs through the middle of the Castle complex to about the road, and from approximately the present entrance structure to beyond the present stables.[36]

Johnson, or most likely again Mrs. Johnson, was not happy with the desert "camp", and he got in touch with Matt Roy Thompson, whom Bessie

36. Ibid; Goldfield Tribune, Oct. 23; Untitled map of Upper and Lower Grapevine property dated June 1922, in the files at Scotty's Castle, Death Valley National Monument. There are drawings of these early structures in the plan files at Scotty's Castle.

had known and dated at Stanford before she transferred to Cornell. Thompson made some pencil sketches transforming the residence by the addition of arches similar to the style at Stanford. Johnson protested at first for he liked the rectangular buildings, feeling, so Thompson reported, that "It symbolized that everything he did was on the square." But in the end Johnson came around, because Bessie liked the arches. This sketch today survives in the plan files at Scotty's Castle, and it obviously set the tone for the style of the buildings. Modifications were made later by the designer C. A. MacNeilledge and Architect Martin DuBovay, but Thompson's design can be clearly seen in the finished product.

One of Thompson's first steps was to work over the residence. He said:

> We undermined the old building with a full concrete-walled basement from which tunnels radiated to the other structures in the group. The old walls were trebled in thickness by adding hollow-tile veneer and insulating them against desert heat by filling them with insulex, a powder which with the addition of water expanded to 12 times its original volume. It dries into a porous stone-like substance.[37]

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37. Randall Henderson, "He Built Scotty's Castle," Desert Magazine, Sept. 1952.

Thompson had arrived at the Upper Grapevine in 1925, and his first chore was locating gravel to be used in the cement for floors, foundations, and plastering for the buildings. He found gravel bunkers "at the upper pit between the two springs."[38]

During the years of construction, Thompson had both white men and Indians working for him. Johnson, at least at first, did not trust the Indians, for he instructed Thompson:

> In working the Indians, be sure and keep them together under a white man, for if you scatter them and they have no one over them, they kill an immense amount of time.

The Indians were kept separate, and had their own little village across the Bonnie Claire road. They were paid $3.50 per day and had to provide their own food. On the other hand, white workers--skilled craftsmen--received $5 to $11 per day, and were provided board.[39]

When Thompson went there, he apparently was under instructions to concentrate his efforts on adding structures, for he began to build the

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38. M. Roy Thompson to A. M. Johnson, Dec. 31, 1925, Letter Box, N. P. S. office, Scotty's Castle.

39. M. R. Thompson to A. M. Johnson, Dec. 27, 1925; M. R. Thompson to A. M. Johnson, Jan. 21, 1926; A. M. Johnson to M. R. Thompson, Feb. 24, 1926; in Letter Box, Scotty's Castle. Johnston, Death Valley Scotty, p. 39.

stable, the oil house, the bunkhouse and shed (the present motel unit), and a reservoir on the Lower Vine. The bunkhouse was reported finished on February 10, 1926, and two men immediately moved in. Up to that time the white workers had been staying in the "dog shack," which apparently was the wooden structure Scotty had lived in.[40]

Also about this time, early February, the workers finished the reservoir and began running water into it. Thompson wrote Johnson, "I hope you can come out soon and take a swim in it."[41] Presumably the diving board was installed at this time.

Also early in the year the workers poured the cement for the auto pit, and began making fence posts, and Thompson branded each one with circle-J. The use of the branding iron indicates these first posts were of wood. Later the concrete posts were made with a mold that gave a circle S-J brand. In this connection it was agreed that part of the posts would have S over J and part would have J over S. But Scotty

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40. M. R. Thompson to A. M. Johnson, Feb. 10, 1926; Johnson to Thompson, Jan. 9, 1926; Thompson to Johnson, Jan. 21, 1926, in Letter Box, Scotty's Castle.

41. Thompson to Johnson, Feb. 10, 1926, in Letter Box. The dried up reservoir, with the reamins of the diving board can be seen today. It is about one-half mile north of Scotty's Ranch.

was on the ground and, it would appear, saw to it that the vast majority of the posts cast bore the S over J brand. At any rate Johnson once complained to Thompson of there being too many posts in that condition.[42] And today empirical evidence indicates that Johnson had a legitimate gripe.

C. Alexander MacNeilledge, a designer from Chicago and Los Angeles, entered the picture in 1926. Although Thompson relegates the activities of the architects to a little interior design work, they nevertheless had some effect on the design of the Castle complex. MacNeilledge was not an architect, but rather a furniture expert. Nevertheless he, according to Martin DuBovay, hired an architect to make the drawings, but MacNeilledge had his name put on the drawings. Mr. DuBovay reports that many of the drawings with MacNeilledge's name on them were actually done by him.

Mr. DuBovay was a trained architect experienced in the Spanish provincial style, and although many of the structures had been started before he came on the scene in 1927, his was undoubtedly a major

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42. Thompson to Johnson, Jan. 21, 1926; Henderson, "He Built Scotty's Castle."

contribution in the final appearance of the complex--the appearance that makes it a cohesive whole. He was totally responsible for the design of the Romanesque powerhouse, and he chose that style, he said, because he felt that it blended in with the style of the other structures.

Although he had met Johnson the previous year, Mr. DuBovay did not begin working on the castle until 1928, and divided his time between Los Angeles and the Castle. Much of his work was concerned with designs for the furniture, hardware, beams, and fittings that were to go into the various buildings of the complex. About 1930 Mr. DuBovay became the architect in name as well as in fact. Johnson and MacNeilledge had a falling out, and Johnson dismissed the designer.[43]

The decision to install the organ seems to have been an after-thought, because, as Mr. DuBovay reports, he had to redesign one end of the annex to accommodate the organ.[44] The Welte organ was installed in 1931 and

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43. DuBovay Interview, 1972. Mr. DuBovay says that the reason Johnson and MacNeilledge had a disagreement was because Johnson caught MacNeilledge double billing him, and Johnson was not the type who liked to pay two prices for a piece of furniture.

44. Johnston, Death Valley Scotty, p. 42.

1932, which apparently made it the last major thing done at the castle. In April 1932 the organ was baptised when Alfred Hay Mallotte gave a concert on it.[45]

Dewey R. Kruckeberg was hired to plan the landscaping. He brought in many exotics such as oleander and Washington palms. The climate proved too severe for the palms, and they died within a few winters. He also hauled in a number of large rocks that had Indian petroglyphs on them.[45a]

In 1929, construction began on a small ranch for Scotty on the Lower Vine. Situated on the old Hunter Ranch, the small complex consisted of a three room house made of redwood, a garage, a shed, a chicken house, and corrals.

Although few written records survive on the building of the castle complex, it is possible to trace construction in two photograph albums in the files at Scotty's Castle. This source plus the drawings, which must

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45. L. M. Davey, "History of the Pipe Organ in Scotty's Castle, Death Valley National Monument," In N.P.S. files at Scotty's Castle. Mr. Davey worked for the Welte company. Some time before 1936 a flood ruined all the player rolls. Davey said that in 1940 he sold Johnson "the Wurlitzer 6 roll changer from a residence in Santa Monica and installed it together with a Tuba of 73 pipes and the necessary switches to play such stops as were not on the Welte."

45a. Kruckeberg's plans for the landscaping of the Castle complex are in the plan files at Scotty's Castle. Microfilm of the plans are in the Denver Service Center files, and the main plan is numbered 143/41034.

number in the thousands, provide the architect with probably the most complete information that has ever been available on a historic structure in the National Park System.

Scotty's Wife

Scotty had his marital problems. As mentioned earlier, before he left New York he married Ella Josephine Millius, a clerk in a candy store, and brought her to the Death Valley region. She remained with him for years and participated in some of Scotty's escapades. Ella was, for example, with Scotty during the "Battle of Wingate Pass." During this Death Valley period she bore Scotty a child, a boy named Walter Perry Scott. Mrs. Scott apparently tired of Death Valley and left Scotty. At one time she lived in Reno, Nevada, and later in Los Angeles. Johnson supplied the money she needed for support from about 1920 on. She received annually between $1,200 and $3,000 through 1932, with occasional sums going to the benefit of the son. At one point Scotty asked Johnson to buy his wife a small house in Reno and an inexpensive car, promising to repay Johnson "out of the first proceeds of my mining properties in Death Valley country, or elsewhere, as soon as I am able to place same on a producing basis." The account records are not clear as to whether Johnson complied with the request, but from other evidence he did.

From 1933 on payments to Mrs. Scott dropped drastically, perhaps reflecting a reduced financial picture for Johnson. In 1933 she received $930 and in subsequent years $600 annually. In 1937 she entered formal proceedings for separate maintenance and began receiving, as a result, $900 per year, which Johnson paid.[46] Apparently a divorce was neither asked for by Mrs. Scott nor granted by the court.

Scotty and Gerard--The Later Years

Death Valley Scotty continued through the 1920's to claim he had a rich mine and surfaced occasionally in the newspapers. In 1926 he announced he was opening his mine to the public, and this piece of publicity attracted the attention of Gerard's representative who wrote Scott proposing that the mine be shared equally by Gerard, Johnson, and Scotty. This arrangement, he felt, would be fair and just since Johnson and Gerard over the years had financed Scotty's prospecting activities.[47]

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46. Walter Scott to A. M. Johnson, Death Valley Ranch. Dec. 2, 1927; tabulation entitled "Monies Furnished Walter Scott," dated July 11, 1940, both in Ibid. After the departure of Mrs. Scott, the desert "miner" was not all the time without female companionship. In the late 1920's Little Eva Mudge, from the Buffalo Bill show, stayed for a while at Scotty's home in the desert, to write, so she said, Scotty's biography. Her husband thought there were other things going on and filed for divorce. In the subsequent trial Scotty was called to Los Angeles as a witness, amidst appropriate publicity.

