

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

August 17, 2022

HDRC CASE NO: 2022-414
ADDRESS: 300 ALAMO PLAZA
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 115 BLK LOT ALL OF BLK & P-100(.209AC)
ZONING: D, H, RIO-3, Public Property
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
DISTRICT: Alamo Plaza Historic District
LANDMARK: Individual Landmark
APPLICANT: Thomas Butler; Alamo Trust, Inc
OWNER: City of San Antonio
TYPE OF WORK: Construction of the Mission Gate and Lunette
APPLICATION RECEIVED: August 01, 2022
60-DAY REVIEW: Not applicable due to City Council Emergency Orders
CASE MANAGER: Edward Hall

REQUEST:

The applicant, Alamo Trust, Inc., is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to construct an interpretation of the Mission Gate and Lunette in Alamo Plaza as part of the Alamo Plan, and in partnership with the Texas General Land Office and City of San Antonio.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Historic Design Guidelines: Chapter 4, Guidelines for New Construction

4. Architectural Details

A. GENERAL

- i. *Historic context*—Design new buildings to reflect their time while respecting the historic context. While new construction should not attempt to mirror or replicate historic features, new structures should not be so dissimilar as to distract from or diminish the historic interpretation of the district.
- ii. *Architectural details*—Incorporate architectural details that are in keeping with the predominant architectural style along the block face or within the district when one exists. Details should be simple in design and should complement, but not visually compete with, the character of the adjacent historic structures or other historic structures within the district. Architectural details that are more ornate or elaborate than those found within the district are inappropriate.
- iii. *Contemporary interpretations*—Consider integrating contemporary interpretations of traditional designs and details for new construction. Use of contemporary window moldings and door surroundings, for example, can provide visual interest while helping to convey the fact that the structure is new. Modern materials should be implemented in a way that does not distract from the historic structure.

Unified Development Code, Section 35-642 – New Construction of Buildings and Facilities

In considering whether to recommend approval or disapproval of a certificate, the historic and design review commission shall be guided by the following design considerations. These are not intended to restrict imagination, innovation or variety, but rather to assist in focusing on design principles, which can result in creative solutions that will enhance the city and its neighborhoods. Good and original design solutions that meet the individual requirements of a specific site or neighborhood are encouraged and welcomed.

(a) Site and Setting.

- (1) Building sites should be planned to take into consideration existing natural climatic and topographical features. The intrusive leveling of the site should be avoided. Climatic factors such as

sun, wind, and temperature should become an integral part of the design to encourage design of site-specific facilities which reinforces the individual identity of a neighborhood and promotes energy efficient facilities.

(2)Special consideration should be given to maintain existing urban design characteristics, such as setbacks, building heights, streetscapes, pedestrian movement, and traffic flow. Building placement should enhance or create focal points and views. Continuity of scale and orientation shall be emphasized.

(3)Accessibility from streets should be designed to accommodate safe pedestrian movement as well as vehicular traffic. Where possible, parking areas should be screened from view from the public right-of-way by attractive fences, berms, plantings or other means.

(4)Historically significant aspects of the site shall be identified and if possible incorporated into the site design. Historic relationships between buildings, such as plazas or open spaces, boulevards or axial relationships should be maintained.

(b)Building Design.

(1)Buildings for the public should maintain the highest quality standards of design integrity. They should elicit a pride of ownership for all citizens. Public buildings should reflect the unique and diverse character of San Antonio and should be responsive to the time and place in which they were constructed.

(2)Buildings shall be in scale with their adjoining surroundings and shall be in harmonious conformance to the identifying quality and characteristics of the neighborhood. They shall be compatible in design, style and materials. Reproductions of styles and designs from a different time period are not encouraged, consistent with the secretary of the interior's standards. Major horizontal and vertical elements in adjoining sites should be respected.

(3)Materials shall be suitable to the type of building and design in which they are used. They shall be durable and easily maintained. Materials and designs at pedestrian level shall be at human scale, that is they shall be designed to be understood and appreciated by someone on foot. Materials should be selected that respect the historic character of the surrounding area in texture, size and color.

(4)Building components such as doors, windows, overhangs, awnings, roof shapes and decorative elements shall all be designed to contribute to the proportions and scale of their surrounding context. Established mass/void relationships shall be maintained. Patterns and rhythms in the streetscape shall be continued.

(5)Colors shall be harmonious with the surrounding environment, but should not be dull. Choice of color should reflect the local and regional character. Nearby historic colors shall be respected.

(6)Mechanical equipment or other utility hardware should be screened from public view with materials compatible with the building design. Where possible, rooftop mechanical equipment should be screened, even from above. Where feasible, overhead utilities should also be underground or attractively screened. Exterior lighting shall be an integral part of the design. Interior lighting shall be controlled so that the spillover lighting onto public walkways is not annoying to pedestrians.

(7)Signs which are out of keeping with the character of the environment in question should not be used. Excessive size and inappropriate placement on buildings results in visual clutter. Signs should be designed to relate harmoniously to exterior building materials and colors. Signs should express a simple clear message with wording kept to a minimum.

(8)Auxiliary design. The site should take into account the compatibility of landscaping, parking facilities, utility and service areas, walkways and appurtenances. These should be designed with the overall environment in mind and should be in visual keeping with related buildings, structures and places.

(c)Multiple Facades. In making recommendations affecting new buildings or structures which will have more than one (1) important facade, such as those which will face two (2) streets or a street and the San Antonio River, the historic and design review commission shall consider the above visual compatibility standards with respect to each important facade.

FINDINGS:

- a. The applicant, Alamo Trust, Inc., is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to construct an interpretation of the Mission Gate and Lunette in Alamo Plaza as part of the Alamo Plan, and in partnership with the Texas General Land Office and City of San Antonio. The design of the Mission Gate and Lunette was developed in coordination with Alamo historians, the Alamo Management Committee, the Alamo Citizens Advisory Committee, and Office of Historic Preservation staff. Future projects associated with the Alamo Plan will include construction of Plaza de Valero, the Alamo Promenade, Alamo Plaza, and the Paseo del Alamo.
- b. DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE – This request was reviewed by the Design Review Committee on July 12, 2022. At that meeting, committee members asked questions regarding the overall design, provided feedback on the proposed aesthetics of the represented gate and walls, and asked questions regarding documentation and design intent.
- c. SITE DESIGN – The applicant has noted ADA improvements, security lighting, hardscaping modifications and the installation of various indigenous plantings through the site. The applicant has noted that landscaping will be done in a manner that maintains much of the existing landscaping throughout the site.
- d. MISSION GATE & LUNETTE INTERPRETATION – The applicant has proposed to construct a representation of the Mission Gate and Lunette. The proposed construction is meant to represent what was present on site in 1835 – 1836. The proposed representation will feature interpretive elements, including walls, exhibits items and a layout that is representative of historical records from 1849 and 1871. The proposed representation will create an entrance into the site and will provide context to Spanish, Mexican, Texian and United States history at the Alamo. In order to appropriately provide interpretation for these two significant elements, staff finds that the lunette design should not overpower the south gate design and the design must show a contrast between the two in a manner that shows they are from two separate time periods. The effort should result in interpretations, not reconstructions. The overall design should be simplistic and read visually as a contemporary intervention to the site.
- e. DESIGN AND MATERIALS – According to the Guidelines for New Construction, materials and architectural details should complement those found on nearby historic structures. Interpretive elements should be reflective of their own time and provide representation of historic elements in a contemporary manner. The renderings submitted generally appear to conform to the guidelines, but additional details may require review to ensure that material selections and façade treatments do not convey a false sense of history or false historicism. Staff finds that a final material palette or visual mockup should be submitted to OHP staff for further review and approval.
- f. INTERPRETIVE ELEMENTS & SIGNAGE – The applicant has noted the installation of various interpretive elements and signage. Staff finds that all interpretive elements and signage should be developed in line with the Alamo Citizen Advisory Committee’s Vision and Guiding Principles for the Alamo Plan.
- g. ARCHAEOLOGY – The project area is located within the Alamo Plaza Local Historic District, Alamo Plaza National Register of Historic Places District, is partially within a River Improvement Overlay District, and includes the Alamo Plaza Local Historic Landmark. In addition, the designated boundary for The Alamo State Antiquities Landmark, and previously recorded archaeological site 41BX6, extends into the project area. The submitted Alamo Mission Gate and Lunette Limits of Work partially overlaps the boundary of the Cemetery on the Grounds of the Alamo Historic Texas Cemetery, as identified on the publicly accessible Texas Historic Sites Atlas. Furthermore, the project area is within or adjacent to the Acequia del Alamo, a Spanish Colonial water feature and designated National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark. Therefore, an archaeological investigation is required. The project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology, as applicable. In addition, the project shall comply with the Texas Antiquities Code and Health and Safety Code of Texas. The archaeology consultant shall submit the scope of work to the Office of Historic Preservation for review and approval prior to beginning field efforts. Archaeological investigations on City of San Antonio property and right-of-way shall be coordinated with the OHP throughout construction of the project.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval, based on findings a through f, with the following stipulations:

- i. That final construction details be developed to further articulate the two, distinct periods of time in which the south gate and lunette were constructed based on finding d.
- ii. That a final material palette or visual mockup be submitted to OHP staff for review and approval prior to construction based on finding e.
- iii. That all interpretive elements and signage should be developed in line with the Alamo Citizen Advisory Committee's Vision and Guiding Principles for the Alamo Plan based on finding f.
- iv. **ARCHAEOLOGY** – Archaeological investigations are required. The project shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations regarding archaeology, as applicable. Moreover, the project shall comply with the Texas Antiquities Code and Health and Safety Code of Texas. The archaeology consultant shall submit the scope of work to the Office of Historic Preservation for review and approval prior to beginning field efforts. Archaeological investigations on City of San Antonio property and right-of-way shall be coordinated with the OHP throughout construction of the project.



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
**OFFICE OF HISTORIC
PRESERVATION**

Historic and Design Review Commission
Design Review Committee Report

DATE: July 12, 2022

HDRC Case #: 2022-414

Address: Alamo Plaza

Meeting Location: Zoom

APPLICANT: Francisco Gonima, Patric Gallagher, Kate Rogers

DRC Members present: Jeff Fetzer, Scott Carpenter, Curtis Fish, Jay M. Gibbs,

Staff Present: Shanon Miller, Cory Edwards, Edward Hall, Rhea Roberts, Shawn Marceaux

Others present: Christina Roberston, Tom Butler, Jacob Gutierrez

REQUEST: Alamo Mission Gate and Lunette

COMMENTS/CONCERNS:

JF: Representation, not a recreation. What is the thought behind creating a faux structure, using stone and creating a somewhat “destroyed” look on each side of the gate. Why not use new materials for a contemporary interpretation?

