

U.S. INSPECTION STATION  
(U.S. Border Station)  
California State Highway 188, Tecate Road  
Tecate  
San Diego County  
California

HABS CA-2782  
CA-2782

HABS  
CA-2782

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
PACIFIC GREAT BASIN SUPPORT OFFICE  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
600 Harrison Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

U.S. INSPECTION STATION  
(U.S. BORDER STATION)

HABS No. CA-2782

Location: California State Hwy 188, Tecate Rd  
Tecate, San Diego County, California

USGS Tecate Quadrangle (7.5)  
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:  
11.535048.3604240

Present Owner: U.S. General Services Administration  
Pacific Rim Region 9, San Francisco, California

Present Occupant: U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Present Use: U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Significance: Constructed in 1933-34 under the U.S. Treasury Department, the U.S. Inspection Station Complex exemplifies Spanish Colonial Revival architecture as interpreted by the Depression-era federal building program. The U.S. Inspection Station also continues to reflect the implementation of U.S. policies for international political relations and economic trade since its establishment in Tecate, California. In addition, the function of the U.S. Inspection Station as an immigration port of entry has had a direct impact and influence on the Hispanic ethnic heritage of the region and new citizens of Hispanic and Chinese heritage.

## PART I. PHYSICAL SETTING

The U.S. Inspection Station complex is located in Tecate, San Diego County, California on the portion of California Highway 188 (known as Tecate Road) that runs across the border into Tecate, Baja California, Mexico.

Located 40 miles southeast of San Diego and 33 miles east from Tijuana, the two Tecates are one of the few examples of companion cities along the U.S.-Mexican border in which the U.S. city is smaller than its Mexican counterpart. Geographically, the two Tecates are located between the 32 degrees and 27 minutes North longitude and 32 minutes West latitude from the Greenwich Meridian at about 1,600 feet above sea level. Both have the dry Mediterranean climate characteristic of the broader Southern California-Baja California region.

In 1888, U.S. Customs Collector, Thomas J. Arnold mentioned that the boundary line between the San Diego District and Mexico was 180 miles in extent, the first 80 miles from the coast being through mountainous and sparsely settled country and the remainder through an uninhabited desert. He added that in the east, San Diego County mountains temperatures could go from 110 degrees in the daytime to 10 degrees at night, while in the desert, highs of 130 degrees had been recorded. Indigenous fauna included rattlesnakes, coyotes, mountain lions, and scorpions, all of them potentially dangerous.<sup>1</sup>

On the U.S. side, a few houses and a small commercial area at the edge of the rural area shaped Tecate, California. Mexicans have long referred to this settlement on the U.S. side as “Tecatito.” It has remained the entrance point to the ranches located in the backcountry region in San Diego California, dubbed the “Mountain Empire.”

Tecate, California’s mountainous site and relative isolation constrained its population growth. With only 116 inhabitants<sup>2</sup>, Tecate, California remains a small community. In terms of physical infrastructure, it has nearly 50 residential dwellings that include a number of mobile homes; two commercial centers consisting of a small grocery store, post office, hardware, and convenience stores; light industrial buildings (mainly warehouses and storage yards for tractor trailers serving the *maquiladoras* [assembly plants] in Tecate, Baja California and a Protestant mission. Tecate, California is part of the unincorporated area of San Diego County. As with many other unincorporated communities in the rural portion of the county, the settlement derives almost all of its services from San Diego County.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Brown, Jim. Riding the Line: The United States Customs Service in San Diego, 1885-1930, A Documentary History. Department of the Treasury. United States Customs Service. Pacific Region.(Washington D.C.:1991), p.51.

<sup>2</sup> San Diego Government Association (SANDAG). SANDAG / Sourcepoint. Population and Housing, 2000 and 2003 Estimates Zip Code 91980. August 2003 [database on-line]; available from <http://cart.sandag.orgspw/spw.asp>; Internet; accessed 17 October 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Sparrow, Glen. “Governing Tecate, California,” in Tecate, Baja California: Realities and Challenges in a Mexican Border Community. Ganster, Paul, et al ed. San Diego State, University Press. (San Diego, California: 2002), pp. 37,40.

Founded in the early 1900s, Tecate, Baja California, Mexico (Tecate, B.C.) is located in a narrow valley alongside the Tecate River, and encircled by rolling hills and mountains full of granite boulders and surrounded by Mediterranean vegetation of oaks, olives, and pepper trees. Situated at the intersection of the route leading to Ensenada and to the Mexicali-Tijuana road, it is well-connected with respect to communication routes. When the San Diego and Arizona Railroad was routed from San Diego to the Tijuana River Valley through Tecate, B.C. in 1919, and then back into the U.S. at Campo, early on, Tecate also became connected to the U.S. by rail.

Tecate, B.C. borders the international boundary marker at number 246 and 228. The downtown area of Tecate lies contiguous to the border. In contrast to its California counterpart, Tecate has evolved from a ranch inhabited by 130 persons in 1910 to an urban center of nearly 80,000 inhabitants at the outset of the twenty-first century. Today, the road that crosses the border connects north approximately 2 miles to Highway 94. Going south, the same road crosses Tecate on the Mexican side connecting to a highway that leads to Ensenada (toward the southwest). The Tijuana-Mexicali highway is another important road that crosses Tecate and runs parallel to the US-Mexican border.<sup>4</sup>

Except for the cattle and train crossing at Campo, California the border crossing point in Tecate is the only port along the 135 mile stretch between Tijuana-San Diego and Mexicali-Calexico. However, in contrast to the large stations at Tijuana and Mexicali serving complexes and commercial hinterlands, the border station at Tecate was until recently a small operation with light traffic, mostly local trade and a relaxed atmosphere.<sup>5</sup> However, this changed after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

## PART II. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

About ten thousand years ago, Kumeyaay indigenous group inhabited the boarder region where the two Tecates are located. Their presence is documented in cave paintings, rock carvings, mortars, shell artifacts, and other artifacts. The present-day indigenous communities belong to the Yuman cultural group, and descendents of the Kumeyaay are present in Tecate, B.C. and in Campo, California. These groups unite to celebrate their religious festivities with walks to the sacred mountain Cuchumá, which is divided by the international borderline.

The mission lands that were part of San Diego de Alcalá Mission, founded in 1769, included part of the Kumeyaay territory. The northwestern region of Tecate emerged as an indigenous *ranchería*, which was a small indigenous settlement that served as a rest stop and ranching area for the mission. K'miai and Pai-Pai indigenous groups also inhabited the area during the Spanish Colonial Era and appear on the list of ranches of the San Diego Mission.

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<sup>4</sup> Price, John A. Tijuana: Urbanization in a Border Culture. University of Notre Dame Press. (Indiana: 1973), p. 130.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

The establishment of mestizo settlements in Tecate began in 1833. That year, Governor José María Echeandía granted Rancho Tecate to Juan Bandini, a prominent politician and businessman from San Diego, Alta California. The ranchers of this period were mostly the sons of mission soldiers that had married Indian women. Cattle rearing was their main activity. In 1848, after the Mexico-U.S. War ended, California Gold fever brought people from all nationalities to Tecate in search of minerals.

Although the first recorded surveys in Tecate, California date from 1857-58 (made by R. W. Groom and John C. Hay respectively), the international boundary line remained a nebulous frontier in the decades to come. The first port of entry was in Campo, California, about seven miles from Tecate, California. It was next to a store located on the west side of the road across from the blacksmith shop of the Gaskill Brothers.

Over a decade later, in 1870, gold was discovered south of Tecate in Real del Castillo. When mining declined, gold seekers started searching again in the Tecate and Mountain Empire areas, founding new ranches in the process. Thus, most of the people living in the region at this time were miners who came from neighboring regions in the U.S. and Mexico, as well as other parts of the U.S. and abroad. Mining companies contracted ranchers to supply them firewood and pack animals, as well as other goods and services.

Tecate's Colonia Agrícola (Agricultural Colony), created through a land grant in 1876, was among the ranches that flourished in the context of the goods demanded by the mining activity. The land grants, a new form of settlement in the region, resulted in the gradual transformation of the Indian lands into cattle ranches. Since the law forbade the Indians from organizing themselves in towns, the Mexican government saw the lands as federal property. Years later, around 1892, with the aim to prevent unlawful filibustering mining activity and maintain a Mexican community on the international border, the Mexican Ministry of Development instigated land ownership regulations. That same year, the first map of Tecate, B.C. was platted. The map clearly showed the land distribution in the Tecate Valley. The ranches proliferated. They spread to the east, following the path of the border division line and that of the San Diego-Tijuana-Valle Redondo and Tecate-Yuma-Arizona roads. There were fifty-four ranches distributed in an area of over 35,000 hectares. The distribution was made in lands of the valleys of San José, San Valentín, San Javier, Nacho, Guero, Tanamá, and Cañada Verde. The last names of the inhabitants at that time were Flores, Noris, Castro, Uribe, Chávez, Downy, León, Valencia, Demara, Villagrana, López, Redonde, Sandoval, González, Salazar, Gallegos, Agreda, Verdugo, Soto, Arguiles, Reinbeck, and Valenzuela among others.<sup>6</sup> Some of them crossed back and forth from Mexico to the U.S.