47. F. B. Mechling to Walter Scott, Tonopah, Nev., June 6, 1926, Ibid.

Scotty and Johnson obviously did not consider this suggestion worthy of consideration and in June 1927 Scotty sent a notice to Gerard once again cancelling all previous agreements with him.[48] And in the fall of the year Johnson personally delivered the pronouncement to the New York banker. Six weeks later Gerard replied to this missive and informed Scotty that it abrogated no agreement between the two.[49]

For the next dozen or so years things dragged on and Scotty revealed no gold mine, but Gerard continued to cling tenaciously to him. It is difficult to understand why Gerard maintained such a close interest in Scotty. Surely after all these years he knew what Scotty was and that he possessed no gold mine. Was Gerard clinging to a dream grounded in boyhood fantasies of the old west, prospectors, and rich gold mines? Or was he the businessman tired of the hectic pace of New York and escaped by living vicariously through the desert prospector who had no schedule or responsibilities?

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48. Notification to Julian Gerard from Walter Scott, dated June 6, 1927, Ibid.

49. Julian M. Gerard to Walter Scott, New York, Nov. 21, 1927, Ibid. Gerard at this time was president of the International Germanic Trust Company.

Whatever his motivation Gerard maintained a friendly relationship with Johnson and Scott, at least judging by the letters that Gerard and Johnson exchanged. The two were on a first name basis, and Gerard extended his "kindest regards to Scotty."

In 1940 another attempt was made by Johnson to settle Scotty's account with Gerard. Responding to this overture, Gerard suggested settling for $75,000 and a 7½% interest in Scotty's endeavors. Johnson replied that he felt Scotty would never agree to both cash and interest, but perhaps would settle for $50,000 or 5% interest. Gerard then countered, by telegram with an offer to settle for either $100,000 cash or $50,000 cash and 5% interest, and if Scotty didn't accept that offer within two days he had instructed his attorneys to move ahead with court proceedings. Johnson then called Gerard's bluff, waited two days before he sat down and wrote, by mail, that it would probably be a month before he would see Scotty again, but at that time he would inform Scott of the latest offer.[50] Dissatisfied, Gerard took Scotty to court in

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50. Gerard to Johnson, New York, April 29, 1940; Johnson to Gerard, Hollywood, May 7, 1940; Telegram, Gerard to Johnson, May 16, 1940; Johnson to Gerard, Hollywood, May 18, 1940; all in Ibid. Johnson in this correspondence contended that "my position in this matter between you and Scott is one of a friendly intermediary to both parties."

March 1941, suing him for 22½% of all he owned. Scotty for the third time in court confessed he never had a secret mine. That testimony plus Johnson's statement that Scotty never had any money caused the judge to deny Gerard's claim. Thus Scotty was finally off Gerard's hook.[51]

Later History of the Castle

Johnson received a scare in the 1930's when he found out that due to faulty surveying the land he thought he owned and had built upon was not his. His land as defined by an accurate survey was one township over. Congress, however, passed a bill permitting Johnson to buy the Upper and Lower Grapevine property for $1.25 per acre which Johnson did in 1935. Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes saw to it that a rider was place in the bill that stated the government would have the right to buy the property upon the death of Johnson.[52]

Johnson was very much affected by the depression that began in 1929. He had to sell his insurance company for a virtual pittance, and his

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51. Johnston, Death Valley Scotty, p. 46.

52. Interview with Horace Albright.

lavish home in Chicago for a fraction of what he had paid for it. Under these reduced circumstances he had no choice but to halt work on the castle. Work stopped in May 1931, and with the exception of cleanup, the expansion of the oil house into the present concession stand, the addition of the service station, and the paving of the parking lot, the complex today is as it was at the time of work stoppage. The steps around the front of the main house were never plastered over, nor was the retaining wall in front of the hacienda or guest house. Of course the largest uncompleted item is the swimming pool. It was quite well along at the cessation of work. What is there today is what was completed by May 1931: ~~The~~ cement wall outlines the pool, ~~the~~ small glass windows designed to hold electrical fixtures to illuminate the pool, ~~the~~ a structure that bridged the pool, and ~~the~~ glass viewing windows. All stand as the most obvious testimony to the unfulfilled dream of a partially crippled tycoon who came to Death Valley to find release for pent up inhibitions and to regain his health and strength to carry on the struggle of life.

When Albert M. Johnson died he left the castle to the Gospel Foundation of California, an organization he had founded two years before

his death in 1948. The purpose of the Gospel Foundation, it would appear, was to run the Castle.[53]

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53. Johnston, Death Valley Scotty, p. 47. When I interviewed Mr. Walter Webb and Miss Mary Liddicote, the two top officials of the Gospel Foundation, I asked them directly what purpose the foundation served. There was much evasion in the answer, and I really received none, except that Miss Liddicote said once the foundation sponsored a two week camp period for boys in the juvenile detention home in Walnut Creek, Calif. Interestingly enough the Gospel Foundation was not a tax exempt organization. See Gospel Foundation information sheet for guides at Scotty's Castle, copy in files at headquarters, Death Valley National Monument.

The Gospel Foundation of California has its roots in a similar organization Johnson established in Illinois. In 1921 he formed the Tabernacle Publishing Company whose principal purpose was to print and distribute hymnals and other religious literature, to aid the needy, and "to conduct, manage or make contributions to such enterprises as its trustees may deem expedient for the dissemination of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the saving of souls through faith alone in his sacrificial death and shed blood on Calvary. . . ."

At the first meeting Johnson was elected President and Treasurer. In 1926 the Board of Directors sold the Tabernacle Publishing Co. to the Hope Publishing Co. and Johnson and crew re-incorporated as the Gospel Foundation with Johnson still president and treasurer. The organization continued to function through the years, apparently chiefly sponsoring evangelical activities by the World Wide Christian Couriers, which was in Chicago, and by Rev. Paul Rader. On June 9, 1948 the Board of Directors met and voted to dissolve the organization, since there was no use to continue on as Johnson had died the previous Jan. 7. The action, of course, indicates that the foundation was nothing more than an instrument used by Johnson and his wife to control their substantial religious charities and activities. See Minute Book, Gospel Foundation, 1921-1948, copy in files, Headquarters, Death Valley National Monument.

The Gospel Foundation,[54] in the person of Miss Mary Liddicote and Mr. Walter Webb, ran Scotty's Castle until 1970 when they sold it to the National Park Service. The government had failed to exercise its option to buy the place in 1948 when Johnson died, but by 1970 it looked differently upon the place because of the water that flows through the place, and to keep private development out of Death Valley National Monument.

Scotty--An Evaluation

Although long suspected, the record is clear that Scotty had nothing and was financially dependent upon Johnson. His mines were fiction and his part ownership of the castle was a front. Scotty had to admit his

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54. The Gospel Foundation was also left the Shadelands Ranch in Walnut Creek, Calif. that Bessie Johnson had inherited from her father. This property is exceedingly valuable, and is now being broken up and developed as an industrial park. The ranch house, located west of the intersection of Oak Grove and Ygnacio Valley Roads, was donated to the Walnut Creek Historical Society, and that organization has been restoring the house for museum purposes. See Contra Costa Times, Aug. 1, 1971, p. 3A.

pennilessness in 1940 when the Internal Revenue troops began to wonder why Death Valley Scotty, owner of fabulously wealthy mines, had never paid income taxes.

To establish Scotty's innocence Johnson compiled a collection of financial notes, letters, accounts, and other documents dated between 1902 and 1940, and they reveal Scotty to be little more than a bum and a parasite. Accounts and statements seem to be in conflict for they show Scotty to be in debt to Johnson and/or Mrs. Johnson for from $500,000 to $700,000. Practically all of Scotty's escapades had been financed by Johnson, for Johnson appears to have been most generous and seldom refused Scotty's request for money. Scotty, incidentally, always kept a front up that the money received from Johnson was always a loan against his share of their mining endeavors. Johnson even testified that Scotty had probably used his money to finance the record breaking run of the Coyote Special to Chicago in 1905, perhaps Scotty's most spectacular and successful publicity endeavor. Apparently he was not aware of the 1912 court suit that had sent Scotty into eclipse for many years. Scotty had then testified that Gaylord had financed the Coyote Special.

Scotty, himself, testified that he had no taxable income since 1913 and that he did not then own, "nor have I owned since the year 1913, any gold producing claim or mine from which I have derived taxable income." He also said that he did not own any real estate, stocks, or other investments, and that Johnson had his unsecured note for $5,000,000 "for past, present and future advances, loans and grubstakes."[55]

The hearing again exposed Scotty for what he was, but it is doubtful that he felt any embarrassment for Scotty liked publicity no matter what form it took. He seemed to belong to the I-don't-care-what-you-say-about-me-as-long-as-you-spell-my-name-right school. Nevertheless, Scotty could not let the issue lie there; he had to keep up the mystery and maintain the fiction that Death Valley held a source of wealth that was his and he would someday present it to the world. After Johnson testified Scotty announced:

> I had a bunch of money amounting to one hundred thousand dollars in Gold Certificates and I buried it in the mountains about the year nineteen hundred and nine. Afterwards cloud bursts came and covered it up and maybe sometime I will be able to get it and maybe I will never get it.[56]

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55. Testimony of A. M. Johnson to E. S. Lahman, Special Agent, Bureau of Internal Revenue, dated Jan. 17, 1940, Ibid.