PG: The representation of the lunette is a contemporary interpretation as the original was earthwork. Some of the character of what is on site will need to be included; a mix of contemporary and recreation is needed. The appropriate balance needs to be found.

SC: If the gate/building on either side of the gate is represented as a faux ruin, it gives concern.

JF: Consider not showing the current amount of detail in the presentation if the final design has not been determined.

JMG: Can more photos or representation of accurate depictions be provided?

PG: What has been shown is what has been found to date.

CF: The volume and mass are less of consideration given the reduced scale.

PG: The footprint is 100% accurate. The height is a general guess due to lack of dimensioned drawings. Proportionately, the taller scale did not feel correct, so the height has been reduced to give a human scale. Approximately, 20% shorter than original presumed height.

PG: Intent is a plaster finish; not a faux finish.

CF: Will the walls be constructed of stone?

PG: Walls will be concrete block with plaster finish with caliche stone or another appropriate material as a finish stone.

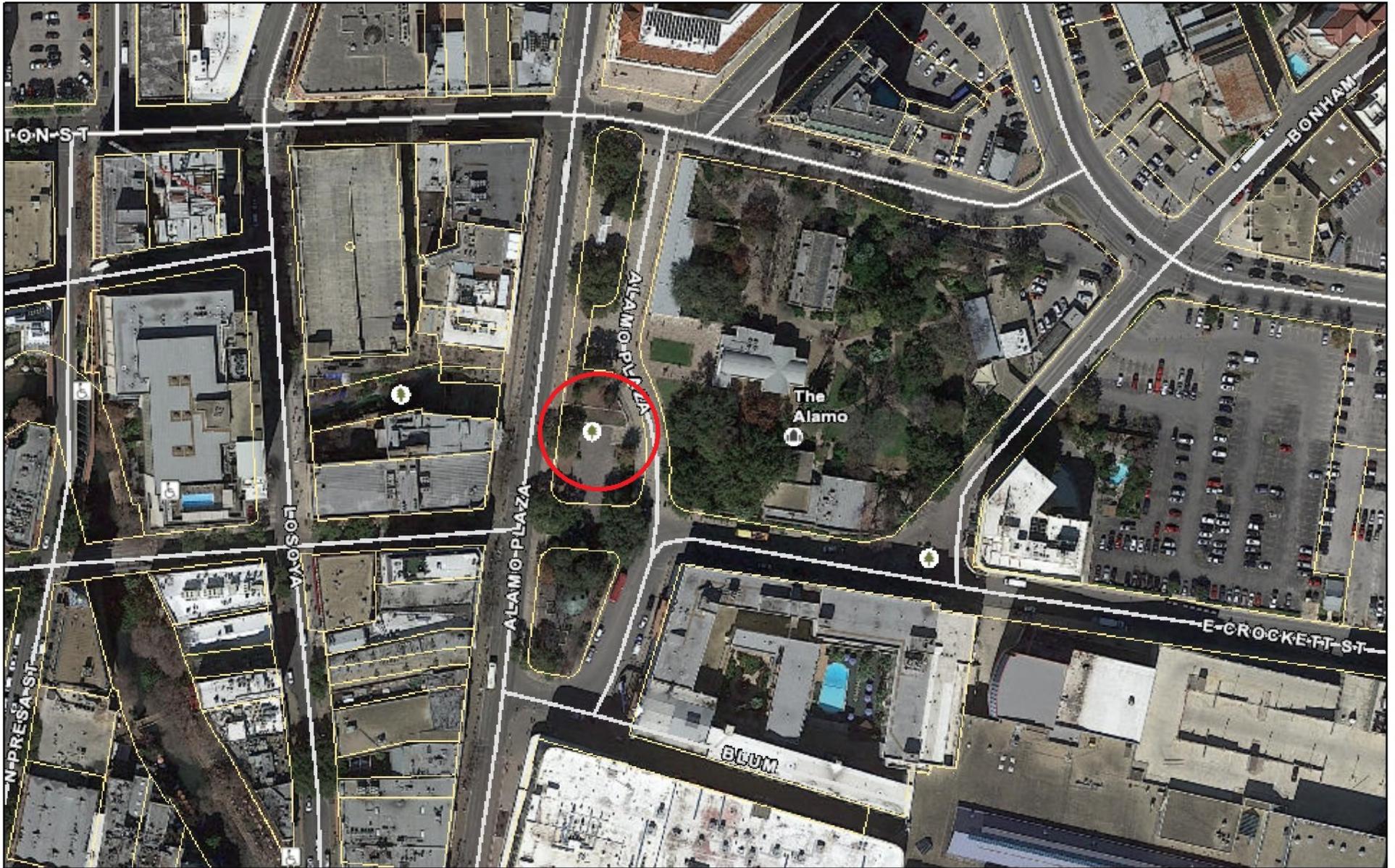
JF: When will this application come before the HDRC?

PG: A date has not yet been determined. THC review is not for a permit, but only a design update.

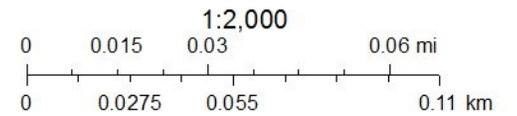
KR: Design update potentially on August 3.

OVERALL COMMENTS:

City of San Antonio One Stop



August 11, 2022





The ALAMO
WELCOME CENTER

THE



WILLIAM M. MCCARTHY - JESSE MCCOY - WILLIAM MITCHELL - JOHN MCGREGOR
ANDREW M. NELSON - EDWARD NELSON - GEORGE NELSON - JAMES NOTTINGHAM
ISAAC RYAN - MIKE SCURLOCK - MARGUS L. SEWELL - MANSION SHED
JAMES TAYLOR - WILLIAM TAYLOR - B. ARCHER M. THOMAS - BENNY THOMAS
DAVID L. WILSON - JOHN WILSON - ANTHONY WOLFE - CLAUDE WRIGHT



The ALAMO
WELCOME CENTER

ONE WAY

THE ALAMO

THE ALAMO

HDRC Submission | Aug 1, 2022

A historical map of the Alamo mission complex, showing various structures and courtyards. The map is rendered in a light blue/teal color on a dark background. Key features include the 'Square of Mission' and the 'Yard of Convent'. A prominent lunette-shaped structure is visible, which is the subject of the text below. The map also shows a river or stream at the bottom right, labeled 'Arroyo running to La Villa'.

THE ALAMO

Mission Gate / Lunette

Mission Gate and Lunette Recreation

History of Events

1718

Mission San Antonio de Valero founded near San Pedro Springs.

1724

Mission San Antonio de Valero relocated to current site.

1762

The mission is fortified with walls and a gate on the south end.

1793

The south wall is 8 ½ feet tall, made of stone, mud, and adobe. The gate is fourteen feet wide and eleven feet tall.

1803

The Spanish Army occupies the mission using it as a military fort.

1835

The Mexican Army fortifies the mission gate with structures and a defensive lunette.

1836

The Mexican Army destroys portions of the Alamo leaving the mission gate structure disconnected.

1861

The U.S. Army uses the remaining south wall as a forage house.

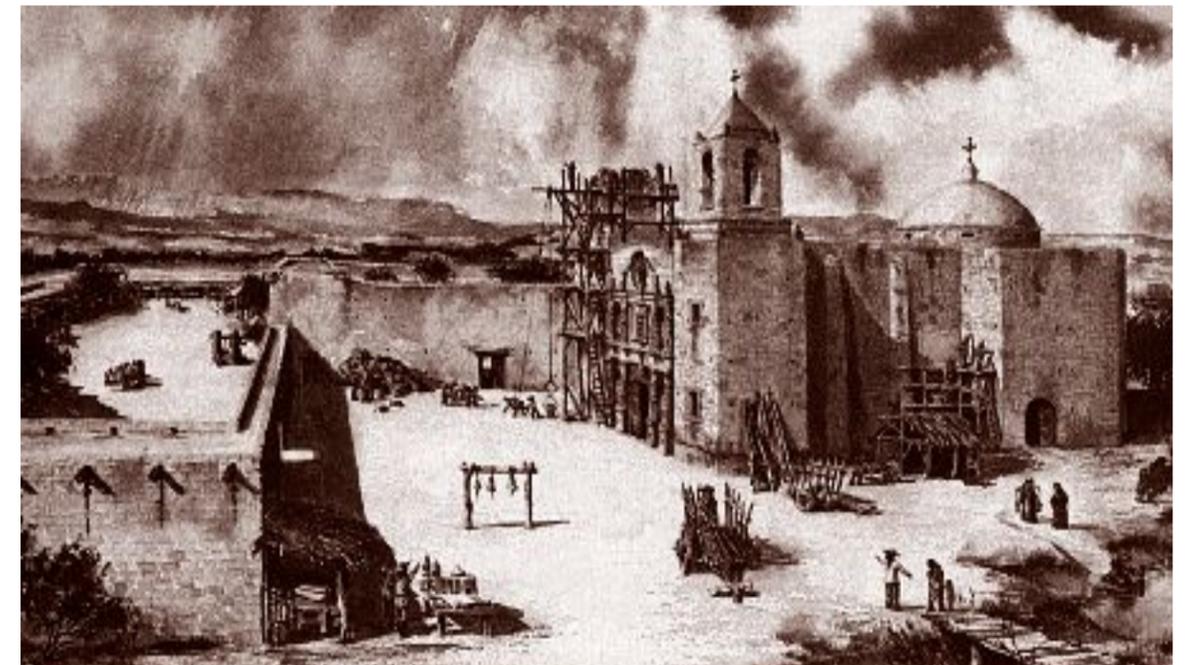
1871

The city of San Antonio purchases the mission gate and tears it down.