On the U.S. side, General Cadwalder had surveyed the valley with his soldiers in 1890, split the magic mountain--Cuchumá in two, and placed a cement marker on its top. Adobe houses began to appear with new settlers. This was the birth of "Tecatito," California. In 1892, the Thing

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<sup>6</sup> Santiago Guerrero, Leticia Vibiana. "Perfil del origen de la población de Tecate." In Tecate, Baja California: Realities and Challenges in a Mexican Border Community. Op. Cit. p. 10. Summers. Op. Cit. p. 14. Fundadores Magazine. (Baja California, Mexico:1999),pp. 24-25.

family opened a general store close to the border crossing. They sold foodstuffs and other merchandise, and offered postal services. Residents came to the store run by Joseph Thing from both north and south of the region. His son Sam Albert Thing, who was 15 years old at that time, was often left alone to run the store. Thing bought and bartered frontier commodities. Some of his clients were prospectors waiting to stock up on grub for another trek. He would buy gold dust and whatever the Mexicans had for sale (cowhides, goat hides, sheep hides, and beeswax). He sold coffee, apples, bacon, beans, sundries, tequila, crackers, and candies to the Mexicans. Sam Thing was at the store until 1900.<sup>7</sup>

At the end of the 19th century, what is now the main plaza in Tecate, B.C. was a lake full of tule, fish, grass, and ducks. The various ranches communicated with each other through trails and through the road of the Pony Express route that departed from San Diego. It went through the Rumorosa Mountains, traversed the desert of the Salty Lagoon and arrived to Yuma Fort. The Pony Express road crossed what was then the town of Tecate, B.C. on Libertad Street (now Avenida Hidalgo). Americans built that road as part of California's military and commercial gate to the east at a time when Mexicali, Baja California's future state capital, had not been born. By the second half of the century, Tecate had a road that linked the town with El Carrizo, Valle de las Palmas, Vallecitos, Valle de Guadalupe, Real del Castillo, and Ensenada.

Crossing into the U.S., through the 'imaginary' international borderline (there were no wires or fences at the border at that time), one could take The One Thousand Curves Road that went through Tecate, California, and to the west leading to Jamúl, El Cajón, and San Diego. To the east, the road went to Potrero, Campo, Jacumba, and what is now the Imperial Valley. There was a trail leading to the Imperial Valley and another to San Diego. People used to travel on the road on donkeys. By the turn of the nineteenth century, the Indians from the region, who had spread throughout Yuma, Arizona, the Imperial Valley, San Diego, and Campo during the many years of exile, began to make their way back to Tecate to visit the mystic mountain of Cuchumá.<sup>8</sup>

Before the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution in 1910, the northwestern part of Tecate (along the Tecate River) experienced some growth. The river was a reliable source of water to both people and livestock. Libertad Street (Avenida Hidalgo) running the two blocks south of the border was Tecate's first street. It started out as a part of the wagon road that joined posts in California with the Yuma, Arizona post. The Butterfield Stage Line handled the transport of merchandise and passengers along this route. The Tijuana and Tecate ranchos served as stops where travelers could rest and acquire goods. In terms of public services, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Tecate, B.C. had a public elementary school and a police commission, both located close to the wagon road.<sup>9</sup>

The outbreak of the Revolution carried with it some visible changes along the U.S.-Mexican border. Concerned about developments in Mexico, U.S. President William H. Taft ordered

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<sup>7</sup> Summers. Op. Cit. p. 15.

<sup>8</sup> Fundadores. Op. Cit. p. 25. Summers. Op. Cit. p. 22.

<sup>9</sup> Santiago Guerrero. Op. Cit. pp.12-13

American troops to patrol along the border. In 1911, he sent the 115<sup>th</sup> Artillery Company to Tecate, California with the mission of enforcing U.S. neutrality during Ricardo Flores Magón's insurrection in Baja California. Magón, a Mexican revolutionary fighting to overthrow Porfirio Díaz's dictatorship, had the support of the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) from Los Angeles, California. Several foreigners joined his army and in short, the U.S. troops were not sent to fight against the Magonistas, but to stop those who were bringing guns into Mexico.

As Flores Magon's army approached Tecate, Mexicans under the command of Captain Mendieta defended the town from what they thought was a foreign invasion. They perceived that this was the case because foreign adventurers, criminals, and the I.W.W.--political radicals from Los Angeles, clearly outnumbered Mexican and Indian rebels. A battle took place on a hill a few feet away from the international border. American neighbors from Tecatito gave refuge to the women and children who had escaped from the chaotic situation in Tecate, B.C. When Magon's army was driven out of town, the women and children who found shelter in Tecatito returned to their hometown.<sup>10</sup> At the level of the central government in Mexico City, the military confrontation between Diaz's and revolutionary Francisco I. Madero's troops ended a month later with the victory of the latter. Consequently, Madero's troops were sent to the north to free Tijuana from the Americans that had joined the Magonistas.

Back in Tecate, California, in 1914 Troop M of the 1st Cavalry replaced the 115th Artillery Company and stayed in the Tecate Campo until the U.S. entered World War I.<sup>11</sup> Despite the presence of troops during that time, border settlers were constantly on guard because of fear of the Mexican bandits.<sup>12</sup>

Despite some growth, Tecate, B.C. remained a small ranching center along the border. The river and seasonal flooding to the south and north respectively restricted the growth of further settlements. In March 1917, Governor Esteban Cantú approved the creation of the Tecate municipality. Luis Pavon, a topographic engineer, drew an urban map of Tecate. Soon after, the wetland was filled in and the streets and avenues were leveled. The sketch of the urban area that was adopted in 1918 consisted of what are today's Hidalgo, Juarez, Revolución, and México avenues (from south to north) and Venustiano Carranza Street to Portes Gil Street (from west to east). It had twenty-one blocks subdivided into lots. Block number seven was set aside for public buildings and the central plaza. Most of the population, however, continued living in nearby ranchos. Those who settled in town continued to cluster on both sides of Libertad Street (Avenida Hidalgo).

The Guadalupe Church constructed in 1931 is located on Avenida Hidalgo, three blocks south of the border. While traveling from the U.S. into Mexico, the church remains the most visible landmark. Since the street that links the Inspection Station with the church also unites the main

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<sup>10</sup> Summers. Op. Cit. pp. 22, 23, 26.

<sup>11</sup> Tecate Camp was likely a temporary camp prior to the permanent construction ca. 1940 of Camp Lockett, Campo, California, which is located approximately 10 miles east of Tecate.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p. 24.

plaza, the core of the city, this singular alignment of Tecate's physical structure has deep symbolic meaning for visitors and locals alike.<sup>13</sup> This cross-axial street layout also creates a cross-cultural appeal to the physical binational setting.

Symbolically, Mexican and U.S. culture combine in this small border region. In this regard, the location of the U.S. Inspection Station is significant for the culture and history of the border in relation to two urban elements; the plaza and the church, which provides locals a feeling of protection when they come from or leave to the U.S. passing by the Virgin of Guadalupe, who is just there, facing the U.S. border at a distance.

The turmoil that followed President Madero's assassination in 1913, translated into the prolongation of the Mexican Revolution until 1920, did not prevent the settlement from becoming connected to other settlements along the border. In 1918, the national highway linking Tijuana and Mexicali was opened—though for some short time the old Tecate-Fort Yuma highway continued being used. Tecate, at this time became a stopover for travelers using the Sutherlands Automobile Stage Line. That same year Tecate became a gateway and transit point connecting Arizona through trails, roads, and a railroad for the border settlements of Tijuana, B.C., Mexicali, B.C., San Diego, California, and Yuma, Arizona.

The following year, in 1919, Tecate became the stop of the Tijuana-Tecate Railway, which is the Mexican shortline portion of the San Diego and Arizona railroad that linked San Diego with the Imperial Valley. It was built for John D. Spreckels, the famous sugar magnate of San Diego. The railway began in San Diego, crossed the international border in Tijuana, and from there headed toward Tecate. It passed through Valle Redondo, continued through Tecate, and crossed back into California to connect Campo and the Imperial Valley where it was linked to U.S. railroads. The tracks ran parallel to Libertad Street (Avenida Hidalgo) in Tecate, where the train depot is located. The train transported a wide variety of merchandise and offered transportation to passengers. Customs services were established the same year.

In 1919, the beginning of the construction of the plaza's kiosk, the place where Tecate residents and visitors from Campo, Dulzura, and Potrero, California gathered to relax or to celebrate civic or public Mexican holidays. Mexicans also went to celebrations in the ranches of the Mountain Empire region. Two years later, in 1921, Tecate became an official port of entry for the U.S.