56. Walter Scott to U. S. Collector of Internal Revenue, Scotty's Castle, Feb. 16, 1940, Ibid.

Scotty went back to the Death Valley Ranch and over the next years surfaced occasionally in the newspapers. He continued to tell yarns, usually built around a small kernel of fact, and he would repeat these tales, seldom reiterating the same details.[57] Visitors came to the castle to satisfy their curiosity and to see the legendary Death Valley Scotty.

Scotty continued to live at the castle, but seems to have spent much of his time at the ranch on the Lower Grapevine. In his last years, as his mobility decreased, he lived in the small apartment at the main house on the Upper Grapevine.

Scotty's benefactors, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson died in the 1940's. Mrs. Johnson was killed in an automobile accident at Townes Pass in 1944, and Mr. Johnson died of natural causes in 1948.

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57. Eleanor Jordan Houston, Death Valley Scotty Told Me -- (Palm Desert, Calif.: Desert Printers, 1971), and Earl C. Driskill, Death Valley Scotty Rides Again (1967) are two examples of the yarns Scotty told during this latter period of his life. Neither author, although each holds Scotty in personal reverence, really believes these tales to be true. They seem to regard Scotty as an authentic western character.

Interestingly, Driskill's book has on the cover a photograph of a waving Scotty dressed as a cowboy on a rearing horse. The photograph, even to the most untrained eye, is obviously doctored. Scotty's face has been superimposed onto the picture. This fakeness is even more obvious in the more complete photograph which can be found in both of two large albums of photographs of the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show. These albums are presently at Scotty's Castle.

Before his death Johnson turned over all his property, including the castle, to the Gospel Foundation of California. Under the guidance of Miss Mary Liddicote and Walter Webb, Johnson's former administrative assistant, the Foundation ran the castle, conducting tours of the main house and selling souvenirs at a gift shop that had been made by building on to the old garage.

Johnson's will provided that Scotty be permitted to live out his life at the castle that had taken his name. He died there in 1954 of cancer and was buried on the hill overlooking the castle grounds.[58] His dog, Windy, who died about the same time, was buried beside him.

What was Scotty? An assessment of the man by second hand sources is impossible, but there are certain facets of him that can be identified. There is little question that he was a spinner of tall tales and a liar. But he wasn't a liar in the traditional sense, because he sometimes told the unvarnished truth. It would appear from the surface evidence that Scotty said that which was most likely to get him

58. Scotty actually died at Scotty's Corner while on his way from the Castle to the doctor's. Interview with Walter Webb.

publicity, whether it was truth or fiction. The desire for publicity seems to be the one consistency in his life.

Scotty appears to have been an extremely likeable person. The ladies liked him--nice, genteel ladies, ones who would normally be offended by his well-stocked, often-used vocabulary of profanity.

Embarrassment was an emotion he did not know, probably because his sense of values did not distinguish between a lie and the truth.

People have called Scotty many things, most of them derogatory--court jester, showman, buffoon, are a few of the kinder ones. Most writers who wrote of him really didn't believe his tales. Reportedly, the true miners of the Death Valley region laughed at Scotty and ridiculed him.

Nevertheless, everyone seemed to like Scotty and either glossed over or made excuses for his less than conventional traits and behavior. Gentle ladies could overlook his profaneness. Reporters would be regaled by Scotty's tales, know they weren't true, but would give him good newspaper coverage. Johnson liked Scotty so much that he supported him fully for years and let the world believe that the Death Valley Ranch was indeed Scotty's Castle.

There is no question today, nor has there been for many decades, that Scotty had no mine, and that Scotty had no money of his own. The question is, why did Johnson support Scotty? The popular story given out for years at the castle was that Johnson in his younger days had very poor health, being on the brink of death, and that Scotty introduced him to Death Valley and the desert. The air and climate had a salutary effect upon Johnson's health, and, consequently, Johnson was grateful to Scotty. Like everything else about Scotty, there may be a kernel of truth to the story. But there were probably other reasons, not the least of which was the fact Johnson enjoyed Scotty's company and tales, and took delight in recounting Scotty's escapades. Johnson probably took vicarious pleasure in Scotty's "adventures." Johnson had been raised a Quaker and undoubtedly possessed all the inhibitions a strong religious background gives. Perhaps deep in his soul he wanted to break from this prison, but couldn't, and so he compensated by living through the unconventional, free wheeling, profane Scotty.

After long and careful research and analysis of Walter E. Scott and Albert M. Johnson, Hank Johnston concluded:

> Despite his [Johnson's] lack of success [in finding Scotty's mine], the city-bred executive found the outdoor adventure in the rugged, pristine country

very much to his liking. Moreover, the dry, invigorating climate proved so beneficial to his tenuous health that he returned to the city feeling better than he had in years.

The following winter Johnson again arranged to join Scott in Death Valley; again he came away uninformed about gold claims but pleasantly revitalized in both mind and body. From this point on, the sapre, handsome Chicagoan visited Death Valley on a regular basis. Despite his persistent back problems, he took up hiking and camping with unabashed enthusiasm. In time Johnson even learned to ride a horse with some skill, although he could mount only from the "off side" using his good right leg as a fulcrum.

As years went by, Johnson's western sojounrs became the most absorbing events in his otherwise prosaic existence. Death Valley shored up his health and captured his fancy--never mind the gold! Johnson dearly loved to don hand-tooled cowboy boots and chaps, strap on a matched set of pearl-handled pistols, and for a few weeks every winter, through his association with the notorious Death Valley Scotty, sort of vicariously live out the dime-novel Westerns that he wasn't allowed to read during his rigid Quaker upbringing. By the time he reluctantly yielded to the fact that Scotty was surely a sham (probably somewhere between 1912 and 1914--the date is pure conjecture), it really didn't matter anymore. Johnson had found a new life in Death Valley, and he desperately needed Scott to make it all meaningful. With his insurance business now burgeoning, he was perfectly willing and able to pay whatever it took to preserve the unusual arrangement.

In retrospect, Johnson's rapport with wily Walter Scott was not altogether surprising. When the spirit moved him, the well-traveled ex-cowboy could be a most amiable companion--especially in a one-to-one relationship where there were no gawking crowds to impress.

> Scotty was a first-rate cook, an entertaining spinner of yarns, a prodigious horseman, a crack hunter, and the finest guide in the territory. No tenderfoot could have asked for a more capable sidekick, and Johnson knew it.[59]

Scotty's Castle--An Evaluation

In thinking about or planning developments for Scotty's Castle, we have to keep one thing in mind: we must forget our emotions and be objective about the place and the men associated with it. Scotty was a bum, there is no question. But that is not the point. The point is that Scotty reveals a lot about the American character, and he does illuminate his times. He reveals the tinsel and gaudiness of show business, and to a great extent he parallels Hollywood. Newspapermen exaggerated his wild tales, and the American public could take this con-man to heart and believe he had a gold mine, even though he three times swore in court that he didn't.

---

59. Johnston, Death Valley Scotty, pp. 35-36. Johnston's view is substantiated by Martin DuBovay, last architect on the Castle. During building, Mr. DuBovay remembered Johnson usually arriving from Chicago in a completely exhausted condition, but after a few weeks in the desert, Johnson's health and energy returned and he became a revitalized man. Mr. DuBovay also remembered that Johnson, in his reading habits, was addicted to westerns. DuBovay Interview, 1972.

The zenith of Scotty's career, and Johnson's too, came in the flambouyant 1920's and it was signified by the building of the Castle--an event that could attract attention in those gaudy times. People could be fascinated by Scotty's Castle and troop in droves to see the place and marvel at what they saw and believe what they heard from Scotty and the guides; it leads one to be convinced that there is no overestimating the gullibility or underestimating the taste of the American public. Even today thousands upon thousands of people come annually to the castle, and many are repeat visitors.

It is this continuing appeal of the place that demands that the National Park Service develop the site to accommodate the visitation in a reasonable and orderly manner.

In evaluating the Castle as a group of historic structures one has to consider the elements of the story, particularly since the architecture of the buildings is not distinctive.

What then does make up the story of Scotty's Castle? There are four distinct, though intertwining, ingredients: (1) Walter E. Scott (loudmouthed braggart and liar, selfish and unprincipled, a con-man, but a winning personality); (2) Albert M. Johnson (successful businessman, wealthy, crippled and unhealthy, inhibited, infatuated with the wild west); (3) a strange friendship, and (4) the building of an estate complex in an unlikely place.

None of these ingredients individually, nor all of them as a whole, would make Scotty's Castle remotely significant nationally. At best these ingredients would make the site of local significance, and then because it is a curiosity.

In the final analysis Scotty as an individual had very few redeeming characteristics; he is hardly a character mothers would want their sons to emulate. He did do one useful thing: he entertained the American people.

Johnson, on the other hand, had a number of redeeming characteristics. He worked hard for success, he contributed heavily to religious activities (in his time that was a high virtue), he overcame physical adversity, and he appears to have been reasonably honorable. But he also engaged in conspicuous consumption.

The friendship that endured between these two disparate personalities can only be explained as a symbiotic relationship; each received the things he needed from each other. Scotty obtained a livelihood, while Johnson received badly needed relaxation as well as protection for his property in Death Valley. There was no imbalance in the giving and receiving, for each man was content with what he received.