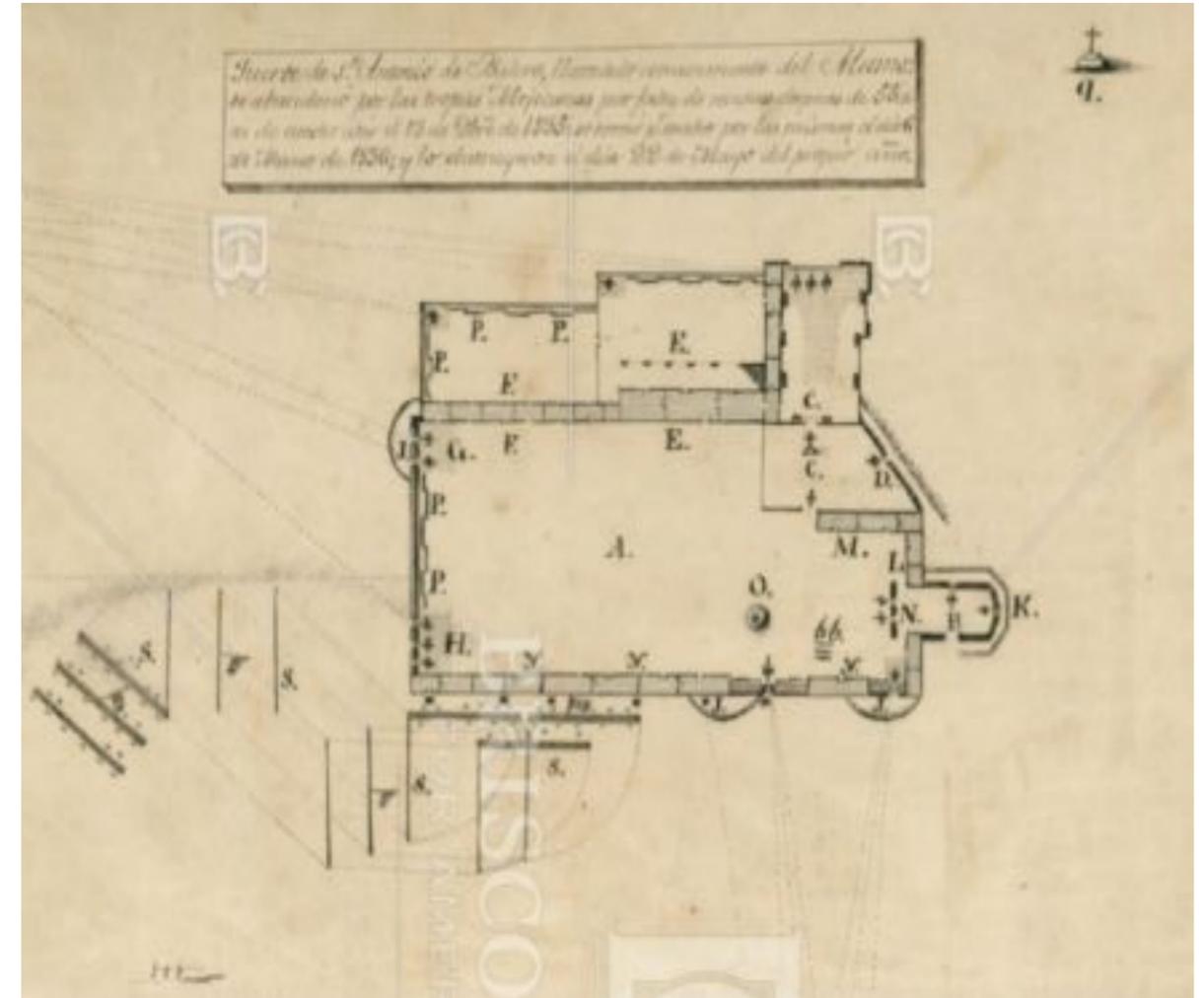
Mission Gate and Lunette Recreation Interpretive Opportunities

- **What materials were used in the construction of this gate?**
Spanish records show the mission wall was made of mud, stone, and adobe. We can interpret construction techniques the Spanish and later the Mexican army used.
- **Who constructed the Mission gate?**
The Spanish missionaries had the main gate constructed as a fortified structure.
- **Why was a fortified structure needed?**
To help protect from Apache attacks and to keep the community safe inside its walls.
- **When did the Alamo become a fort?**
In 1803 a Spanish Cavalry unit occupies the site and uses it as a fort for the first time. It will remain Spanish until Mexican independence is achieved in 1821.



Mission Gate and Lunette Recreation Interpretive Opportunities

- **Who built the lunette and why was it necessary?**
The lunette was constructed by the Mexican Army in 1835 to create a defensible fort for the army. The lunette guarded the main gate which was the entrance to the compound.
- **What happened to the lunette?**
When the Mexican Army left the Alamo following the defeat at San Jacinto, General Andrade was ordered to destroy all defensive positions on the site, including the lunette and any single walls that existed. That is the reason that the main gate is photographed later as a standalone structure in the plaza.
- **What happened to the Mission gate?**
In 1871, the city of San Antonio purchased the property for \$2500 and had it torn down.



Mission Gate and Lunette Recreation

Interpretive Opportunities

→ **What else was the structure used for?**

It was used as a forage house before being torn down.

→ **Why is this structure important to telling the story of the Alamo?**

The Mission gate and lunette allow us to tie the different historical periods together. It is a structure that serves the Spanish, Mexican, Texian and U.S. periods. It allows us to discuss the evolution of the plaza and also allows us to open the door for Valero Plaza interpretation. We can use this location to discuss building materials, how people cooked (since the kitchen was attached to this structure), how to construct a lunette, what manuals were used to do so and the importance of conservation measures to protect our heritage. This structure is important as it not only serves as an “entrance” into the site—it is also an entrance into the history of the site.



G&A

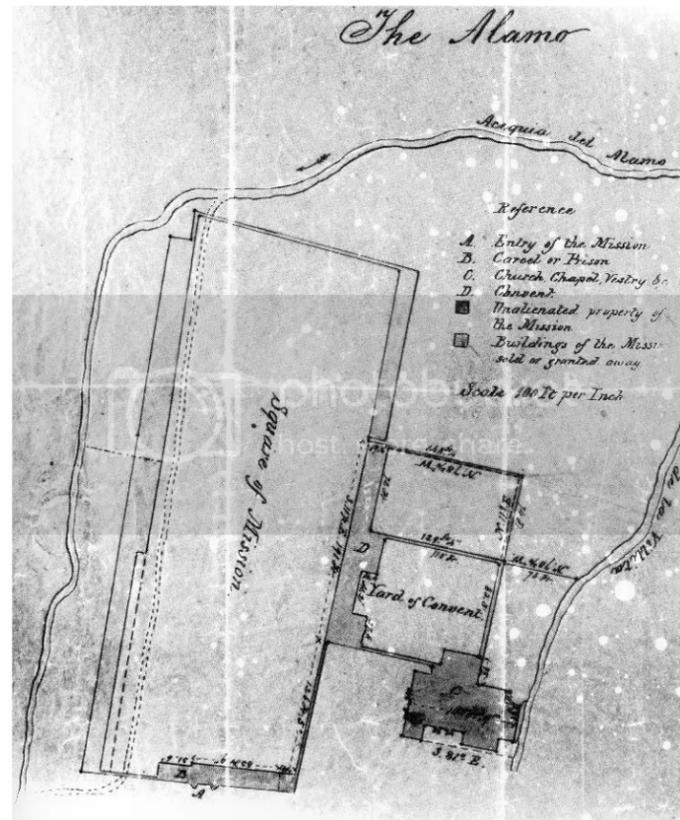
Mission Gate and Lunette Recreation

Location

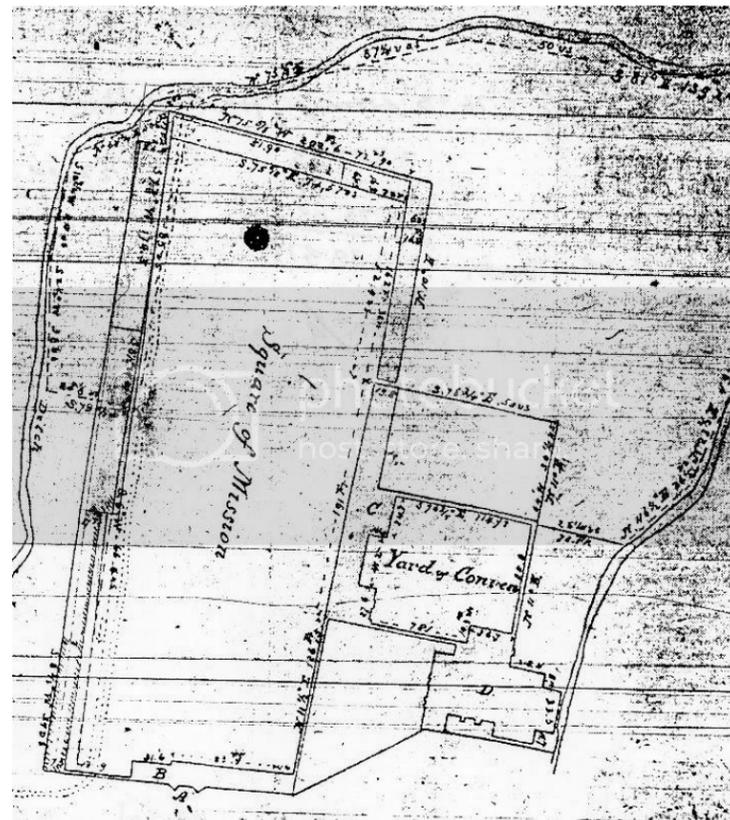
Giraud's map (1849) and Hartnett's survey (1871) paint a fairly clear picture of the locations of the Fort's walls, and both show the Mission Gate near the center of the southern wall, with the lunette/tambour extending southward from the gate.