In the years that followed, like other Mexican border settlements, Baja California became dependent on tourist and entertainment businesses mainly sustained by U.S. patrons. These were the years of the U.S. Prohibition (1918-1933), whose final years coincided with the unleashing of the Great Depression. The so-called "culture of sin" that flourished in many border cities during those years was a combined product of U.S. investors fleeing moral reform in their country and depressed conditions in border communities that led local politicians and businessmen to embrace pariah (socially outcast) businesses. Such economic activities brought significant growth to most border settlements.

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<sup>13</sup> It is important to note that unlike most cities in Mexico, the church was not located next to the plaza that was created in 1918.

The sociopolitical permissible environment served well for the launching of a series of business ventures. The Santana Brothers, for instance, opened various stores and bars in Tecate. In the 1920s, a whiskey distillery was established. Don Levi and Alberto V. Aldrete opened a malt house in 1929. From 1923-30, the Governor, Abelardo L. Rodríguez gave economic support to grape planting for the production of the world famous *mosto* (grape-juice). The table wines of Tecate also became known all over the world.<sup>14</sup>

In the aftermath of the Great Depression, the U.S. initiated a large military build up. San Diego, situated within less than one-hour distance from Tecate and Tijuana, became one of the sites hosting big military installations. These facilities provided clientele for a rejuvenated entertainment and tourist economy after the Second World War.<sup>15</sup> This, along with Mexico's central government programs to populate its northern regions, unleashed further migration to border cities.

In 1937, the Mexican government initiated a colonization scheme to encourage Mexicans to settle in the northern regions. There was much concern about the composition of the population in border settlements. For instance, as late as 1930, one third of Mexicali's population was Chinese nationals. In Tecate, B.C. several businesses were owned and operated by Chinese migrants.<sup>16</sup> Along with the colonization program, there were economic developments such as the 1939 opening of an oil refinery next to the malt factory. In 1943, the Tecate Brewery opened its doors. During those same years, several wineries appeared, among them the prominent Tecate Winery. Grocery stores, restaurants, and lodging services also began to emerge. When the Tijuana-Tecate-Mexicali highway was paved, businesses began to locate along Juarez Avenue. New buildings, including municipal government buildings, were also built at that time.<sup>17</sup>

Tecate, B.C. became a combination of both traditional and modern urbanism. The traditional form is represented by the typical grid pattern of streets centered on the plaza, church, government buildings, and businesses. This traditional design was indeed the result of a nationalistic influence that replicated the pattern of Spanish Colonial cities from the center of the country. It is divided into a "primary section" and the more recent, and more outlying, *Colonias* and *fraccionamientos*.<sup>18</sup> The main plaza and the grid are the dominant elements of the urban layout together with the border port of entry that connects the plaza and the church.

The plaza is the principal public space as well as the functional and symbolic heart of the town. Flanking it are the municipal palace, and a hotel built in the 1950s. A bank and a cantina from

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<sup>14</sup> Santiago Guerrero. Op. Cit. p. 15. Fundadores. Op. Cit. p. 25.

<sup>15</sup> Arreola. Op. Cit. p. 26.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. pp. 21,22.

<sup>17</sup> Santiago Guerrero. Op Cit. p. 15.

<sup>18</sup> In the given context, *Colonias* and *fraccionamientos* would be similar to a California city or town, community (*Colonias*), and a neighborhood within that same community (*fraccionamientos*). As an example, La Jolla is a community within the City of San Diego, and Bird Rock is a neighborhood within La Jolla.

the 1950s also face the west side of the plaza. Contrary to other border cities, the businesses in Tecate are mostly oriented toward the people that live in Tecate and less to tourism which has been much less significant than in Tijuana. While, Tecate, B.C. neighbors a tiny town and a rural area, Tijuana is closer to larger cities such as, Chula Vista and San Diego.

In Tecate, binational trade has historically occurred within walking distance of the Inspection Station on Lázaro Cardenas, the main street that links the port of entry with the main plaza. In a similar way, people from Tecatito and from the nearby ranches (Campo, Dulzura, and Potrero, California) arrive at the port of entry and walk straight to the main plaza and to its kiosk. The plaza has served as a gathering place for people living on both sides of the border. A majority of the commercial outlets, restaurants, taco shops, and ice cream stores are arranged around the plaza.

The plaza is the center of urban life for both Tecate and Tecatito since Tecate, California has never developed as a city. The fiestas and many social activities take place in Tecate, B.C. with people from both countries attending events such as Day of the Dead and Mexican Independence Day. The first houses were constructed around the plaza, on Avenida Hidalgo and after the 1930s next to the border. The people from the San Diego County's Mountain Empire region came to the fiestas and dances in Tecate, B.C. and the Mexicans went to visit friends and relatives from the nearby ranches in the region. Even musicians joined together in binational community celebrations.<sup>19</sup>

Some Americans who owned businesses in Mexico also lived in Tecate. Increasing distance from the plaza meant decreasing status in most Mexican cities and a lower economic position except in cases like Tecate where moving closer to the border line was a matter of practicality for people living on one side and working on the other.

During the Prohibition era, border city economies again became tied to North-American tourist activity. However, other local factors such as a beer industry in Tecate and highway construction promoted by the national government all across the borderland region contributed to economic growth. The population in Tecate, B.C. in 1921, when it became a port of entry, was 493 people. In 1930, during the Depression era, there were 566 inhabitants and by 1960, there were 7,074. The population doubled by 1970 to 14,738 as a result of Maquiladora program and again the population doubled in 1980 to 30,540. The 1990 census reported 51,946 people residing in Tecate, B.C.<sup>20</sup>

## IMMIGRATION POLICIES AND THE BORDER CROSSING IN TECATE

There were very few federal laws dealing with immigration into the U.S. prior to the late nineteenth century, and those tended to address immigration from Europe or Asia at seaports.

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<sup>19</sup> Summers. Op. Cit. p. 21.

<sup>20</sup> Arreola. Op. Cit. pp.24, 25, 28,29.

The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and Alien Contract Labor laws of 1885 and 1887 prohibited certain laborers from immigrating to the U.S.<sup>21</sup>

When California was admitted to the Union on September 28, 1850, tariff collections in the new state, formerly administered by U.S. military authorities, came under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Custom Service. San Diego became the headquarters of a Customs collection district, which initially covered the entire southern portion of the state.

In 1885, when licit and illicit traffic grew in the port and at the boundary line, two horse mounted inspectors on temporary assignment were not enough to control it. Business fell off in San Diego as a result of the growth of Los Angeles' commerce. The borderland started taking a greater share of local resources and personnel, first at Tijuana and then, at Campo, Jacumba, Calexico, Tecate, and Andrade, California as well as other remote and isolated spots. Facilities in these stations at that time were a little more than encampments.<sup>22</sup>

In 1891, federal law provided for the inspection of immigrants arriving at land border ports. The Immigration Bureau took charge of regulating immigration. It opened two immigration ports of entry along the border between 1891-92. In 1893, there was just one immigrant inspector along the U.S.-Mexico border stationed in El Paso, Texas.<sup>23</sup>

Deputy Collector/Inspector, Ralph Conklin was assigned in 1891 to patrol the mountainous area around Campo. He worked out of his home without official Customs facilities. From the Campo station, horse mounted inspectors rode to both Tecate, ten miles to the west, and to Jacumba, twenty miles to the east, to man the gates there on alternate days. This work was very dangerous as the serious beating Inspector Ralph Conklin by cattle smugglers proved in 1894.<sup>24</sup>

In 1899, there were just four U.S. immigration inspectors working along the Mexican Border. They staffed ports of entry at Nogales, Arizona, El Paso, and Laredo, Texas and at Piedras Negras, Mexico.<sup>25</sup> By 1905, the border between Baja California, Mexico and California, United States became one of the main zones of action for smuggling Chinese.<sup>26</sup> Although, the Bureau of Immigration's mission at this time concentrated primarily on enforcement of the Chinese

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<sup>21</sup> Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Service webpage. "Overview of INS History." <http://immigration.gov/graphics/aboutus/history/articles/oview.htm> (10/5/2003) p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> Brown, Jim. Riding the Line: The United States Customs Service in San Diego, 1885-1930 A Documentary History. Department of the Treasury. United States Customs Service. Historical Study # 15. (Washington D. C:1991), p 32.

<sup>23</sup> Bureau. Op Cit. pp. 3-4.

<sup>24</sup> Brown, Jim. Op. Cit. pp. 22 and 35.

<sup>25</sup> Bureau. Op. Cit. pp.3-4.