Someone once remarked that Scotty's Castle placed in Hollywood would be overshadowed by a number of other private residential complexes. Indeed, it is the setting alone that makes the Castle distinctive and unusual. It was not an easy task building the complex in the desert; it was difficult hauling the materials from the railhead to the site over rough roads, but it wasn't all that difficult for someone who had the money. Nevertheless, building the castle is one element of the story, but an element of local significance.

Technology, though, is perhaps the most significant story at the Castle complex. The solar water heating system is unique, and in its day apparently worked quite well. The technical aspects of the system could be explained, but the important part of the story would center around the implication of such a system in conserving our natural resources.

The extensive use of the Pelton water wheel in the electrical generating process is another fascinating technological story that is well illustrated by surviving equipment at the Castle complex. This equipment, too, has ecological implications.

Some people condemn Johnson for abusing the environment that surrounds the Upper and Lower Grapevine, while others contend that he used

nature without disturbing it, that he was in ecological balance with the environment. An ecologist is going to have to take a dispassionate look at the scene and determine whose view is right. This analysis will probably reveal examples of the good and bad use of our natural surroundings that would be worth making a part of the interpretive story.

Treatment of Scotty's Castle

Throughout this report I have used the term Scotty's Castle when referring to the complex of buildings on the Upper Vine, and I think this is the name we should continue to use, despite the fact that the name Death Valley Ranch is engraved on the lintel of the back entrance to the main building. Scotty's Castle is the name by which it was popularly known from the days it was being constructed. From the beginning Scotty said he was building a castle, and as far as we can tell now Johnson did not discourage that notion, nor in later years did he apparently object to the appellation. Historically the complex has been known as Scotty's Castle, so why change the name now to the unknown and stilted Death Valley Ranch?

The object of restoration of the Castle complex should be to take it back to May 1931 when Johnson halted construction on the place. Of

course, this action would mean taking out the concession stand, the present gas station, the public restrooms, and the remnants of the old station, and perhaps the asphalt parking area.

This complex is not so sacred that its setting has to be fully protected as would be done to a more historically significant structure. Consequently, there are no historical reasons that would preclude developments adjacent to the complex, or even adapting the rock crusher to visitor services use.

The two most important structures in the complex are the main house and annex, and the powerhouse, and they should be refurnished or restored to their historic appearance and opened to the public for interpretation. Most of the other structures should be adapted to park use. The hacienda, for example, could continue to be used for park housing, and the barn and stable could be utilized to display fixtures that never were installed in the house before work stopped. The tack room could be refurnished to its historic use. These are just ideas, and I am sure the interpretive planners could come up with other and perhaps better uses for the structures. My point is that the only two structures that need to retain their purity are the main house and annex and the powerhouse. All the structures of the complex, including the two previously mentioned, are third order of significance except perhaps the solar water heating system. It's uniqueness and age may make it second order.

The principal object of site development should be to take parking and concession activities out of the center of the complex, and retain the exterior of all the structures as they appeared in May 1931, which for the most part is as they appear today.

Historically it matters little whether the visitor and concession facilities are moved a great distance from the complex, or just outside its bounds; the decision as to location should be determined by ecological and convenience factors. It has been proposed that the rock crusher should be converted into a visitor center to introduce the visitor to the Scotty's Castle story. There are no historical reasons that the crusher could not be used in such manner; certainly we have better ways to spend historic preservation money than to interpret the working of a rock crusher.

Scotty's Ranch on the Lower Grapevine is interesting, but hardly worth restoring for it to be opened to visitation. All of these structures are third order of significance. District Ranger Wayne Schultz once suggested that this small ranch be fixed up to provide a headquarters for scientists and other researchers studying the various facets of Death Valley. I think his suggestion is imminently fine and workable. It is an idea that exhibits the type of imagination the

Director called for in his memo of August 16, 1972 on historic preservation. The setting and exterior of the buildings would retain their historic appearance, but the interiors would be adapted for living quarters and work and/or storage areas.

The immediate alternative to these proposals is to do nothing and abandon the castle. Public pressure, however, would prohibit the National Park Service from doing that at the present time.

When one considers the cost of maintaning this complex and weighs that factor against the significance of the place and then takes into account the limited funding usually available for historic preservation, one has to look long and hard at the castle complex and determine whether it is worth preserving for interpretive purposes.

In view of the other cultural resources in the Park Service more worthly and in need of ~~alteration~~ preservation, I recommend that serious consideration be given to eventually eliminating the Castle Complex as an interpretive resource. In the meantime interpretation at Scotty's Castle should be completely objective and no attempt should be made to deify Scotty. Perhaps the true and factual story of the castle will educate the public to accepting the idea of closing it down to visitation.

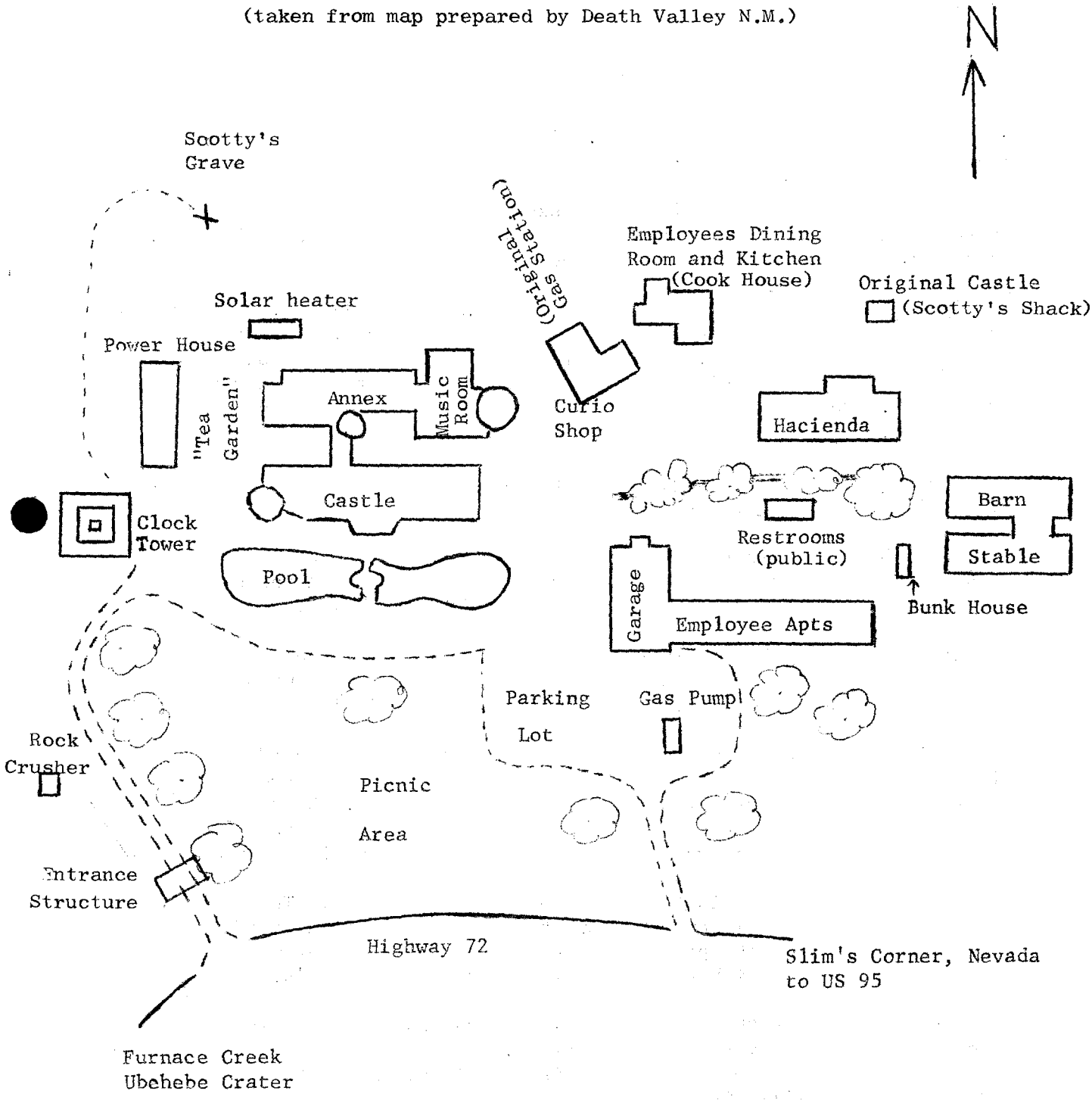
There are many socially beneficial uses to which the buildings of the castle complex could be put. At one time Dave Turello suggested

using the complex to house urban ghetto children while giving them a course in desert ecology. This is one idea, and I am sure the Park Service's planners could come up with other imaginative ideas for the use of the castle complex.

Recommendations for Additional Research

No additional research is required on the lives of Walter E. Scott or Albert M. Johnson. Research, however, is required on the physical resources of the Castle Complex, and I recommend that architectural data sections of historic structure reports be prepared for each of the structures as repair work is needed. A study of the past and present furnishings in the main house and annex would also be useful at some time.

MAP OF CASTLE COMPLEX AND GROUNDS
(taken from map prepared by Death Valley N.M.)