Sources

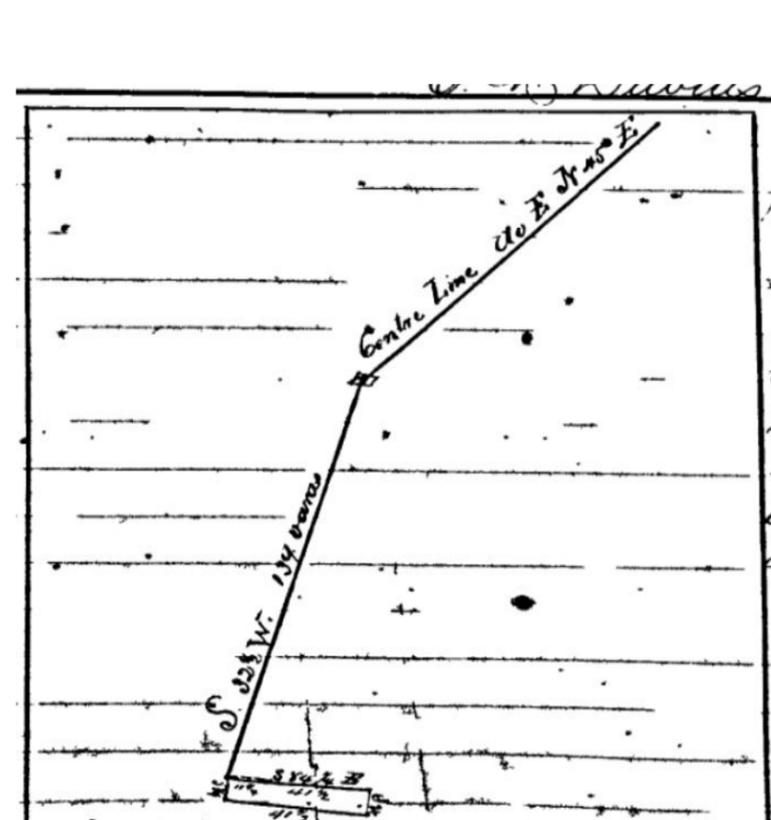
Giraud Army Plan



Giraud Light Plan



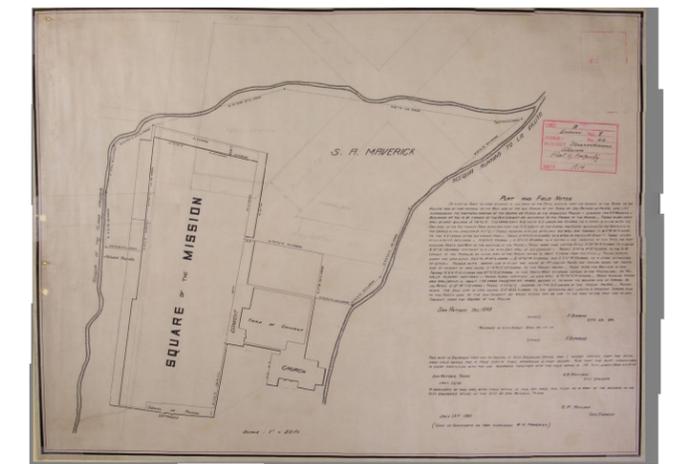
Hartnett Survey



Giraud Plat

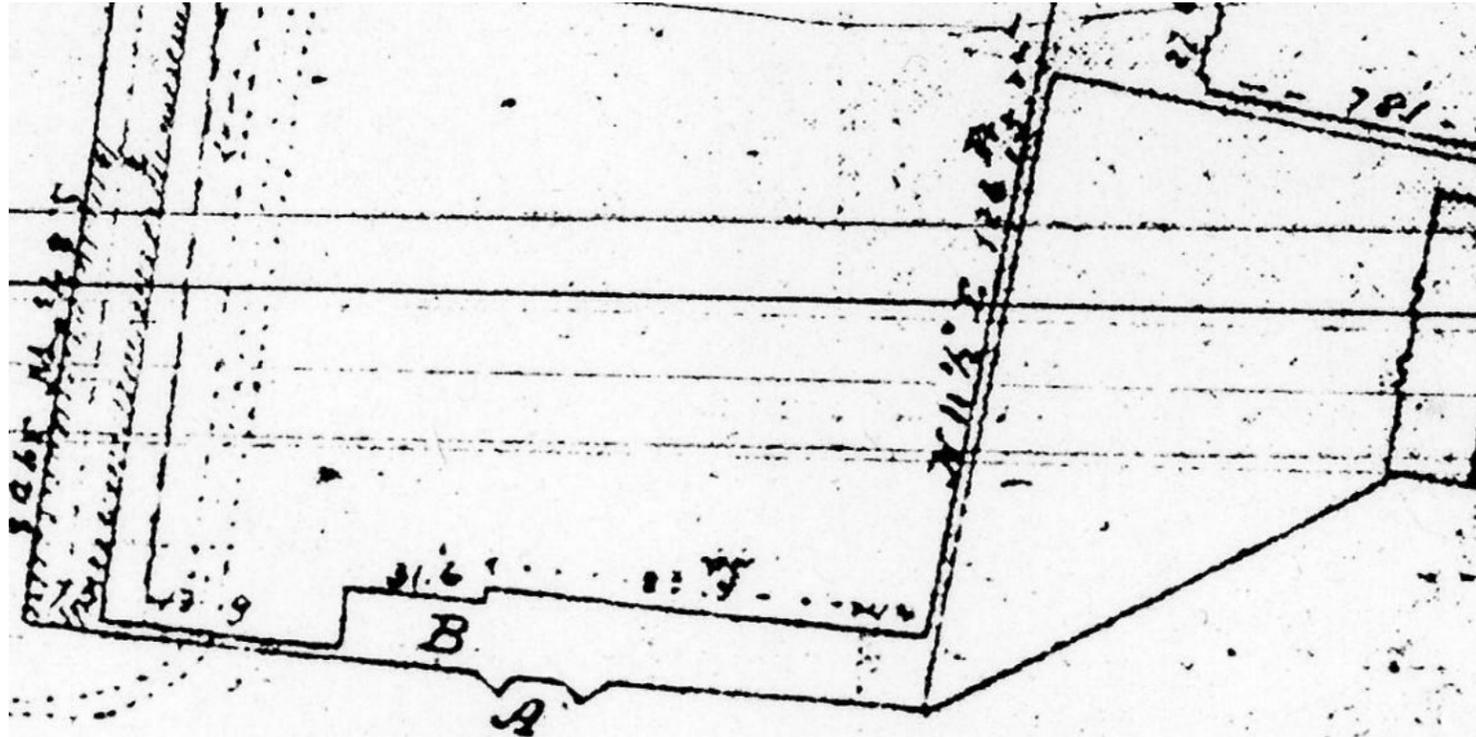


C.P. Matlack Redraw

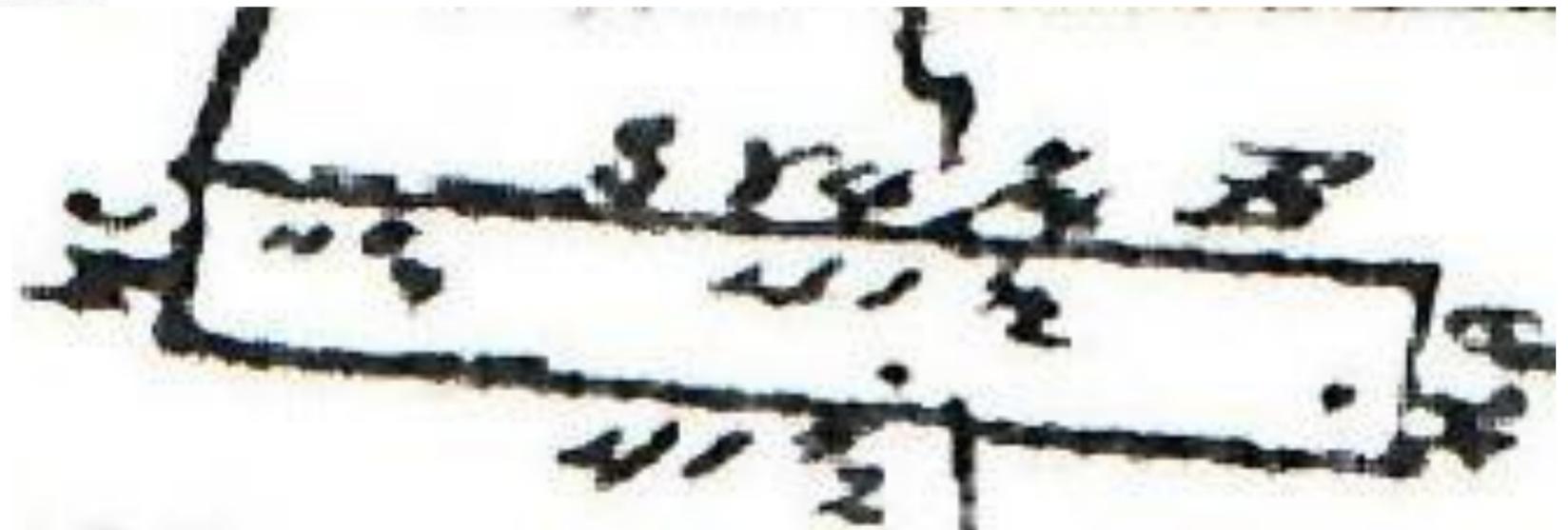


G&A

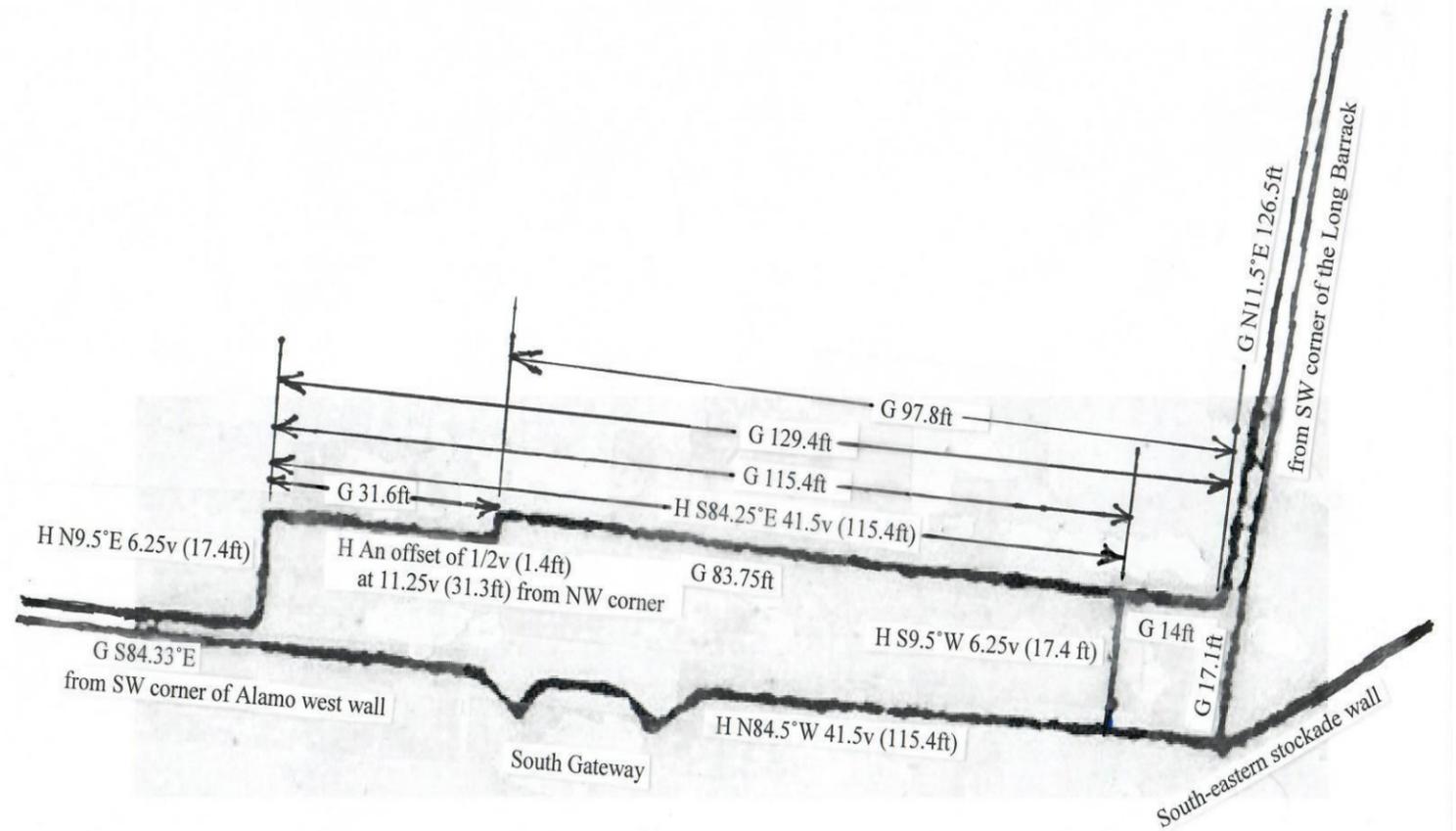
Sources



Giraud's Light plan, detail



Hartnett's survey, detail



Courtesy of James Ivey

Mission Gate and Lunette Recreation

Appearance

- Most descriptions indicate the buildings were made of stonework, probably hewn limestone or caliche block. There may have been some irregular timber patches in places where the stonework had collapsed. There is also the question of whether it would have been plastered.
- The construction of the low barrack may provide insight into the material and appearance of the Mission Gate.