<sup>26</sup> Taylor Hansen, Lawrence Douglas. "El Contrabando de Chinos en la Frontera de las Californias durante el porfiriato (1876-1911). Migraciones Internacionales Vol. 1. Num. 3. (Tijuana, B.C.: 2002) p. 27.

exclusion laws, their duties expanded with the Bureau's introduction of standardized forms and procedures at Mexican Border ports. These new procedures along with the Chinese Exclusion Act acquired field operatives who worked under the jurisdiction of the Collectors of Customs in the border ports. The "Chinese Inspectors" in San Diego, had the responsibility of protecting 180 miles of border land, in addition to implementing the Bureau's new standardized procedures. The new practices were to determine whether a given alien was subject to the head tax placed on arriving immigrants. Those who paid the head tax were counted as "statistical" entries and port officials reported their admission to the Bureau for inclusion in federal immigration statistics. U.S., Canadian, Mexican, and Cuban citizens were excluded from the head tax and were considered "non-statistical" entries, and therefore were not recorded as part of federal immigration statistics.<sup>27</sup>

Ships sailing from China docked in San Francisco where passengers were refused entry under the terms of the Exclusion Act. The vessels then went to Ensenada or Mazatlan ports in Mexico, where the Chinese disembarked and crossed the border in wagons and or foot at night through remote places to enter the U.S. with the help of smugglers. The Chinese inspectors had to ride horse back over rough country, night or day to stop them. Just one customs inspector was stationed at Campo to stop the illegal immigrants who would cross at any point between Ensenada and Campo with no physical barriers to really stop them. In 1902, there were four Customs officers stationed along the border line, two at Tijuana, four miles from the coast, one at Campo, sixty miles east, and one at Calexico, one hundred and thirty miles east.<sup>28</sup>

The authorities of the North District of Baja California tried to cooperate with Americans to stop the smuggling of Chinese. However tensions arose when the U.S. Immigration Service sent agents into Mexican territory. The Mexican government complained of violations to national sovereignty and of kidnapping acts. The trafficking of Chinese was not interrupted until the 1910-20 decade when the Revolutionary Movement in the North of Mexico and World War I closed the traditional routes used by smugglers.<sup>29</sup>

The horse mounted inspectors on the U.S.-Mexican border faced duties as daunting as any Customs officer has ever confronted. Perennially understaffed, they were paid three dollars per day plus one dollar for the feeding and maintenance of their horses, which they themselves had to provide.

The mounted inspectors worked under the Customs Border Patrol, originally established in 1853. The title endured for eighty years, until 1933, when these personnel were designated "Customs Port Inspectors." By this time, most Customs ground transport was replaced by automobile. Nevertheless, certain terrain was still inaccessible to cars, and the Service kept a dozen mounted

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<sup>27</sup> Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services, Early Immigrant Inspection Along the US/Mexican Border. February 2003 [article on-line]; available from <http://uscis.gov/graphics/aboutus/history/articles/MBTEXT.htm>; Internet; accessed 13 February 2004.

<sup>28</sup> Brown, Jim. Op. Cit. pp. 21-22, 24.

<sup>29</sup> Taylor Hansen. Op. Cit. p. 27

inspectors, who patrolled points along the border between Arizona and Mexico. In 1936, the Port Inspectors came under the jurisdiction of the Customs Investigative Division.<sup>30</sup>

Charles Cameron signed on with the Customs Service in 1905 and spent thirty years working in Southern California and Arizona. In 1940, Cameron's life as a mounted inspector was described in a personal interview, as a vanished Southwest full of stagecoaches, U.S. Army "bluecoats," Indians, outlaws, gunplay and frontier justice. Cameron was born in San Francisco in 1863 from Scottish parents and moved to Campo, California in 1868 and later to San Jose, near Tecate. San Jose was below the border in Baja California. In 1874, his family moved near Campo to raise sheep and later they went into the cattle business.

Cameron did blacksmithing at Campo for seven years with the Gaskill Brothers before he went to the Customs Service. In 1878, the Campo store owned by Luman and Silas Gaskill was attacked by Mexican bandits. The store carried tobacco, groceries of all kinds, harnesses, collars, tools, implements, saddles, spurs, horseshoes etc. There was a band of Mexican outlaws in the region stealing horses in Baja California and driving them north and on their return stealing good American horses and selling them in California.

Enforcement of the Exclusion Act was the principal impetus behind the establishment of new duty stations at Campo, Tecate, and Calexico, California. Cameron was an expert tracker and helped to catch and deport several hundred Chinese and other aliens, smugglers and guides. Cattle and horse smuggling was also a common concern at that time, as well as the crossing of stray animals. In his interview, Cameron alludes to the problem of controlling the movement of livestock across the U.S.-Mexican border. Farm animals were apt to stray across international boundaries and far too frequently they crossed the border with human assistance, which constituted criminal misconduct.<sup>31</sup>

The Campo port of entry was relocated around 1918 to Tecate, California. The local residents erected a modest building for Customs on their own initiative and without cost to the government, in an area now known as "the adobes."<sup>32</sup>

The outbreak of World War I reduced immigration from Europe, but also imposed new responsibilities on the Immigration Service. Internment of enemy aliens became a service function. Passport requirements disrupted routine traffic across U.S. land borders with Canada and Mexico, and the Immigration Service consequently began to issue Border Crossing Cards.

After 1917, higher head tax and literacy requirements caused more people to try illegal entry. Mass immigration resumed after the war, and the U.S. Congress responded with a new immigration policy, the national origin quota system. Established by Immigration Acts of 1921 and 1924, the system limited immigration by assigning each nationality a quota based on its

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<sup>30</sup> Brown, Jim. Op. Cit. pp. 51-52.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. pp. 54-59, 63.

<sup>32</sup> Brown, Jim. pp.36-37.

representation in past U.S. census figures. Although the illegal trafficking of Chinese restarted lightly during the 1920s, the enactment of the 1921 Quotas Law, restricting the number of immigrants of each country to a determined number, provoked an increase of illegal European immigrants that were trying to cross into the U.S. The difficulties experienced while trying to stop the new immigration flux replaced Chinese smuggling as the Immigration Services primary problem.

After 1924, the number of European immigrants that entered the United States decreased substantially while the number and proportion of Mexicans in relation to the total volume of immigrants increased. As a result, the U.S. Congress established the Border Patrol in order to stop the problem of undocumented Mexicans.<sup>33</sup>

During the Great Depression, when few wanted to immigrate to the U.S. and as jobs dried up, Mexicans in the U.S. returned to Mexico. Over 400,000 Mexican aliens and their American – born children, were repatriated during a decade. Some of them settled next to the border waiting for an opportunity to come back.<sup>34</sup>

On the U.S.-Mexican border, mounted inspectors were overburdened by the extra responsibilities of having to do both Customs and Immigration work since no Immigration and Naturalization Service existed in the San Diego region. The town of Tecate, B.C. was the second largest on the border, and everybody could cross the line on foot into the U.S. at almost any point they chose with just Inspector Cameron available to stop them.

Imports at Tecate amounted to practically nothing in 1919, but the traffic there was quite heavy since most of U.S. exports in that area went through Tecate. In 1920, the automobile became a law enforcement tool for immigration inspectors but also a weapon against them when they were run down by smugglers who used them to make their escape. As a result, cement blocks started to be used on each side of the road at various places where traffic was inspected.<sup>35</sup> At that time automobiles as well as horses were also traded or stolen and smuggled through the border.

When General Abelardo L. Rodriguez was governor of the Northern District of Baja California (1923-1929), the Volstead Law (January 1920, December 1933), prohibiting alcoholic beverages was enacted, and as a result an economic boom started in Baja California. The income from the alcohol business helped Rodriguez build many public works. Numerous cantinas, bars, and restaurants were created in Baja California, which were mostly owned by Americans. Tourists would cross the border to drink in Tijuana, Tecate, Ensenada, and Mexicali. However, the beginning of the economic crisis of 1929 and the reestablishment of the liquor sales in the U.S.

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<sup>33</sup> Taylor, Op. Cit. pp.26-27

<sup>34</sup> Reims, David M. "Recent Immigration Policy: An Analysis." In Chiswick, Barry R. The Gateway US Immigration Issues and Policies. American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. (Washington D.C.:1982), p 15-19.

<sup>35</sup> Brown, Jim. Op. Cit. pp. 72,75, 76,78.

in 1933, led to the disappearance of tourists that crossed the international border to drink in Mexico.<sup>36</sup> During U.S. Prohibition, wine was also produced in Tecate in the Tanama, San Valentin and Casa Blanca Wineries, and in Rancho La Puerto. Their fields in Tecate were filled with grapes, olives, and oak trees.<sup>37</sup>

With the upsurge in smuggling, San Diego's Customs officers increasingly relied on motor transport to patrol the border. Understaffed, and with incidental responsibility for enforcing U.S. immigration laws, the inspectors were so overwhelmed, that even dull smugglers could figure out a reasonable and safe system of getting across the border line.<sup>38</sup>

American women started hiding contraband such as liquor under their clothes. Under the impetus of the Volstead Act and a need to inspect women crossing the border, the first woman inspector was designated. At this time, Chinese men dressed as women were also detected crossing the border in Tecate.<sup>39</sup>

In 1932, Mexican repatriates expelled from the U.S. as a result of the economic crisis crossed into Tecate, B.C. Entire families returning with their furniture. The San Diego and Arizona railroad was full of people mostly coming from Los Angeles. At that time, there were only two small hotels, a cantina, and a restaurant in Tecate, which were located at the end of Avenida Hidalgo. In Tecate, California there were three stores. Two of which were next to the border. These stores were owned by Mr. Johnson, Mr. Valencia, and Mr. Lyn.