WHAT TO DO WHILE WAITING FOR YOUR TOUR

Check the tour time written on your ticket -- BE ON TIME

It is recommended that you remain in the area of the Castle if you have a short wait. Should you have more than an hour's wait, may we suggest a drive to Ubehebe Crater: turn right out of the parking area and follow the signs 8 miles (15 minute driving time via paved road) to Ubehebe Crater. The drive takes you through the Creosote Bush desert, to the cinder fields and Ubehebe Crater. A ½ mile walk to Little Hebe Crater takes about 45 minutes round trip. Allow enough time to return for your tour.

The story of Scotty's Castle encompasses the lives of and the friendship between Walter R. Scott, a mysterious desert prospector, and Albert M. Johnson, a Chicago millionaire businessman.

In 1924, with the assistance of architect C.A. MacNeilledge, Johnson and Scott began construction of the Death Valley Ranch, later to be known as Scotty's Castle. The Spanish theme is carried throughout the Castle buildings, highlighted by Austrian woodwork and German metalwork. Construction stopped in 1931 with about 75% of the Castle completed.

Growing on the Castle grounds are fan palms, oleanders, native cactus, grapevines, willow and cottonwood trees.

East of the Castle is the Hacienda or guest house now used as a private residence by the Castle staff. The small, weathered building behind the Hacienda is believed to be Scotty's "original castle".

Walking west past the public restrooms, you see the old residential units, now occupied by Castle employees. On display are two old cars used by Scotty and Johnson.

A combination of agreeable climate and available water provides an ideal setting for the Castle. The small water course in front of the Hacienda is excess water from the spring further east. Nearby is the stable that housed Scotty's mules, horses, feed and tack, and also served as a garage and workshop during early construction of the Castle.

In front of the Castle is the uncompleted swimming pool. The unfinished area between the Castle and the powerhouse was to be a tea garden and servants quarters. The powerhouse contains a Pelton water wheel which provided the Castle with DC electricity in the early 1930's.

The solar heater on the northeast hillside was used to heat water for one of the heating systems of the Castle. On top of the hill to the north are the graves of Scotty and his dog Windy. A short 5-minute walk to the top will give an excellent view of the area. PLEASE FOLLOW THE ROAD.

Another good view of the Castle and ground is from the clock tower. One can receive the full effect of the chimes when standing on the balcony at the quarter hour!

SUMMARY OF FLOOR SPACES OF BUILDINGS IN DEATH VALLEY RANCH

Name of Building	Class of Construction	Stories High	Length	Width	Partial Floor Space in Sq. Ft.	Total Floor Space in Sq. Ft.
Main Building	frame and stucco	two stories	97'-0"	33'-0"		3201.00
Annex	frame and stucco partially concrete	two stories	112'-o"	26'-0"		2912.00
Guest House	frame and stucco	one story	86'-0"	18'-0"		1756.00
Cook House	frame and stucco	one story	main part 49'-0" north wing 15'-6"	16'-0" 11'-0"	784.00 170.50	954.50
Chimes Tower	frame and stucco	56'-3" high, 1st story concrete	16'-0"	16'-0"		256.00
Gas Station	frame and stucco	one story	east part 17'-0" west part 28'-0"	17'-0" 16'-0"	289.00 448.00	737.00
Garage	frame and stucco	one story	96'-0"	36'-6"		3504.00
Garage-leanto	frame and stucco 1/3 open shed	one story	200'-0"	16'-0"		3200.00
Barn	south wing frame & stucco, north wing concrete open shed	one story	center part 45'-0" south wing 135'-0" north wing 98'-0"	35'-0" 36'-0" 36'-0"	1575.00 4860.00 3528.00	8388.00
Power House	concrete	one story	36'-0"	18'-0"		657.00

Copied from a report prepared by Martin Dubovay, architect
April 25, 1931

NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)

STATE:	
COUNTY:	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON:
Scotty's Castle

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Death Valley Ranch

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Death Valley National Monument

CITY OR TOWN:
Death Valley

STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
California			

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☒ District ☐ Building ☐ Site ☐ Structure ☐ Object	☒ Public ☐ Private ☐ Both	Public Acquisition: ☐ In Process ☐ Being Considered	☐ Occupied ☐ Unoccupied ☐ Preservation work in progress	Yes: ☐ Restricted ☒ Unrestricted ☐ No

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Agricultural	☐ Government	☒ Park	☐ Transportation	☐ Comments
☐ Commercial	☐ Industrial	☐ Private Residence	☐ Other *(Specify)*	
☐ Educational	☐ Military	☐ Religious		
☐ Entertainment	☐ Museum	☐ Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Death Valley National Monument

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
	California	

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Death Valley National Monument

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE	CODE

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: ☐ Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE

STATE:
COUNTY:
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One) ☐ Excellent ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Deteriorated ☐ Ruins ☐ Unexposed	
	(Check One) ☐ Altered ☒ Unaltered	(Check One) ☐ Moved ☒ Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL *(if known)* PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This site at first consisted of three rectangular buildings. The main house was two-story with two apartments upstairs and storage, cooking, and garage space on the first floor. Another structure was called the garage, and the third building was much smaller and later became known as the cook house.

These structures became the core for the later developments. The main house was converted into a Spanish style home with arches and wooden shutters and a little cupola. Behind this structure was built the two-story annex which was connected to the main house by a tile courtyard and a bridge joining the second floors. Arched gateways enclosed the courtyard. The annex contains several bedrooms, storage rooms, and a music room that houses a piano and a 15th rank theatre organ, both of which are player types activated by rolls.

The garage had its walls thickened by lath and plaster and a long "L" addition extended from it. This latter section contained shops and a bunkhouse for the workmen. To the north and east of the end of the "L" is a plastered shack used today as quarters for the watchman. Originally it was a construction building known as the "dog shack."

The cook house was remodeled also into the Spanish style with projections of rooms here and there. The original small rectangular building is buried somewhere in this structure which today, and has from its beginning, served as a cook house and dining room for the hired hands.

A barn was built at the same time, and a little later a stable was placed parallel to it. Massive wooden gates with strap-iron scroll work connected these two structures at each end to enclose the barnyard.

A one-story with basement guest house was placed against the hillside between the barn and the main house. It, too, is of the Spanish style, and it was divided into rooms for overnight guests.

A small gas station was built into the hillside between the guest house and the main house. Two metal gasoline tanks were sunk into the ground before the building went up. In later years this building was enlarged and the whole thing became a curio-snack shop. The gas pumps were moved to a new location at the west side of the garage.

To the west of the main house a clock-chimes tower was thrust into the air. Containing a clock near the top and an automatic and player chimes system, this tower dominates the landscape and also is Spanish in design. Below it is a castellated wall or battlement, known as the power house. Buried in the bowels of this structure are several generators, pelton wheels and other equipment necessary to convert running water to electricity. This structure, Romanesque in design, is the only one here that departs from the Spanish style.

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of this complex is the solar water heating system with its insulated tank and glass covered flat frames, containing water pipes, tilted to get the full heat of the sun. It is not in operating condition today.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. DESCRIPTION (cont'd, sheet #1)

The entrance to this estate is marked by castle-like gates flanked on each side by half-finished lakes. A huge swimming pool in front of the main house is also half-completed. Adjacent to the west side of the main house is an area of concrete monoliths. These were to be part of a tea garden and outdoor cooking area.

The buildings, except for the battlement, are made of frame and plaster and most of them were given their final coat of plaster. But throughout the grounds can be seen evidence of unfinished work. The entrance way is finished but lacks its final coat of plater. Concrete walls are in their unfinished state awaiting a covering coat of plaster. The main house is complete except for the front steps which need their topping of plaster and tile. The bridge and gazebo dividing the swimming pool are in a similar condition. The concrete walls of the swimming pool are formed, but the bottom of the pool is gravel, and the tile for the pool sits in the basement where it has been for over forty years.

Two other features associated with the ranch, but artistically not part of it, are Tie Canyon and the rock crusher. Tis Canyon contains a vast number of railroad ties taken from the Tonopah and Tidewater Railroad when the Bonnie Claire section was discontinued. In general the section is a junk yard containing also remains of trucks used in construction, a construction shed, and junked automobiles of more recent vintage.

The rock crusher, made of heavy wood beams and stones, was used during construction. It still stands, though in a dilapidated state.

A small wooden shack in a terribly deteriorated condition is located behind the guest house. It was reputedly the cabin Walter Scott used before the other buildings went up, and is popularly known as the "original castle."

The grounds were landscaped with palms, cacti, and other desert plants, as well as huge boulders containing petroglyphs. Oleanders are much in evidence around the main house.

Surrounding all the property owned by Johnson and Scott is a barbed wire fence strung on concrete poles, each having three rein forcing rods. These posts are branded "J" over "S" in some cases, but most have "S" over "J".

Boundary: The historic land embraced in this marked by the barbed wire and concrete post fence that enclosed the approximately 1500 acres comprising the Death Valley Ranch.