- The gateway opening itself was mostly likely rectangular; however, it may have had a reinforcing stone archway above it.

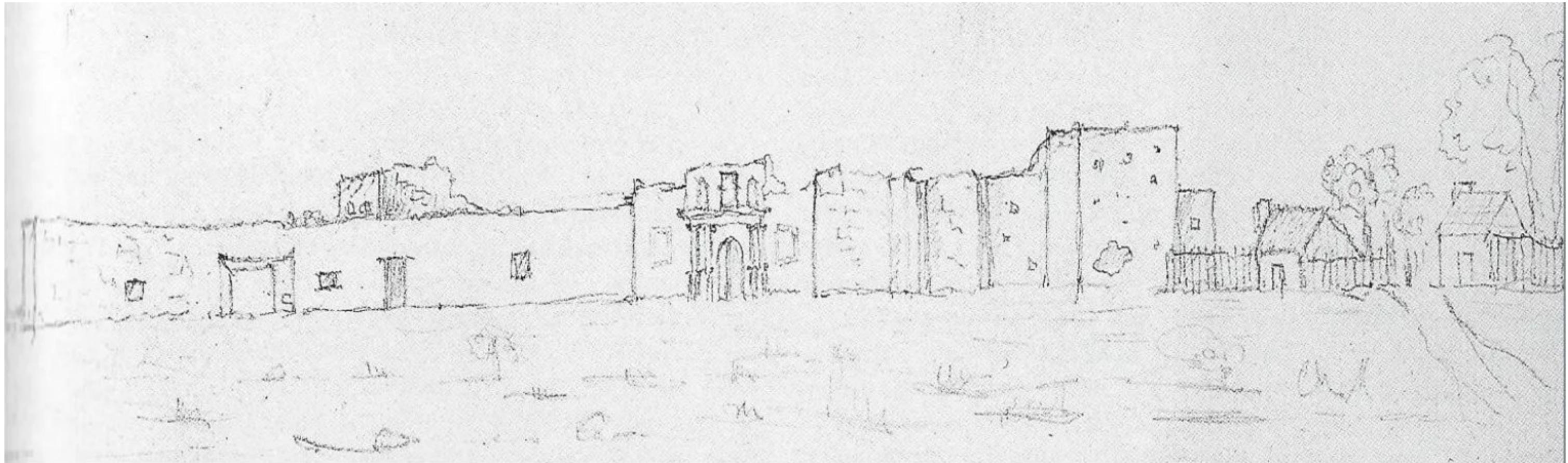
Mission Gate and Lunette Recreation

Appearance

- There probably was not an actual metal gate in the gateway at the time of the battle. The opening would have been defended by the tambour/lunette.
- The shape and placement of window or doorway openings in the buildings are not clear. Later accounts describe these, but they may have been added after the battle when the buildings were repurposed for other uses. Most likely, there would have been doorways facing north into the plaza, but we don't know their exact locations.
- Most accounts indicate that there was weathering along the top of the building walls, so the height of different pieces would have been irregular.
- Based on drawings done shortly after the battle, it appears there were some window and door openings facing south.