Mexicans crossed the border to go to the stores in Tecatito or to go to stores in Tijuana or San Diego. Almost everything that came to Tecate, B.C. at that time was from the U.S. Although vegetables and fruits were produced in Tecate, people preferred to buy them in the U.S. Additionally, it was common to buy clothes, shoes and other items through Sears and Roebuck catalogues located in the stores in Tecate, California. Local residents would go to Johnson's store to order and receive products from New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Other products and mail came through the express service on the train.<sup>40</sup>

In 1933, the Volstead Law ended and the mounted inspectors who had patrolled the border at the turn of the century gave way to an inspection force located at fixed duty stations. A marked improvement in the District's physical plant took place as permanent facilities were built. The Tecate U.S. Inspection Station was relocated in 1931 to its present location.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Martinez, Pablo L. Historia de Baja California. Patronato del Estudiante Baja Californiano. (Mexico:1956) pp.541-544.

<sup>37</sup> Espinoza Valle, Víctor Alejandro. Don Crispín: Una Crónica Fronteriza. El Colegio de la Frontera Norte. (Tijuana, Baja California:1992),p.90.

<sup>38</sup> Brown, Jim. Op. Cit. p. 73.

<sup>39</sup> Brown, Jim. Op. Cit. p. 72

<sup>40</sup> Espinoza Valle. Op. Cit. pp. 86,87.

<sup>41</sup> Brown, Jim. Op. Cit. pp. 80-81.

At the beginning of the 1930s, it was still easy for Mexicans to cross the border through Tecate into the U.S. without a passport. Illegal border crossers would cross at night through a wire fence where no surveillance existed.<sup>42</sup> By the 1930s, patrol agents used cars, trucks, motor boats, and radios to help enforce illegal crossings. In the 1940s they added helicopters and airplanes.

During World War II, the acute manpower shortage created by the war opened the door for the use of temporary workers from Mexico. The administration negotiated in 1942 the Bracero Agreement with the Mexican government. *Braceros* (laborers) were also recruited from the Bahamas, Barbados, Canada, Jamaica, and Newfoundland, but the bulk of the *Braceros* were from Mexico.

By the 1940s, there was a repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Acts. The Chinese-American community had changed. It was smaller and no longer perceived as a threat to the U.S. working force. They learned English and adapted many American ways. The pro-China foreign policy of the Roosevelt Administration encouraged Americans to look differently at China. When Japan attacked the U.S. in 1941, China became an ally. Congress repealed the Chinese Exclusion Act without many debates and traditional west coast opposition to the Chinese largely decreased.<sup>43</sup>

The threat of War in Europe, and a growing perception of immigration as a national security rather than an economic issue, affected the Immigration and Naturalization Service in 1940 which was moved from the Department of Labor to the Department of Justice.<sup>44</sup>

The U.S. government approved the recruitment of Mexican workers during the First and Second World Wars to obtain additional farm and railroad workers (The Bracero Program) to replace U.S. workers that had gone to war. Both wartime *Bracero* programs were ended unilaterally by the U.S. in 1964, in part because U.S. labor and civil rights groups argued that the Mexican migrants depressed wages and increased unemployment for similar U.S. workers. As a result illegal immigration as a national concern grew again.

After the number of Mexican illegal aliens apprehended grew to more than 500,000 in 1952, the INS launched "Operation Wetback."<sup>45</sup> It was described as a Service-wide effort to sweep down, through California and Texas, and "drive" illegal aliens out of the country.

American agriculture continued to import seasonal labor from Mexico, as they had during the war, under a 1951 formal agreement between the U.S. and Mexico that made the Bracero Program permanent. The program expanded in the 1950s, when irrigation opened new land for

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<sup>42</sup> Espinoza Valle. Op. Cit p. 83.

<sup>43</sup> Reims, David. Op. Cit. pp. 15-19.

<sup>44</sup> Bureau. Op. Cit. pp. 3,4.

<sup>45</sup> U.S. Department of Justice. Immigration & Naturalization Service. An Immigrant Nation: United States Regulation of Immigration, 1798-1991.U.S.: 1991, p. 23.

farming in the southwest. During its peak in 1956, the program recruited 445,197 workers. Although the *braceros* were expected to remain temporarily, many stayed, along with their family members. Although growers fought to retain the cheap labor supply, Congress refused to extend the program past 1964.<sup>46</sup>

The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 revised the preference structure by creating separate categories for skilled workers and for relatives of citizens and resident aliens. This law expanded security procedures and investigation of immigrants and aliens. It also removed all racial barriers to naturalization, and granted the same preferences to husbands as it did to wife's of citizens. Hundreds of thousands of displaced persons and refugees had come to the U.S. after World War II from communist countries. This encouraged American fears of communism both abroad and at home.

In late 1965, the law set numerical limits to replace the quota system and gave preferences or priority to family members of citizens or permanent residents. It also gave preference to immigrants with skills in demand in the U.S. A preference was also established for conditional entrants, which included refugees. As a result, a rising number of illegal entries appeared after 1966.

Border problems became more complex in the 1970s when the business of alien smuggling began to involve drug smuggling as well. The use of electronic surveillance equipment increased. By the 1980s deteriorating economic conditions and social and political unrest in many Central and South American countries pushed migrants towards the United States. In response, manpower from INS and the Border patrol was increased and was shifted to problem areas.

Since 1980, immigration laws have addressed the policies towards refugees, control over illegal immigration, criteria for selection of immigrants, and exclusion and deportation of ineligible aliens.<sup>47</sup>

By the 1980s, only 12.5 percent of legal immigrants came from Europe or Canada, while 47.7 percent were Latin American or Caribbean, and 39 percent were from Asian countries. Of those Latin American/Caribbean entrants, 68.7 percent were from Mexico between 1990 and 1994. Persons who entered the United States illegally or who entered legally and then violated the terms of their visas constituted another major flow. Refugees and asylees are other group of immigrants to the U.S. The vast majority since 1945 came from Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.<sup>48</sup> By 1990 there were more legal immigrants from Mexico than from all Europe

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<sup>46</sup> Baker González, Susan et al. "U. S. Immigration policies and Trends: The Growing Importance of Migration from Mexico" in Suárez-Orozco Marcelo M. ed. Crossings: Mexican Immigration in Interdisciplinary Perspectives. Harvard University Press. (Cambridge, Massachusetts:1998). p. 87.

<sup>47</sup> U.S. Department of Justice. An Immigrant Nation: United States Regulation of Immigration, 1798-1991.(U.S.:1991), pp 22-25.

<sup>48</sup> Gonzalez Baker. Op. Cit. p. 83.

combined. More than one-quarter of all Mexican immigrants to the U.S. arrived in the last five years.<sup>49</sup>

Since that time, both legal and undocumented migration from Mexico has grown steadily. The legal population, in particular, grew dramatically in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act legalization provisions conferred legal status on nearly 3 million undocumented immigrants, overwhelmingly of Mexican origin, who had been working in agriculture or living illegally in the U.S. before 1982.<sup>50</sup>

In 1994 Operation Gatekeeper was implemented as a 300 million dollar effort by the Border Patrol to fortify the San Diego County segment of the U.S.-Mexico border through manpower, hardware, and technological enhancements. More than 2000 Border patrol agents were stationed in the San Diego sector to carry out Gatekeeper (where 45% of illegal immigrant apprehensions along the border occurred in the 1993 fiscal year). Gatekeeper has sought to force attempted crossings into the much less hospitable mountainous terrain in the eastern portion of San Diego County and into the desert of neighboring Imperial County.<sup>51</sup> This policy has pushed crossers to Tecate and to Mexicali and resulted in many deaths for those who are abandoned in the desert by smugglers.

The Illegal Immigration Responsibility Act of 1996 authorized nearly a doubling of the Border Patrol by the year 2001, increasing the number of agents from 5175 to 10,000. The new legislation also called for additional measures to toughen border enforcement, including the construction of a controversial 14-mile long triple metal fence built south of San Diego and increased penalties for alien smuggling. The main goal was to discourage unauthorized entry along the southwest border. This was achieved by increasing the fencing, surveillance equipment, and law enforcement personnel. In 1996, INS extended Gatekeeper to include the 66 westernmost miles.<sup>52</sup>

In response to the new stricter measures to protect the border following the terrorist attacks in the U.S. on September 11, 2001, it is harder for legal and illegal aliens to cross the border. Many illegal workers are now staying in the U.S. instead of coming back after the farm season as they had done in the past. Moreover, they are bringing their relatives from Mexico to live with them, adding pressures to cities infrastructure, welfare, medical, and school systems and creating settlements of poverty in many areas of California.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Suárez-Orozco Marcelo M. ed. Crossings: Mexican Immigration in Interdisciplinary Perspectives. Harvard University Press. (Cambridge, Massachusetts:1998), p. 7.