This fence not only embraces the castle area but also the lower ranch known as Scotty's Ranch. A separate form has been prepared on this complex, and it is attached hereto. To protect the visual and historical integrity of the site, the boundary of the Castle complex and Scotty's Ranch is an area extending out 500 feet from the fence and completely surrounding the historic land.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

- [ ] Pre-Columbian
- [ ] 15th Century
- [ ] 16th Century
- [ ] 17th Century
- [ ] 18th Century
- [ ] 19th Century
- [x] 20th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)* 1922-1948

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

- [ ] Aboriginal
- [ ] Prehistoric
- [ ] Historic
- [ ] Agriculture
- [x] Architecture
- [ ] Art
- [ ] Commerce
- [ ] Communications
- [ ] Conservation
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Engineering
- [ ] Industry
- [ ] Invention
- [ ] Landscape Architecture
- [ ] Literature
- [ ] Military
- [ ] Music
- [ ] Political
- [ ] Religion/Philosophy
- [ ] Science
- [ ] Sculpture
- [ ] Social/Humanitarian
- [ ] Theater
- [ ] Transportation
- [ ] Urban Planning
- [ ] Other *(Specify)* _____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Albert M. Johnson, a wealthy business man of Chicago, met Walter Scott, a "con" man, and the two in time became friends. When time permitted, Johnson visited Scott in Death Valley and there relaxed his nerves. In time he began buying property in the Grapevine Springs area, letting the world believe that Scott was his partner in the venture. In the early 1920's Johnson built three rectangular and very plain buildings. His wife did not like them and urged him to convert them to the Spanish design, similar to the buildings on the Stanford University campus.

With the aid of Matt Roy Thompson, an old schoolmate at Stanford, and C. A. MacNeilledge, a designer and interior decorator, Mrs. Johnson had her way and a complex of buildings grew up, all but one of Spanish design. MacNeilledge served as architect on the job until he was fired, and then Martin Dubovay, a trained architect, took over and stayed until work ended. Thompson, an engineer, was construction superintendent throughout. The landscape architect was Dewey Kruckeberg.

Work continued on the buildings until May of 1931 when Johnson, feeling the pinch of the depression, ordered construction halted.

Although from time to time over the years Johnson mentioned finishing the work, nothing was done, and the complex of buildings is substantially as it was in 1931.

Partly because of the location and partly because of Scott, who created an air of mystery about himself with his supposed gold mines, there has always been a public interest in the place. From the days of construction people have visited the place in droves.

The main house and guest house were furnished with some European antiques, but most of the furniture was made especially for the house.

The complex is a mixture of quality and cheapness. The buildings are frame and plaster, but much of the tile, and there were copious quantities of it, was handmade. The tile floor in the music room was laid to very exacting specifications and is today regarded by tile people as an outstanding piece of work.

If it were in the Los Angeles area, this complex of buildings would raise no eyebrows, but its setting in the desert creates an entirely different dimension of interest. Consequently, the significance of this place is that it is an example of the conspicuous consumption by the wealthy in the 1920's.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hank Johnston, Death Valley Scotty: The Man and the Myth (Yosemite, Calif: The Flying Spur Press, c. 1972).

F. Ross Holland, Jr., "Death Valley Scotty and Scotty's Castle," Historic Preservation Team, Denver Service Center, NPS, 1973.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

CORNER	LATITUDE Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	37°	02'	13"	117°	22'	00"
NE	37°	02'	13"	117°	19'	43"
SE	37°	00'	50"	117°	19'	43"
SW	37°	00'	50"	117°	22'	00"

OR

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES

LATITUDE Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
°	'	"	°	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 400 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
California		Inyo	
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: F. Ross Holland, Jr., Historian

ORGANIZATION: Denver Service Center, NPS

DATE:

STREET AND NUMBER: 7200 W. Alameda Ave.

CITY OR TOWN: Denver

STATE: Colorado

CODE:

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

_____
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

_____
Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)

STATE:	
COUNTY:	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Scotty's Ranch

AND/OR HISTORIC:
(Lower portion of Death Valley Ranch)

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Death Valley National Monument

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
California			

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
[X] District [ ] Building [ ] Site [ ] Structure [ ] Object	[X] Public [ ] Private [ ] Both	Public Acquisition: [ ] In Process [ ] Being Considered	[ ] Occupied [X] Unoccupied [ ] Preservation work in progress	Yes: [X] Restricted [ ] Unrestricted [ ] No

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

[ ] Agricultural	[ ] Government	[ ] Park	[ ] Transportation	[ ] Comments
[ ] Commercial	[ ] Industrial	[ ] Private Residence	[ ] Other *(Specify)*	
[ ] Educational	[ ] Military	[ ] Religious		
[ ] Entertainment	[ ] Museum	[ ] Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Death Valley National Monument

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE

STATE:

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Death Valley National Monument

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE	CODE

COUNTY:

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: [ ] Federal [ ] State [ ] County [ ] Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One) ☐ Excellent ☒ Good to ☒ Fair ☐ Deteriorated ☐ Ruins ☐ Unexposed	
	(Check One) ☐ Altered ☒ Unaltered	(Check One) ☐ Moved ☒ Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL *(if known)* PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Constructed in the late 1920's and early 1930's, this ranch originally consisted of a small three-room and bathroom house constructed of redwood, an auto garage, shed, chicken house, and corral and fencing. About a half mile away there was a water reservoir made of dirt embankments and used for irrigation purposes and swimming. Near it was a structure probably used as a place to change into swim suits. The reservoir also had a diving board.

Today the house, chicken house, and corral are in good condition. The shed and auto garage, which has an old panel truck in it, show neglect and are in fair to poor condition. Water from the nearby spring has seeped under the house, but the extent of damage is unknown. In front of the house a suspended garden hose pours water into a white enamel bathtub of uncertain vintage.

Weeds, brush, and trees have pretty well taken over the place.

The swimming pool is nearly dry and weeds and brush almost obscure it. The diving board is a wreck, and the nearby shed is in ruins.

Boundary: see form for Scotty's Castle.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

- [ ] Pre-Columbian
- [ ] 15th Century
- [ ] 16th Century
- [ ] 17th Century
- [ ] 18th Century
- [ ] 19th Century
- [x] 20th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)*

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

- Aboriginal
  - [ ] Prehistoric
  - [ ] Historic
- [ ] Agriculture
- [ ] Architecture
- [ ] Art
- [ ] Commerce
- [ ] Communications
- [ ] Conservation
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Engineering
- [ ] Industry
- [ ] Invention
- [ ] Landscape Architecture
- [ ] Literature
- [ ] Military
- [ ] Music
- [ ] Political
- [ ] Religion/Philosophy
- [ ] Science
- [ ] Sculpture
- [ ] Social/Humanitarian
- [ ] Theater
- [ ] Transportation
- [ ] Urban Planning
- [x] Other *(Specify)* Residence

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built on the Death Valley Ranch property at the lower end of Grapevine Springs, Scotty's Ranch was erected at the same time as Scotty's Castle on the Upper Grapevine. The Castle was the show-place, the center of attention, while Scotty's Ranch served as a hide-away for Walter E. Scott and his benefactor, A. M. Johnson. Scotty lived primarily at the ranch for many years, moving to the Castle, apparently, when he became old and infirm. The panel truck in the garage was Scotty's, and he was closely identified with it.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Benjamin Levy, "Death Valley National Monument, Historical Background Study," Division of History, NPS, April 15, 1969.

F. R. Holland, Jr., "Death Valley Scotty and Scotty's Castle," Historic Preservation Team, Denver Service Center, NPS, 1973.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

CORNER	LATITUDE Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	37°	02'	26"	117°	24'	15"
NE	37°	02'	26"	117°	22'	00"
SE	37°	00'	42"	117°	22'	00"
SW	37°	00'	42"	117°	24'	15"

OR

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES

LATITUDE Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
°	'	"	°	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2000 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
California		Inyo	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: F. Ross Holland Jr., Historian

ORGANIZATION: Denver Service Center, NPS

DATE:

STREET AND NUMBER: 7200 W. Alameda Ave.

CITY OR TOWN: Denver

STATE: Colorado

CODE:

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

_____
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

_____
Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

Form No. 10-301
Rev. 7-72

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE	
COUNTY	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Scotty's Castle

AND/OR HISTORIC: Death Valley Ranch (Upper Grapevine)

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Death Valley National Monument

CITY OR TOWN:
Death Valley

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
California		Inyo	

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:
U.S.G.S., Ubehebe Crater, Calif.-Nev.

SCALE: 1:62,500

DATE: 1957

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.

Form No. 10-301
Rev. 7-72

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

STATE	
COUNTY	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: Scotty's Ranch

AND/OR HISTORIC: Death Valley Ranch (Lower Grapevine)

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Death Valley National Monument

CITY OR TOWN:
Death Valley

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
California		Inyo	

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:
U.S.G.S., Ubehebe Crater, Calif.-Nev.