G&A

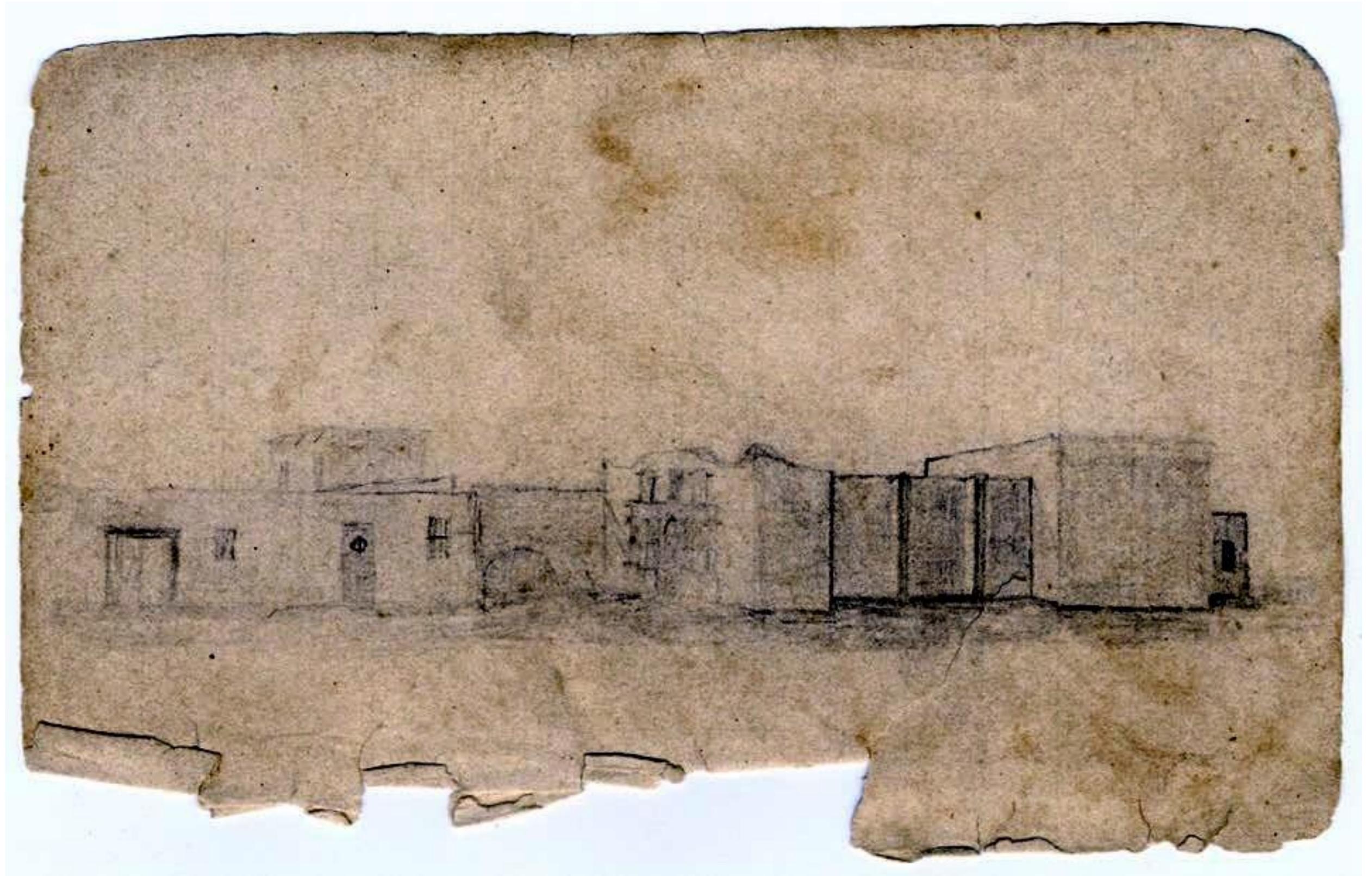
Sources



The Alamo, 1844, by William Bollaert

G&A

Sources

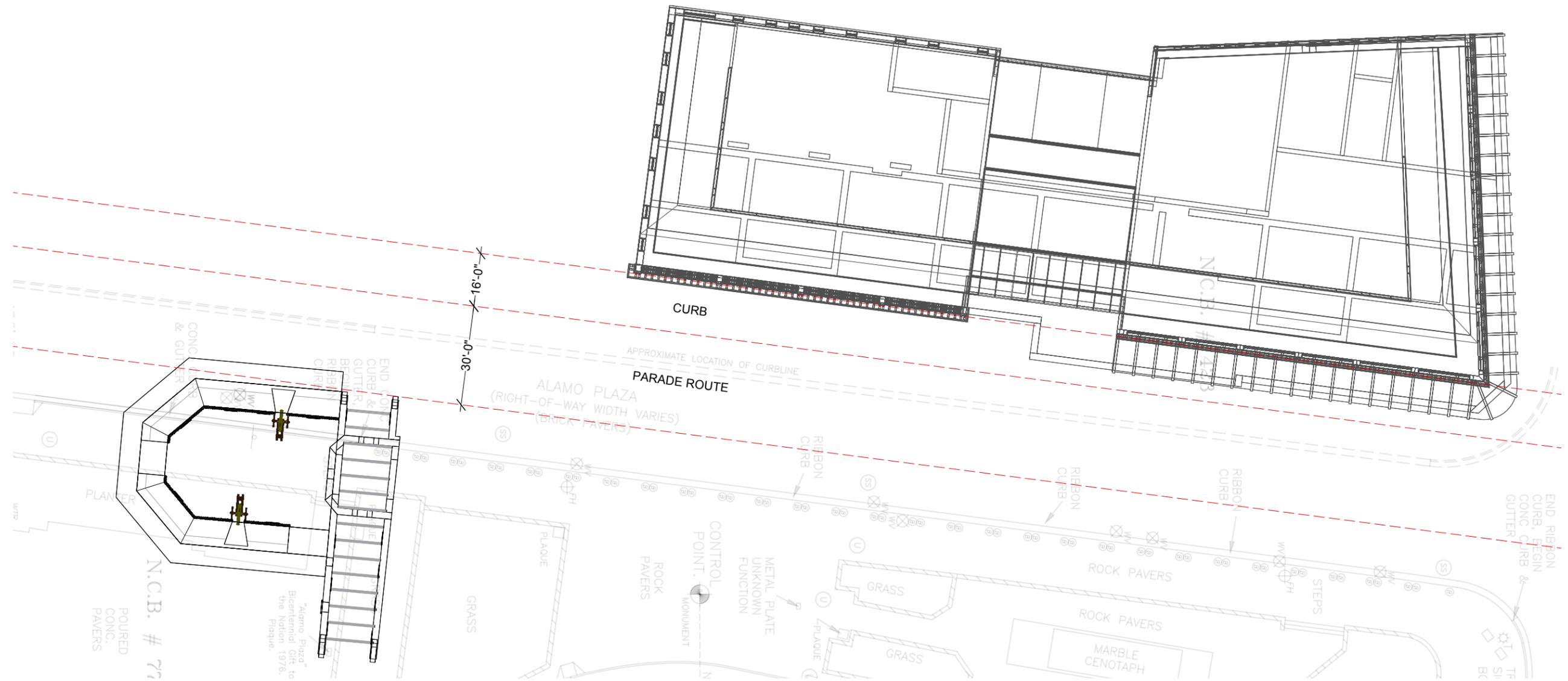


The Alamo, 1837, by George Fulton



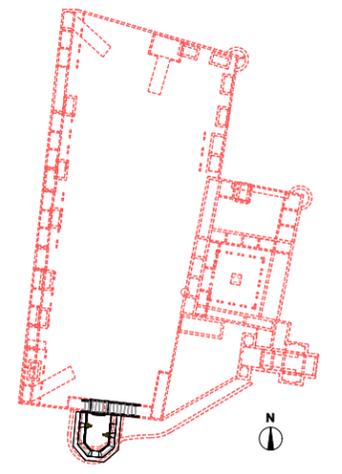
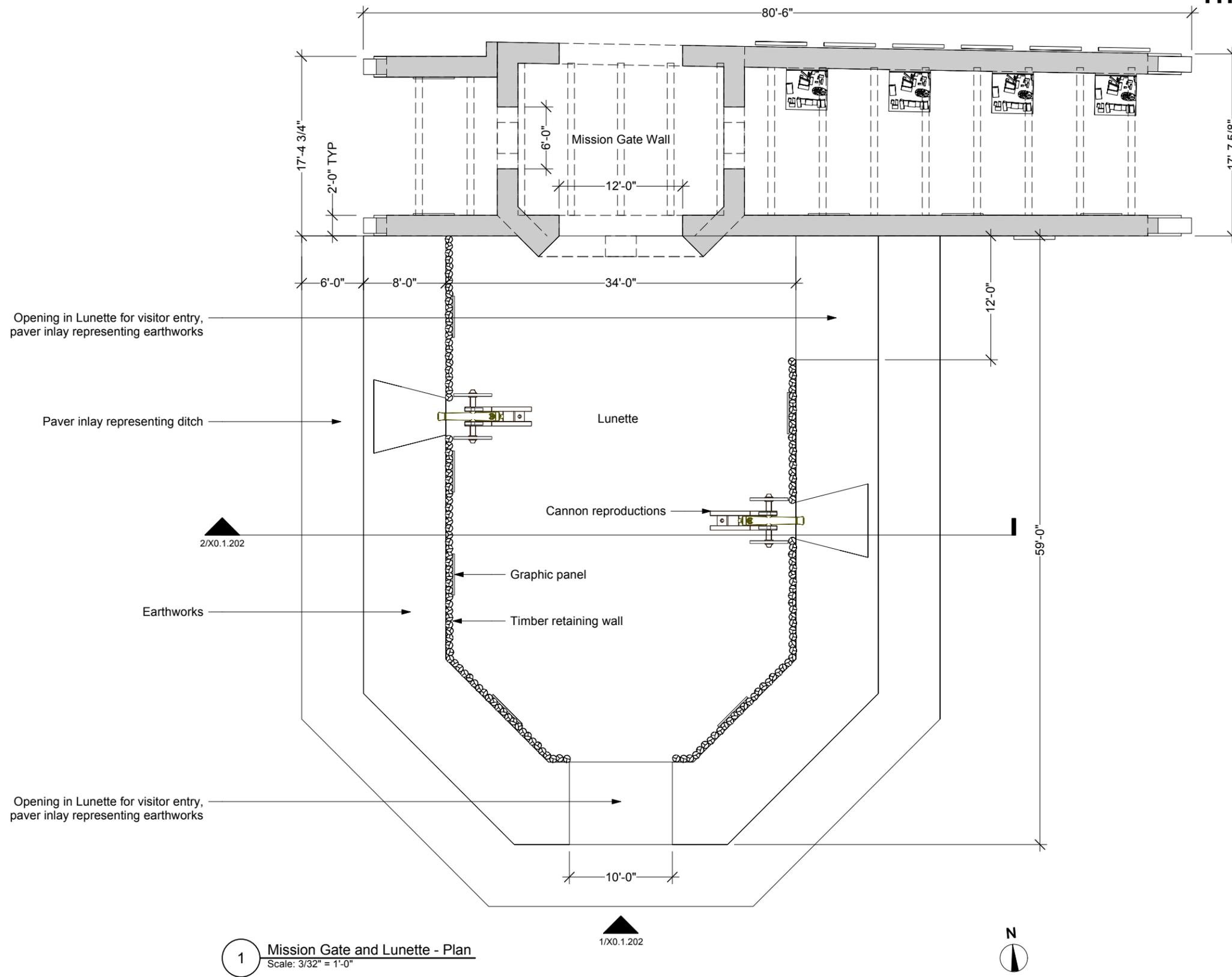
Lunette
South Gate
Palisade

1 Mission Gate - Site Plan
Scale: 1:750



1 Mission Gate - Site Plan - Clearances
 Scale: 1:400



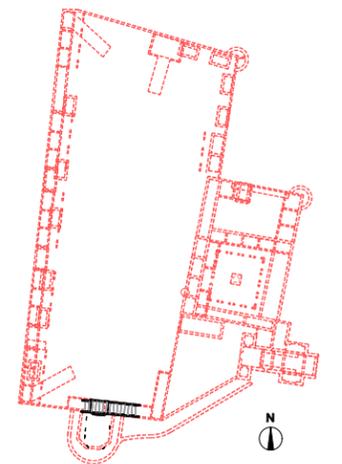
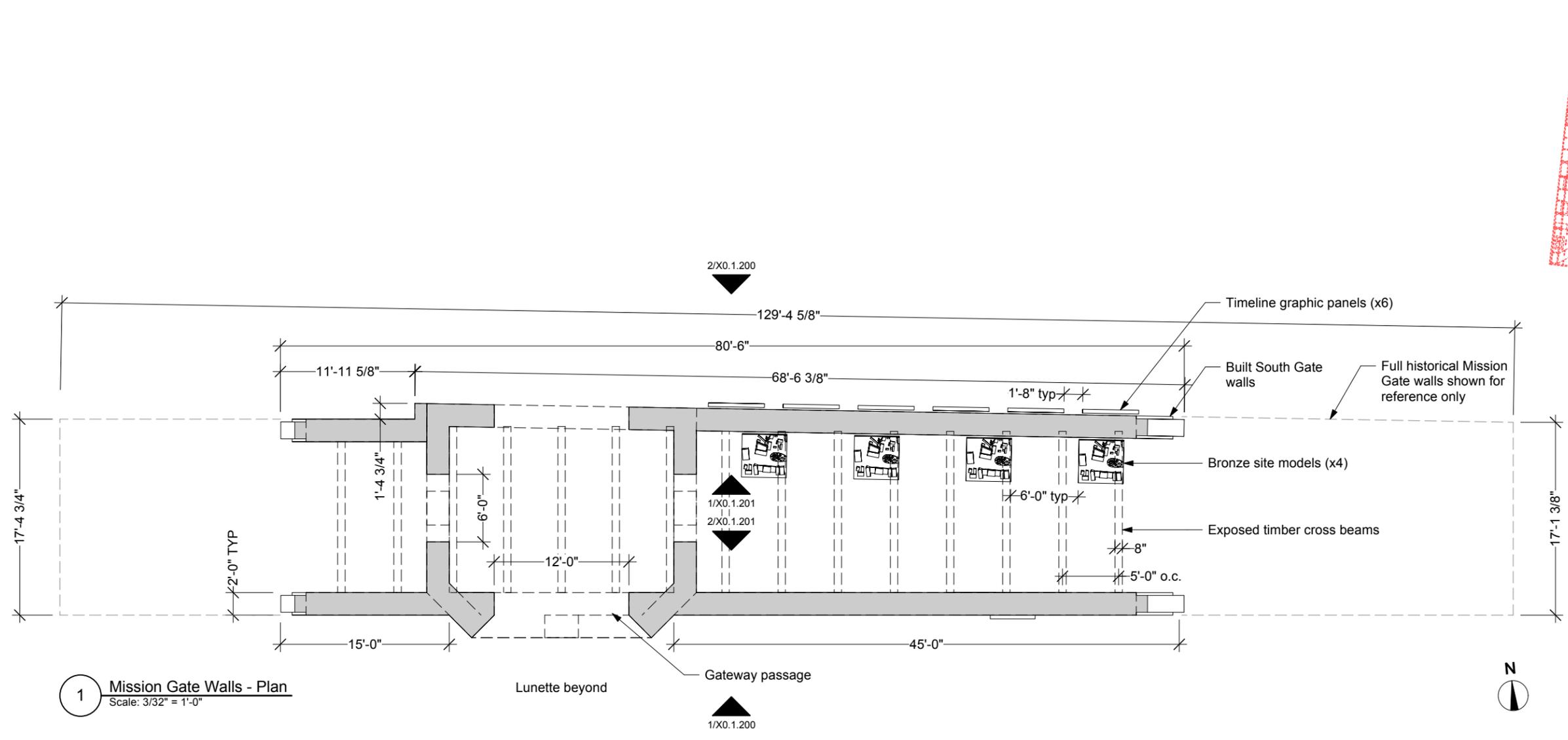