<sup>50</sup> Gónzales Baker, Op. Cit. p. 87.

<sup>51</sup> Cornelius, Wayne. "The Structural Embeddedness of Demand for Mexican Immigrant Labor: New Evidence from California," in Suárez-Orozco. Op. Cit. p. 129.

<sup>52</sup> Andreas, Peter. "The US Immigration Control Offensive : Constructing an Image of Order on the Southwest Border," in Suárez-Orozco. Op. Cit. p. 345

<sup>53</sup> Porter, Eduardo. "Tighter Border Yields Odd Result: More Illegals Stay." Wall Street Journal. Friday, October 10, 2003. p. A1.

The INS continues growing and redefining functions under a new protection of the border policy, which emphasizes the security of the nation. The construction of fences along the U.S.-Mexico border, more technology and longer lines of cars and people waiting for inspection, is the new image of border crossings after 2001. This contrasts in the case of Tecate, with the traditional relaxed atmosphere that characterized its border crossing for a century.

#### BRIEF HISTORY OF DEPRESSION-ERA FEDERAL BUILDING PROGRAMS

The U.S. Department of Treasury, Office of Supervising Architect designed and oversaw construction of all federal buildings throughout the nation from 1852 to 1939, when the duties of the Office were transferred to the Federal Works Agency, Public Buildings Administration.<sup>54</sup> In 1949, the duties were again transferred, but into the newly established General Services Administration where the Public Buildings Program continues today. The Public Buildings Act of 1887, 1913, 1926, 1949, et. al. authorized the Department of Treasury and subsequent agencies to acquire land, allocate funds, and design and oversee the construction of federal buildings. However, the Public Buildings Act of 1926 precipitated a period of building construction that was unprecedented in the U.S.<sup>55</sup> The bill was approved by President Coolidge on May 25, 1926 and “was the beginning of the great building program that is the wonder of the world.”<sup>56</sup> Congress allocated over \$150 million to accelerate the program, which became the impetus for the \$300 million development of the Federal Triangle in the District of Columbia.<sup>57</sup> Supervising architect, James A. “Judge” Wetmore is credited with overseeing the construction of more federal buildings during his tenure, than were erected throughout the nation prior to 1915.<sup>58</sup>

James A. Wetmore entered federal service in 1885 as a court stenographer and in 1893 was transferred to the Treasury Department from the Interior. He served as head of the Treasury’s Law and Records Division from 1896-1911, when he became Executive Officer in charge of non-technical operations. While in this position, Wetmore began conducting the duties of Oscar Wenderoth, Supervising Architect (1912-1915) and by 1915 after Wenderoth’s resignation; Wetmore became Acting Supervising Architect.<sup>59</sup> He served in this capacity from 1915 to

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<sup>54</sup> U.S. Department of Treasury. Office of the Curator. The 1891 Drafting Studio of the Office of Supervising Architect. n/d [article on-line]; available from <http://www.ustreas.gov/offices/management/curator/exhibitions/drafting/1891.pdf>; Internet; accessed 8 October 2003.

<sup>55</sup> Public Buildings Act, 1926 is noted as Elliott-Fernald Act of 1926 by GSA in <http://www.gsa.gov> and the Keys-Elliott Act of 1926, in NPS Bulletin 13 Appendix D. p. 13.

<sup>56</sup> The Federal Architect, January 1935. Page 11.

<sup>57</sup> U.S. Department of Interior. National Park Service. The Federal Triangle Transforms the Avenue’s Southside. n/d [article on-line]; available from <http://www.nps.gov>; Internet; accessed 17 October 2003.

<sup>58</sup> Federal Architect, April 1940, page 8.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

1934.<sup>60</sup> During Wetmore's tenure, he supported Treasury Secretary William McAdoo's development of a federal building classification system, which categorized federal buildings according to the level of annual postal receipts, location within a city, and the building's inclusion of a post office.<sup>61</sup> This classification system was developed as an efficiency model that would help save costs generated in constructing federal building projects. Additionally, this system was to "provide a rational system of uniformity and business economy in designing and constructing federal buildings" suitable to the public needs without wasting government money.<sup>62</sup> While James Wetmore extended the idea of standardization of building design into the furnishings and maintenance of the buildings, he also recognized a need to prepare individual drawings for each building project that would consider site-specific details, such as topography.<sup>63</sup>

With the onslaught of the Depression, the federal building program became a prominent force in stimulating economic recovery under both the Hoover and Roosevelt Administrations. The enactment of the 1931 Federal Employment Stabilization Act, which required advanced planning of federal building projects, in conjunction with the Public Buildings Act of 1926, allowed Depression-era federal building programs to start without much delay.<sup>64</sup> In 1933, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) was established by the National Industrial Recovery Act.<sup>65</sup> Work relief programs administered through FERA and its State counterpart (SERA) put thousands of the unemployed to work erecting public buildings and constructing other public improvement projects throughout the nation. The emergency relief programs helped establish the Public Works Administration (PWA) in June 1933, which was a permanent work relief program developed for skilled laborers.<sup>66</sup> Another program established by FERA was the Civil Works Administration (CWA), which was a temporary work relief program that provided the unemployed work during the winter months of 1933-34. This program was the precursor to the Works Progress Administration (WPA) established in 1935 as a permanent work relief program that lasted until 1943.<sup>67</sup> Depression-era federal building programs amounted to thousands of public buildings and other public improvement projects throughout the nation. Combined, these programs enrolled over 2 million workers, and spent over \$6 billion dollars on public infrastructure.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt. "Executive Order No. 6419 Exemption of James A. Wetmore from Compulsory Retirement for Age." November 9, 1933.

<sup>61</sup> Lee Antoinette J. Architects to the Nation: The Rise and Decline of the Supervising Architect's Office. Oxford UP. 2000, page 224.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid. pages 225-226

<sup>63</sup> Ibid. page 226

<sup>64</sup> U.S. Department of Interior. National Park Service. NPS Bulletin 13: How to Apply the National Register Criteria to Post Offices. 1994.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid

<sup>66</sup> Ibid

<sup>67</sup> Mintz, S. Digital History. 2003 [article on-line]; available from <http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu>. Internet; accessed 22 October 2003.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid

The Tecate U.S. Inspection Station is one of the last projects implemented during James A. Wetmore's tenure as Acting Supervising Architect for the Department of Treasury. The Inspection Station reflects commitments established by the building program to design and furnish buildings in an efficient manner consistent with the program's goals. While it is unknown whether CWA workers helped to construct the Inspection Station Complex, it is plausible since the erection of the complex coincided with the winter months of 1933-34, the same time the CWA program was enacted.

### PART III. SPECIFIC SITE HISTORY

Louise A. Simon, Superintendent of Architectural Division, U.S. Department of Treasury approved the architectural drawings for the Tecate U.S. Inspection Station on October 25, 1932 under James A. Wetmore, Acting Supervising Architect.<sup>69</sup> By November 1933, shortly after the dedication of the Calexico, U.S. Inspection Station, construction began on the Inspection Station in Tecate. J.E. Bogue, Associated Contractors of Los Angeles, was reported as the contractor for both stations.<sup>70</sup> The U.S. Inspection Station was dedicated on December 1, 1934. The celebration was reported in the San Diego Union the next day as;

#### TECATE CUSTOMS HOUSE DEDICATED IN BORDER PARTY

With more than 100 person present, the new American customs house at Tecate was dedicated yesterday afternoon. Several prominent Mexicans from Tecate participated in the ceremony.

The new building, which cost \$51,000, had been one year in construction. It is modern in every detail and has facilities for customs, immigration and health quarantine officers. Chris Nelson, president of the Campo chamber of commerce, had charge of the dedication.

Among the speakers, all of whom expressed a close feeling of friendship between the United States and Mexico, were Assemblymen Charles Stream; Marco Martinez, San Diego chamber of commerce, W.S. Wolin; immigration inspector, who was born in Pine Valley and reared in San Diego county; Refugio Del Rio, mayor of Tecate; Fortine Flores, Mexican collector of customs at Tecate; Manuel Rivas, manager of the Mexican Malt Co.; Charles Salter, deputy collector of customs for the Los Angeles district; Joseph L. Long, oldest resident of Tecate valley, and W.B. George, San Diego collector of customs.

George said that Tecate was made an American Port of Entry 13 years ago when the customs house was moved from Campo. He said that business at Tecate so far this year was more than double the amount

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<sup>69</sup> Louise A. Simon, was the last Supervising Architect for the U.S. Department of Treasury. He served between 1934-1939.