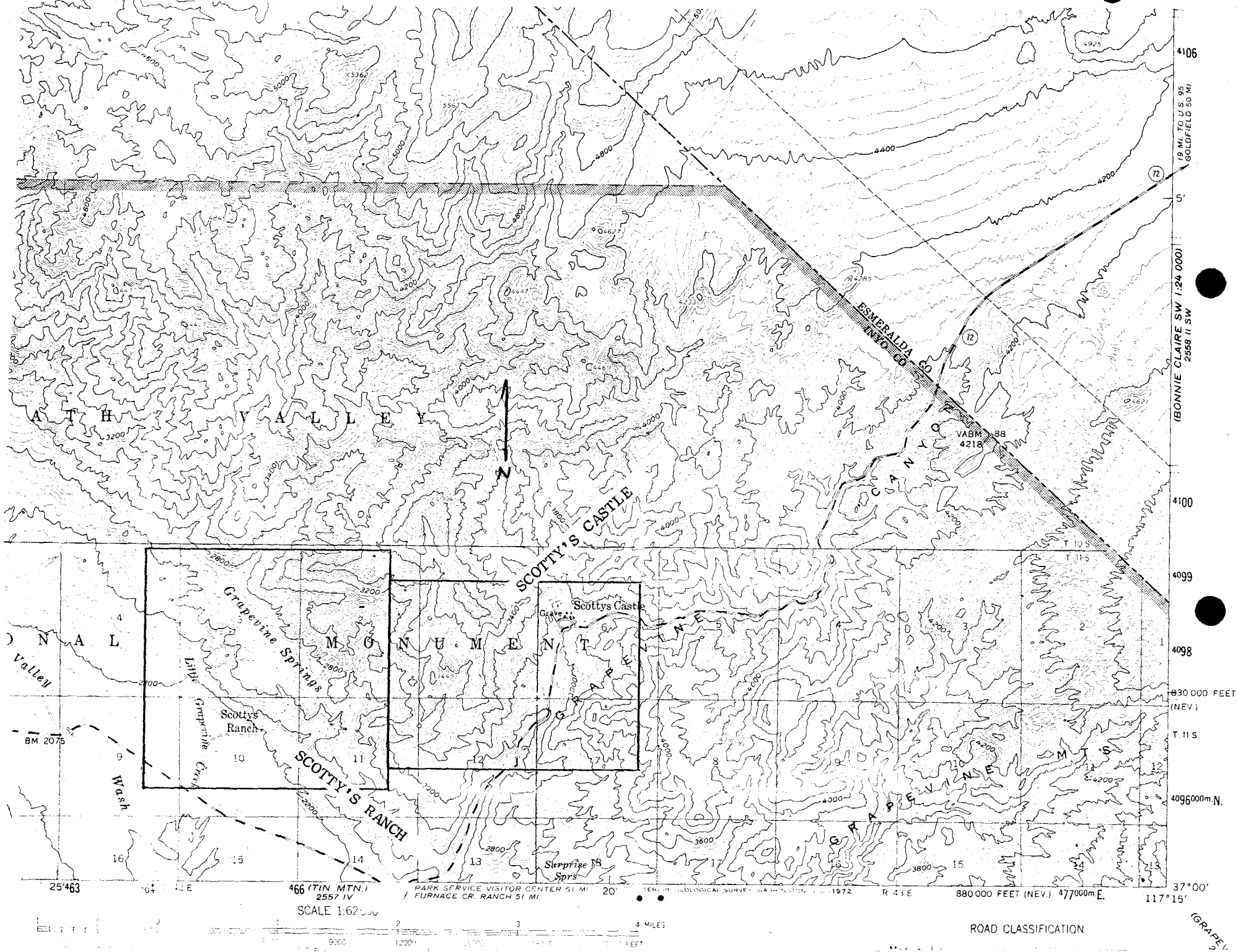
SCALE: 1:62,500

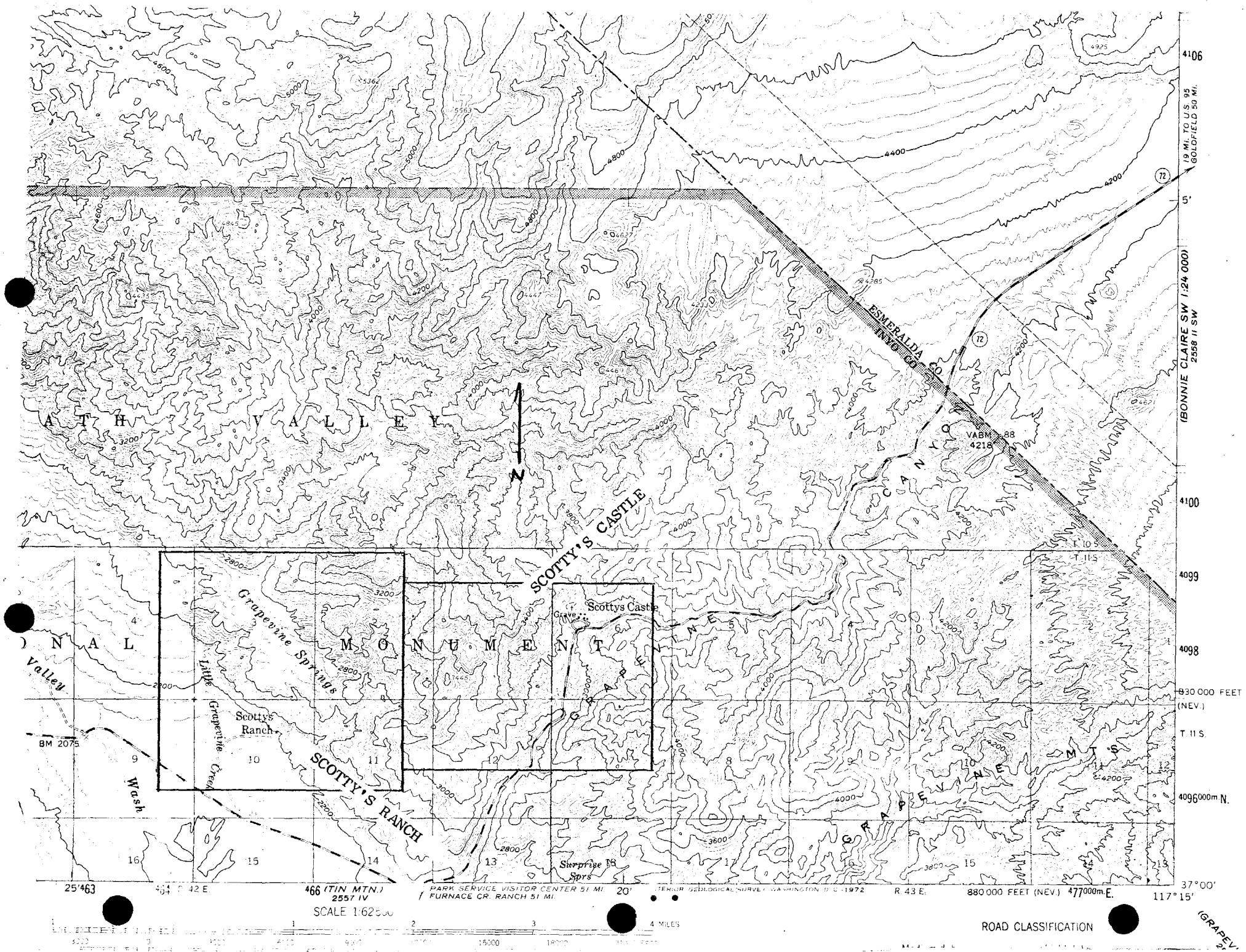
DATE: 1957

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.


ESMERALDA CO
INYO CO
A T H V A L L E Y
SCOTTY'S CASTLE
M O N U M E N T
Scotty's Castle
Grave
Grapevine Springs
Little Grapevine Cr.
Scotty's Ranch
SCOTTY'S RANCH
GRAPEVINE
Surprise Spr
VABM 4218
19 MI. TO U.S. 95 GOLDFIELD 50 MI.
(BONNIE CLAIRE SW 1:24 000)
2558 II SW
T. 10 S.
T. 11 S.
R. 43 E.
830 000 FEET (NEV.)
880 000 FEET (NEV.)
4096000m.N.
477000m.E.
37°00'
117°15'
25'463
466 (TIN MTN.) 2557 IV
PARK SERVICE VISITOR CENTER 51 MI
FURNACE CR. RANCH 51 MI
SCALE 1:62
4 MILES
ROAD CLASSIFICATION


ESMERALDA CO.
INYO CO.
SCOTTY'S CASTLE
SCOTTY'S RANCH
Scotty's Castle
Grave
Scotty's Ranch
Grapevine Springs
Little Grapevine Creek
Surprise Spring
VABM 4218
BM 2075
Wash
Valley
MONUMENT
GRAPEVINE MTS
T. 10 S.
T. 11 S.
R. 43 E.
880 000 FEET (NEV.)
830 000 FEET (NEV.)
4096000m N.
477000m E.
37°00'
117°15'
25'463
466 (TIN MTN.) 2557 IV
20'
19 MI. TO U.S. 95 GOLDFIELD 50 MI.
(BONNIE CLAIRE SW 1:24 000) 2558 II SW
PARK SERVICE VISITOR CENTER 51 MI.
FURNACE CR. RANCH 51 MI.
SCALE 1:62500
4 MILES
ROAD CLASSIFICATION