KEY PLAN

1 Mission Gate and Lunette - Plan
Scale: 3/32" = 1'-0"

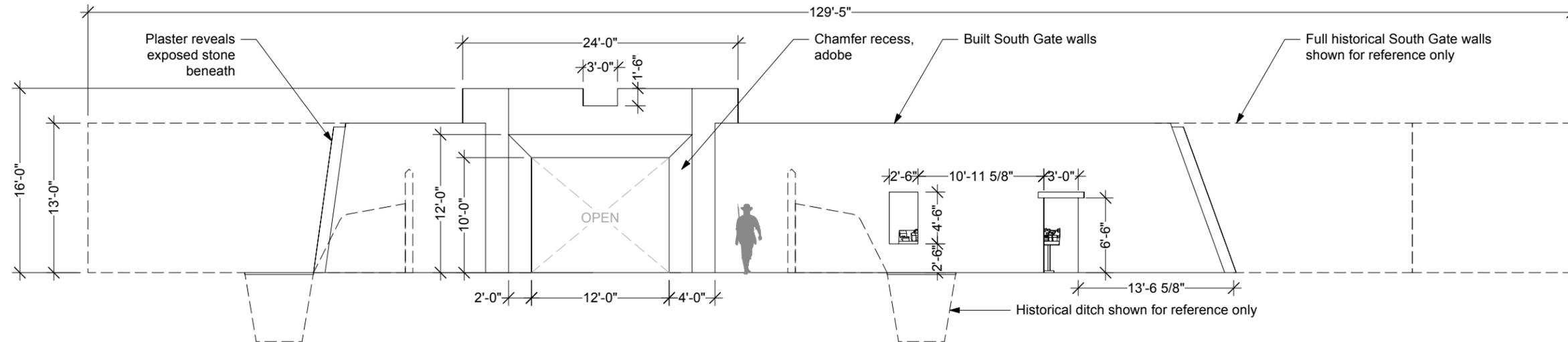
THE ALAMO | MISSION GATE

MISSION GATE WALLS - ENLARGED PLAN

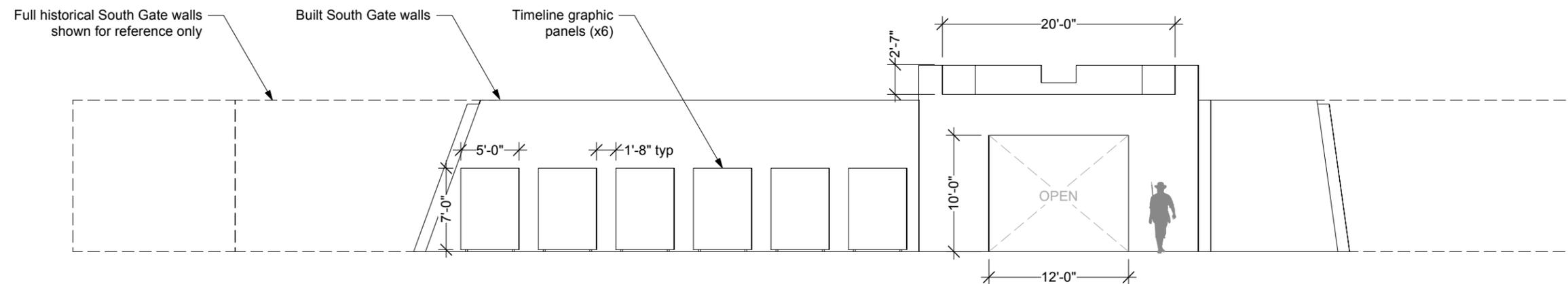


KEY PLAN

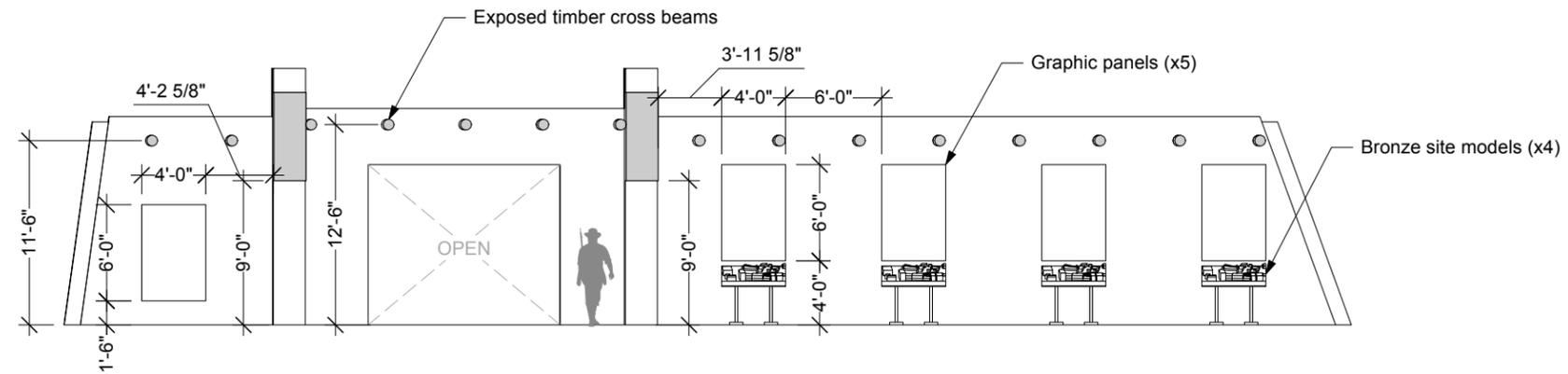
1 Mission Gate Walls - Plan
Scale: 3/32" = 1'-0"



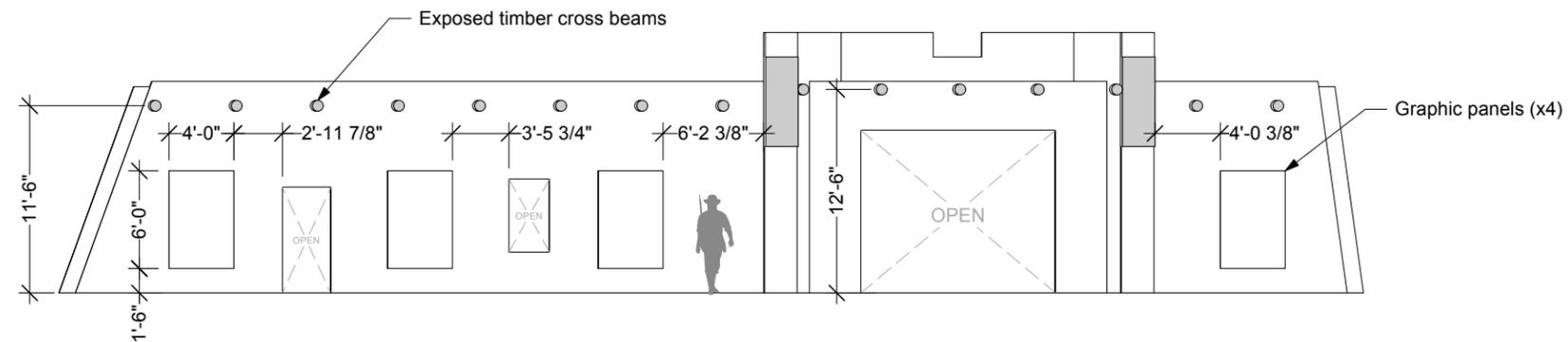
1 Mission Gate Walls - Front Elevation
Scale: 3/32" = 1'-0"



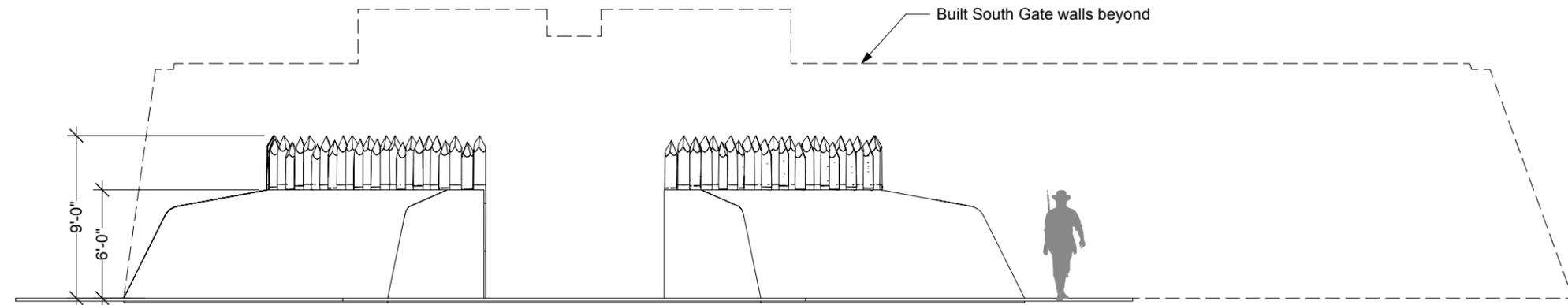
2 Mission Gate Walls - Back Elevation
Scale: 3/32" = 1'-0"



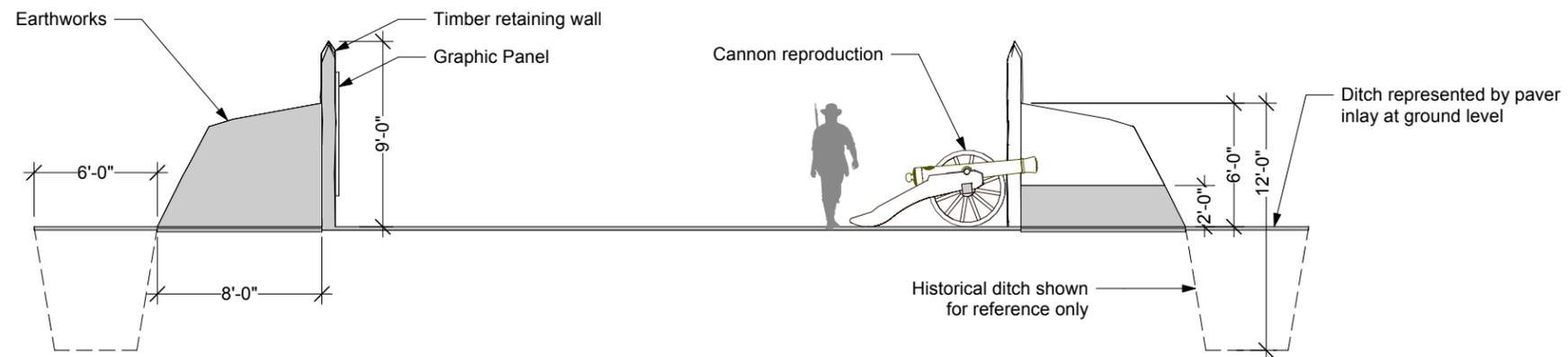
1 Mission Gate Walls - Interior Elevation North
Scale: 3/32" = 1'-0"