<sup>70</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, U.S. Border Station, Tecate, California. March 20, 1991.

transacted there last year. George was warm in praise of Gov. Augustin Olaches of Baja California. In closing, George presented the key to the building to William Hewson, collector in charge at Tecate.

The Inspection Station complex is located on a little less than an acre and is situated in an east-west configuration. The complex consists of the main U.S. Inspection Station with an attached public health wing (south wing) and an attached inspection shed (north wing). South of the main building and slightly recessed are two separate buildings that are referenced on the original plans as the Immigration Residence and the Customs Residence. A 60' wide concrete paved area is between the Residences and the border line. The buildings are examples of a regional adaptation of the Spanish Colonial Revival-style and possess characteristic features such as, red tile roofs, smooth stucco walls, arched openings, and multi-paned windows. Modest in style and detailing, these buildings continue to retain their historic fabric and overall integrity.

According to the original drawings from 1932, the complex was built as planned excluding a separate garage building illustrated behind the inspection shed (north wing).<sup>71</sup> It appears that the garage was never constructed as a separate building based on as-built drawings prepared in 1956 that indicate that the separate garage building was not constructed, as well as aerial photographs taken of the site prior to 1956. The complex has undergone some alterations since its original inception. Two of the most obvious exterior modifications include removal of the porte-cochere on the west elevation of the main building, which was replaced with a steel-framed canopy in ca. 1962 and the removal of the wood paneled overhead doors at the west elevation of the inspection shed (north wing). These doors were replaced with windows and a door sometime after 1950.<sup>72</sup> The south window openings on the east elevation of the inspection shed (north wing) also have been filled-in and/or replaced with smaller windows with fill. The date of this modification is unknown. Additionally, a metal vent was added to the chimney between ca. 1935-50, and the porches on the residences have been enclosed.<sup>73</sup>

#### PART IV. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION<sup>74</sup>

##### U.S. Inspection Station

The U.S. Inspection Station is an L-shape, load-bearing brick building with smooth plaster on the exterior. The main building is two stories with a one-story, side gable north wing (inspection

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<sup>71</sup> Names associated with the original drawings approved on October 25, 1932 include J.A. Wetmore, Acting Supervising Architect; Approved drawings by Louise A. Simon Superintendent of Architectural Division; T.G. Brooks Superintendent of Structural Division; and N.S. Thompson, Superintendent of Mechanical Division.

<sup>72</sup> Copy of photograph "La Garita De USA Tecate, B.C. ca. 1950" Courtesy of Ceutec, Centro Culturo Tecate October 3, 2003.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> The physical description is based on the National Register of Historic Places nomination, *U.S. Inspection Station, Tecate, San Diego County, California* March 20, 1991, and confirmed with site visits conducted by the Project Architect, original drawings, historic photographs, and illustrations.

shed) and a one-story, front gable, south wing (public health wing). The main building has a full basement. The foundations are concrete. The two-story main building has a medium pitched roof with red terra-cotta clay barrel/mission tiles set in irregular patterns. Both the north and south wings have composition shingle roofs with red clay tile coping along the roofline. A terra-cotta cartouche with ribbon and shield, is centrally located above each of the north and south wings at the roofline. Elevations have copper hanging gutters and downspouts. Attached to the west façade is a ca. 1962 porte-cochere canopy with matte tan tile on the columns at each bay and island. The canopy spans over two traffic lanes and narrows to one traffic lane in front of the inspection shed (north wing). The main entrance is centrally located and slightly recessed in the west elevation of the main two-story building. The entry has wood double doors with six lights, four wood panels, and a twelve-light fixed transom. A twelve-over-twelve double-hung sash window and a ca. 1962 guard booth flank the entrance. A window was removed from behind the guard booth to provide a booth entry.

The inspection shed (north wing) and public health wing (south wing) have four 6-inch setbacks measuring 8' x 11'. The setbacks in the public health wing contain three twelve-over-twelve windows and one nine light, four panel wood door with a four light transom above. The setbacks in the inspection shed were originally paneled wood overhead doors, which were removed sometime after 1950 and replaced with two ten light pared casements; a twenty light fixed window with an eight light casement on each side; and a wood door with glass lights.

The original wood-framed porte-cochere canopy, as illustrated in the original 1932 architectural drawings, consisted of a series of four 4'-4" wide concrete islands, with 7'-6" wide bays that ran parallel to the west elevation of the main building. Each island contained four concrete columns covered with 6" square matte tan colored tiles and decorative terra-cotta caps. Two pilasters of similar design were attached to the main building. The columns supported a concrete beam and wood joist faced with concrete. Additionally, the concrete had tile inserts and a terra cotta cornice. Concrete balusters were placed around the perimeter of the top with wrought iron railing and two flag poles placed on top of the two front piers.

The east elevation of the main building contains a pair of twelve-over-twelve windows that flank two four-over-four windows and a nine light, two panel wood door. A wood canopy found with tile and supported by decorative wood brackets is above the door. The second floor contains four nine-over-nine windows in the center, and a centralized stucco chimney. The east elevation of the inspection shed consists of four window openings, with the southernmost opening filled in. A nine-over-nine window and two three-over-three windows follow. The openings were all originally nine-over-nine.

The room projecting from the southeast corner of the public health building was originally a small room used for de-lousing. It is smooth stucco on three sides except for one door opening on the north wall. The remainder of the east elevation consists of a wood door flanked by a fixed panel on each side and an eight-over-eight transom light. A wood door and canopy are also overhead with a nine-over-nine window and a smaller three-over-three window to the north.

The south elevation includes six three-over-three windows and a wood panel door with a six-over-six hinged transom. Two concrete steps lead to the door from grade. A canopy finished with tile is above the door entry. A row of 6" square tiles that surround the door. An arched stucco parapet is above the door, and two two-over-two windows are located on the second floor of the main building at the north and south elevations.

The north elevation, primarily the public health wing, includes a wood door, with a canopy and tile trim. This is one three-over-three window to the east and three three-over-three windows to the west. The north elevation of the inspection shed includes a wood door with one three-over-three transom light, and canopy.

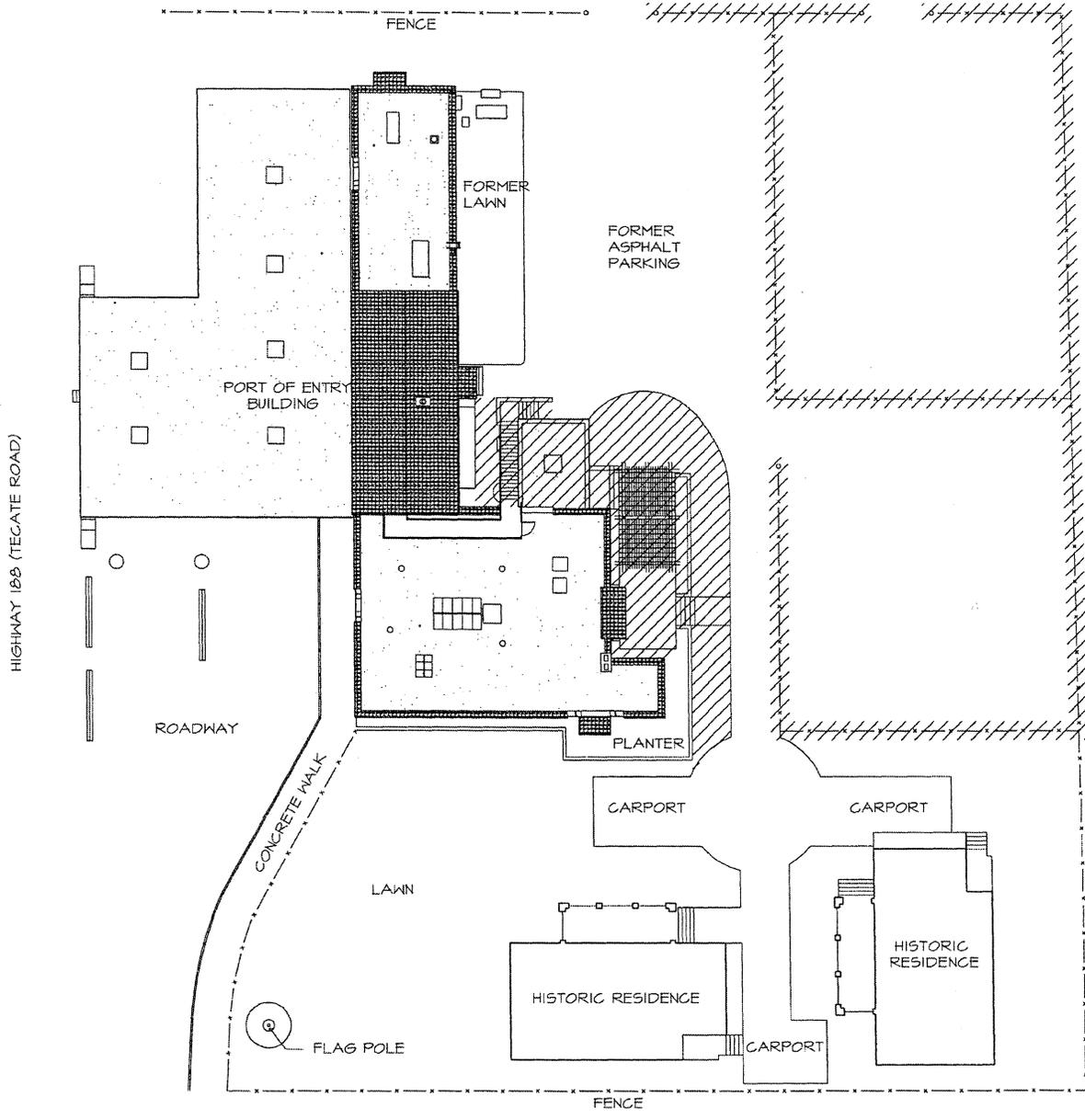
#### Immigration Residence and Customs Residence<sup>75</sup>