APPENDIX

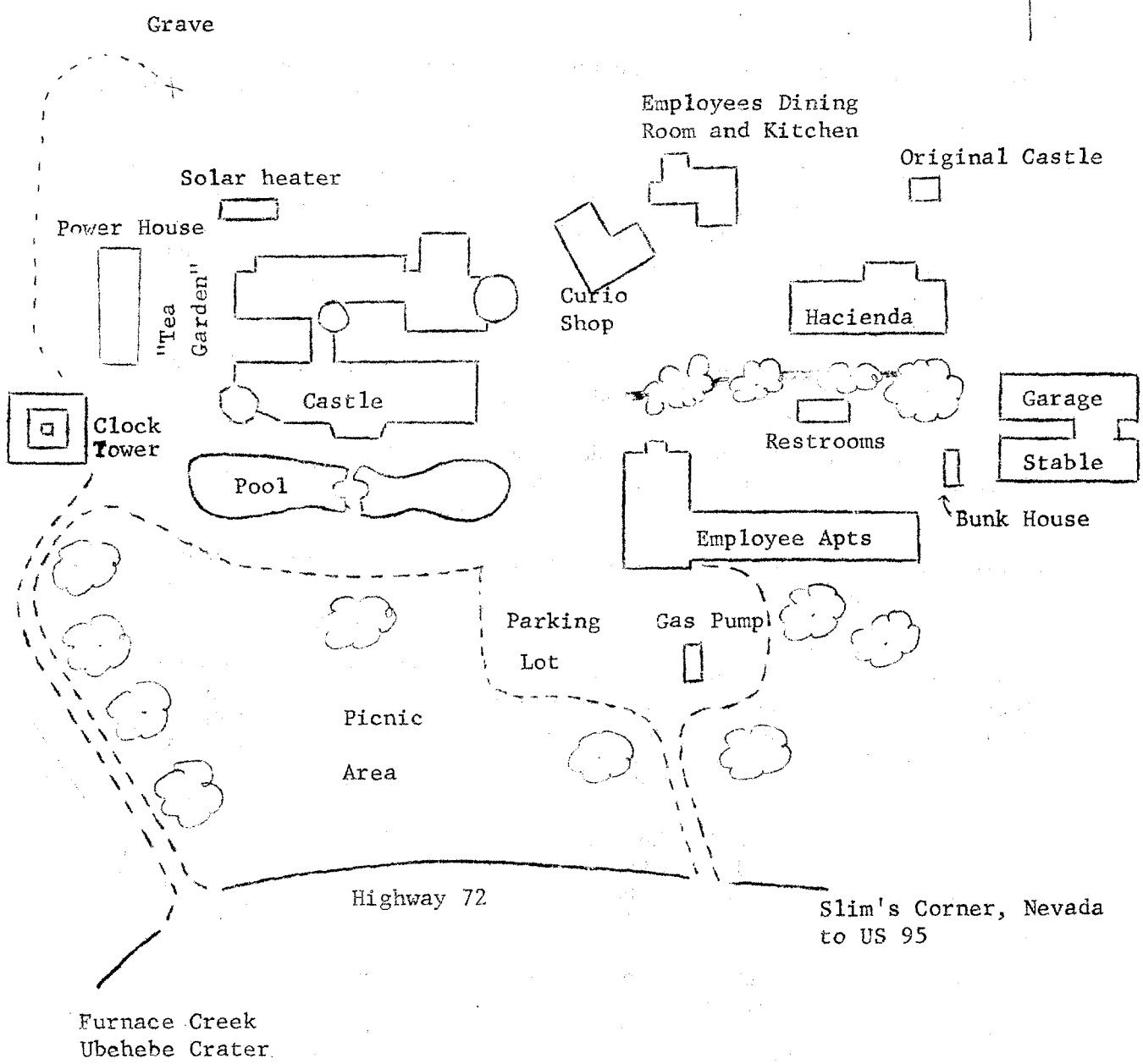
Taped interview with Architect Martin DuBovay on the building and furnishing of Scotty's Castle.

(Now being typed)

ILLUSTRATIONS

To the west is Tie Canyon, the storage area of the Tonopah-Tidewater Railroad ties that Scotty and Johnson bought to provide fuel for the Castle's 14 fireplaces. You are welcome to walk in this area, but we must warn you that the old woodpiles are the home of some of the rattlesnakes of the area. Good sturdy shoes are recommended for walking in this Canyon.

MAP OF CASTLE AND GROUNDS



WHAT TO DO WHILE WAITING FOR YOUR TOUR

Check the tour time written on your ticket -- BE ON TIME

It is recommended that you remain in the area of the Castle if you have a short wait. Should you have more than an hour's wait, may we suggest a drive to Ubehebe Crater: turn right out of the parking area and follow the signs 8 miles (15 minute driving time via paved road) to Ubehebe Crater. The drive takes you through the Creosote Bush desert, to the cinder fields and Ubehebe Crater. A ½ mile walk to Little Hebe Crater takes about 45 minutes round trip. Allow enough time to return for your tour.

The story of Scotty's Castle encompasses the lives of and the friendship between Walter P. Scott, a mysterious desert prospector, and Albert M. Johnson, a Chicago millionaire businessman.

In 1924, with the assistance of architect C.A. MacNeilledge, Johnson and Scott began construction of the Death Valley Ranch, later to be known as Scotty's Castle. The Spanish theme is carried throughout the Castle buildings, highlighted by Austrian woodwork and German metalwork. Construction stopped in 1931 with about 75% of the Castle completed.

Growing on the Castle grounds are fan palms, oleanders, native cactus, grapevines, willow and cottonwood trees.

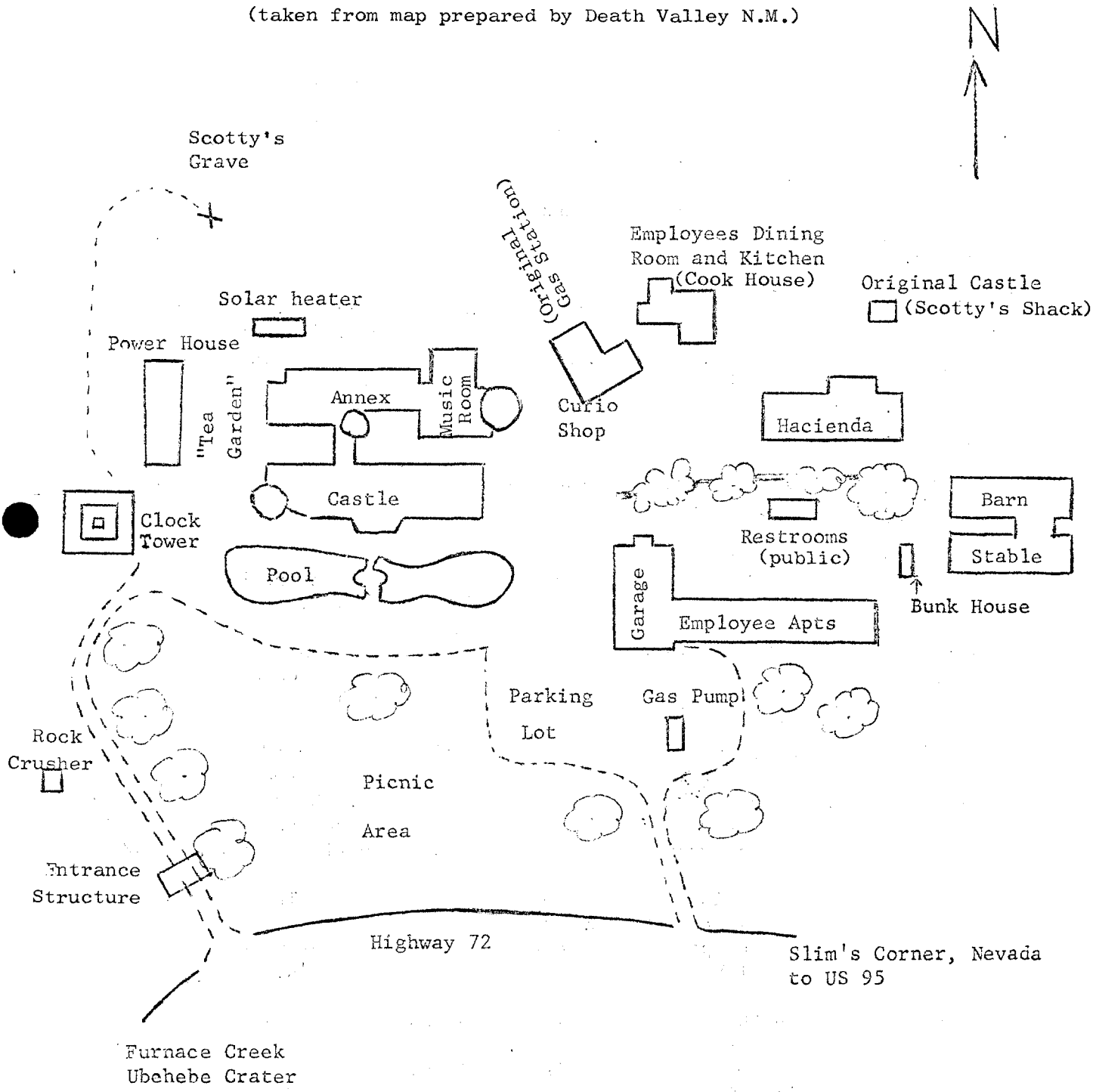
East of the Castle is the Hacienda or guest house now used as a private residence by the Castle staff. The small, weathered building behind the Hacienda is believed to be Scotty's "original castle".

Walking west past the public restrooms, you see the old residential units, now occupied by Castle employees. On display are two old cars used by Scotty and Johnson.

A combination of agreeable climate and available water provides an ideal setting for the Castle. The small water course in front of the Hacienda is excess water from the spring further east. Nearby is the stable that housed Scotty's mules, horses, feed and tack, and also served as a garage and workshop during early construction of the Castle.

In front of the Castle is the uncompleted swimming pool. The unfinished area between the Castle and the powerhouse was to be a tea garden and servants quarters. The powerhouse contains a Pelton water wheel which provided the Castle with DC electricity in the early 1930's.

The solar heater on the northeast hillside was used to heat water for one of the heating systems of the Castle. On top of the hill to the north are the graves of Scotty and his dog Windy. A short 5-minute walk to the top will give an excellent view of the area. PLEASE FOLLOW THE ROAD.

Another good view of the Castle and ground is from the clock tower. One can receive the full effect of the chimes when standing on the balcony at the quarter hour!

MAP OF CASTLE COMPLEX AND GROUNDS
(taken from map prepared by Death Valley N.M.)