2 Mission Gate Walls - Interior Elevation South
Scale: 3/32" = 1'-0"



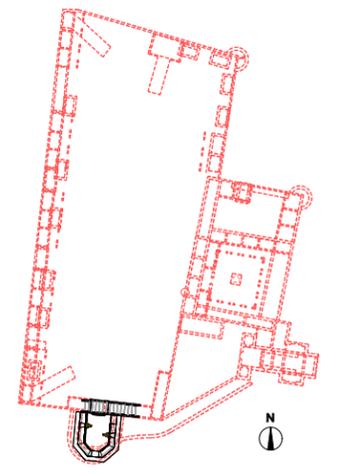
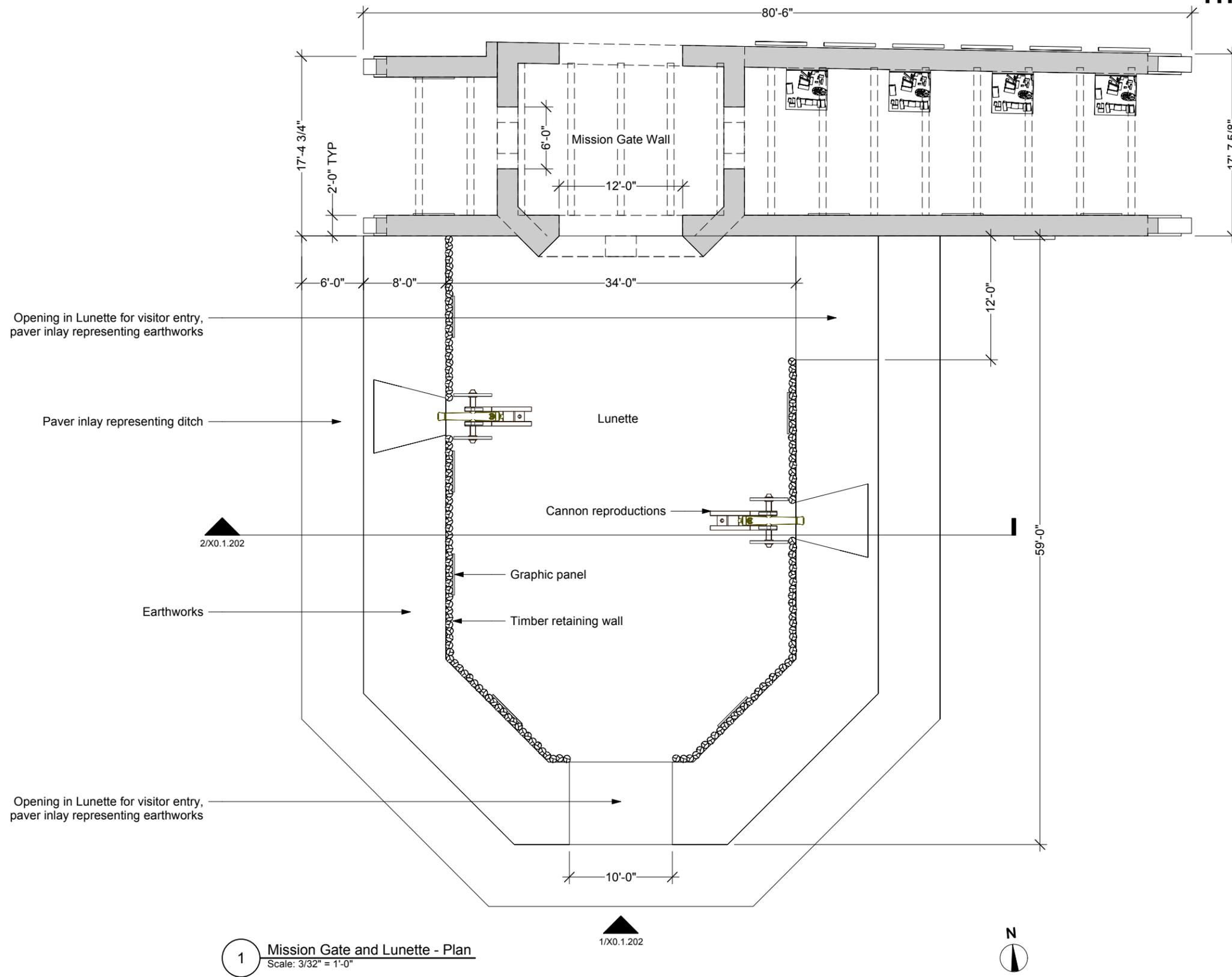
1 **Lunette - Enlarged Elevation**
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



2 **Lunette - Section**
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



1 Mission Gate - Site Plan
Scale: 1:750



KEY PLAN

1 Mission Gate and Lunette - Plan
Scale: 3/32" = 1'-0"



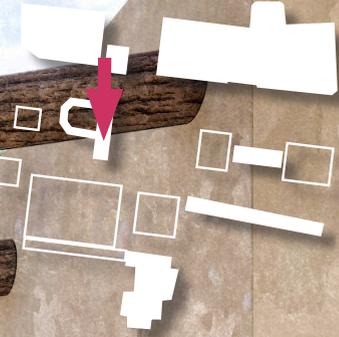


1803





rem
sum
olor





1836
Loren Ipsum
Dolor



Loren
Ipsum
Dolor



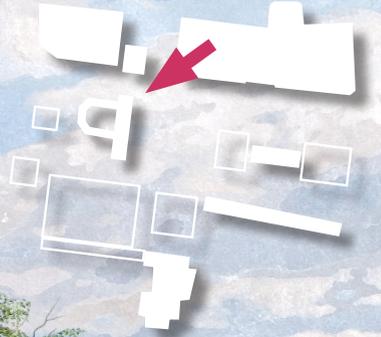
1803

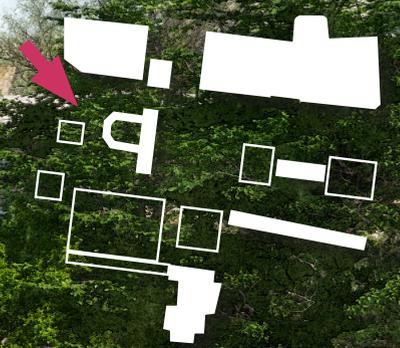
1836

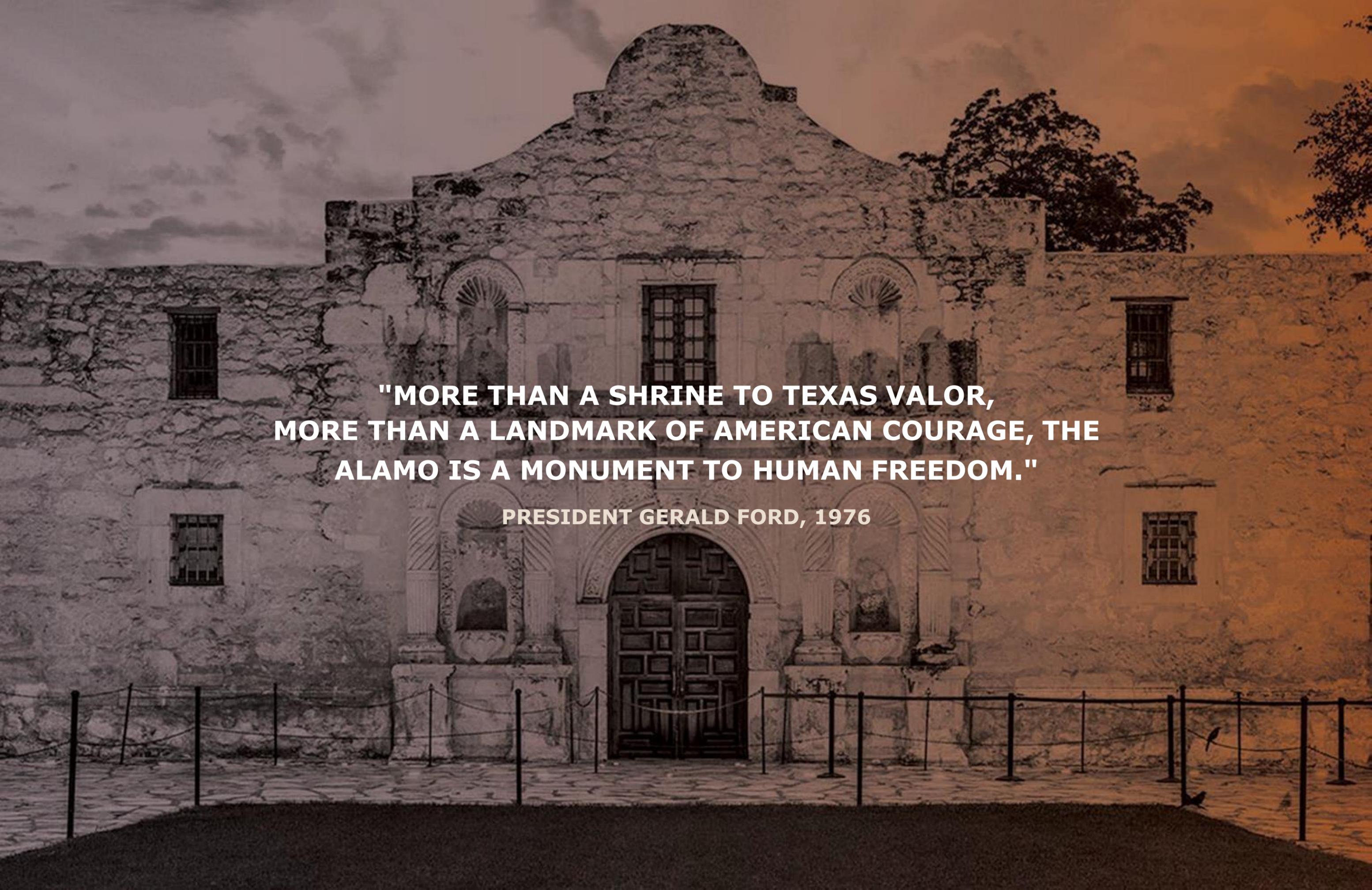












**"MORE THAN A SHRINE TO TEXAS VALOR,
MORE THAN A LANDMARK OF AMERICAN COURAGE, THE
ALAMO IS A MONUMENT TO HUMAN FREEDOM."**

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD, 1976