The Immigration and Customs Residences are identical in plan and elevation. They are situated perpendicular to each other, and south of the Inspection Station. The residences are small one-story, wood-framed and stucco, over basement with a concrete foundation. The roofs are low pitched gable covered in red barrel/mission tiles. The windows are double hung wood sash, six-over-six with wood trim. Exterior doors are nine light, two panel wood doors. The enclosed wood frame and stucco entrance porches are centered on the main elevations. The porches have three arched openings on the front and one on each side.

Adjacent to the front door on each side is a window. Another window is at each end of the front elevations. The original drawings show these windows as having wood shutters and flower boxes. Stucco chimneys are located slightly off-center on the front elevations. The rear elevation of each residence includes a small cutaway porch with two screened-in arched openings. The side elevations consist of two windows and circular wood-sash windows below the attic crawl spaces. Several of the windows have been replaced with wood louvers.

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<sup>75</sup> The physical description is based on the National Register of Historic Places nomination, U.S. Inspection Station, Tecate, San Diego County, California March 20, 1991, and confirmed with site visits conducted by the Project Architect, original drawings, historic photographs, and illustrations.

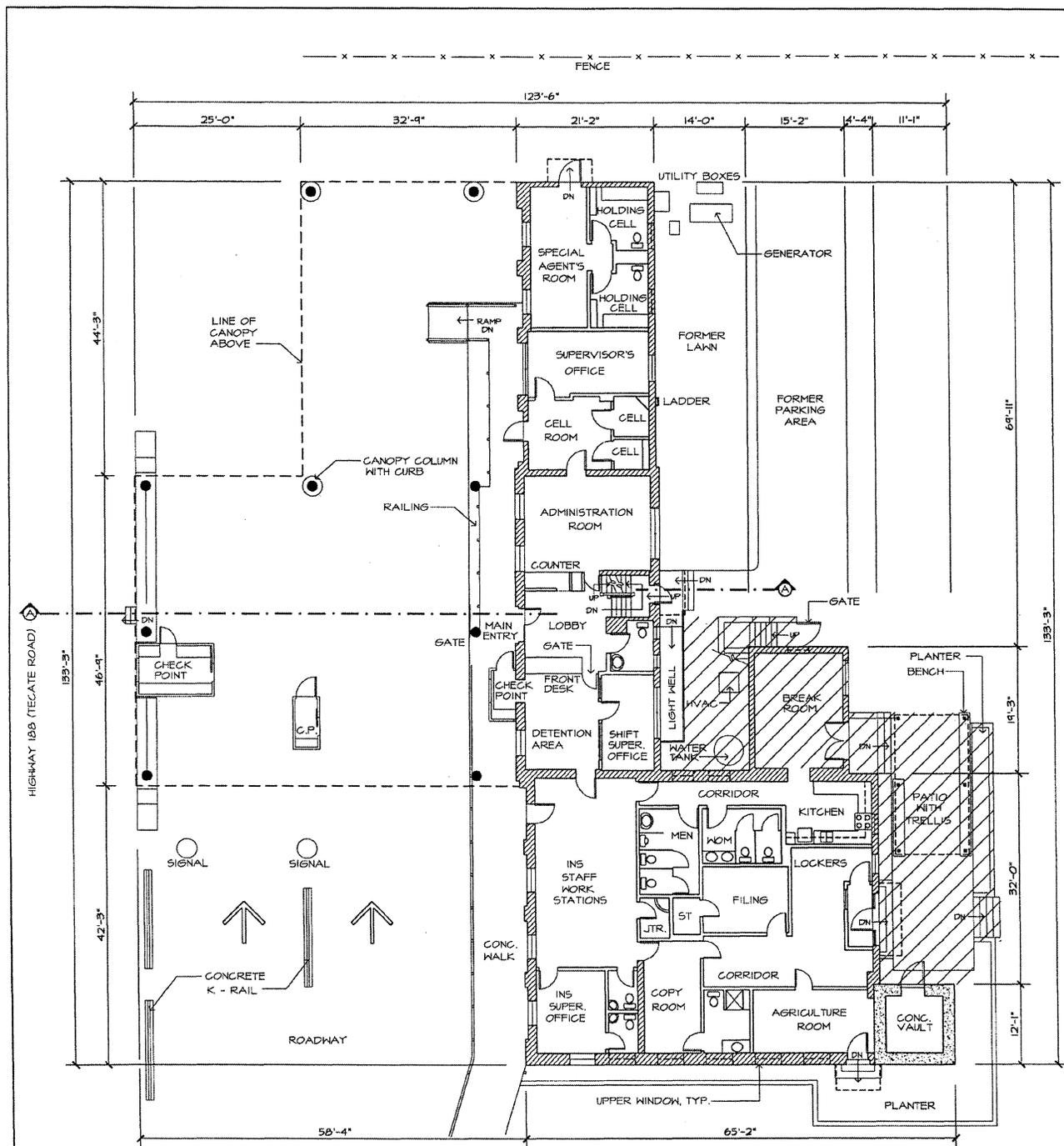


⊕ SITE PLAN

▨ RECENTLY REMOVED PORTIONS

DRAWN BY: MIKE GOETZ & RAHUL KINI. ARCHITECT MILFORD WAYNE DONALDSON, FAIA (2003)

NAME AND LOCATION OF STRUCTURE	SHEET	OF	SHEETS
U.S. INSPECTION STATION, TECATE TECATE, SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA	1	OF	2
	HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY CA - 2782		LIBRARY OF CONGRESS INDEX NUMBER



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

RECENTLY REMOVED PORTIONS

DRAWN BY: MIKE GOETZ & RAHUL KINI, ARCHITECT MILFORD WAYNE DONALDSON, FAIA (2003)

<p>NAME AND LOCATION OF STRUCTURE</p> <p>U.S. INSPECTION STATION, TECATE</p> <p>TECATE, SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA</p>	<p>SHEET 2 OF 2 SHEETS</p>	<p>HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY</p> <p>CA - 2782</p>	<p>LIBRARY OF CONGRESS INDEX NUMBER</p>
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## B. Supplemental Material

Two aerial photographs of site, one taken July 20, 1988 (Negative No. 72880-4), the other on February 26, 1992 (Negative No. 73863-1) by Jeran Aerographics, Inc., 2811 Dusk Drive, San Diego, CA 92139.

## PART VI. PROJECT INFORMATION

HABS documentation for the U.S. Inspection Station is mitigated recording required by a Memorandum of Agreement between the General Services Administration and the California State Office of Historic Preservation Officer. Documentation is being undertaken as part of planned alterations to the site for new facilities for Custom and Border Protection, U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Proposed alterations include the seismic retrofit to the U.S. Inspection Station main building and construction of a rear addition (east elevation). The proposed work also includes the removal of

the non-historic steel-framed porte-cochere located on the front of the building (west elevation) and reconstruction of the original wood-framed 1932 porte-cochere. The proposed rear addition will impact 32' of the existing historic fabric on the east elevation where the addition will connect to the original façade. The rear entry canopy, doors, and windows in this location will be removed. The majority of the existing interior walls, that were previously modified, will also be removed. Interior restoration will be made consistent with the original character of the building.

Architect Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA is the consulting firm to General Services Administration for the HABS documentation. Sub-consultants obtained by Architect Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA include Edward Gohlich for architectural photography services, and Maria Curry, for historic and ethnic research. Project management was undertaken by David Marshall, Project Architect. Architectural interns, Mike Goetz and Rahul Kini supervised by David Marshall, undertook measured drawings. Nicole J. Purvis, Preservation Planner, provided supplemental historical research and writing. Maria Curry, International Council of Monuments and Sites Baja California Representative, authored the HABS narrative documentation for Part I. Physical Setting, Part II. Historical Context and subsection Immigration Policies and the Border Crossing in Tecate on October 13, 2003.



Aerial photograph taken by Jeran Aero-Graphics, Inc. on July 20, 1988.



Aerial photograph taken by Jeran Aero-Graphics, Inc. on February 26, 1992.