

United States Helium Production Plant No. 1, Pressure Reducer
House, (Building No. 11)
(Federal Aviation Administration Southwest Regional Office)
4400 Blue Mound Road
Fort Worth
Tarrant County
Texas

HABS No. TX-3487-E

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY
Southwest System Support Office
National Park Service
P.O. Box 728
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

UNITED STATES HELIUM PRODUCTION PLANT No. 1
PRESSURE REDUCER HOUSE, (BUILDING NO. 11)

HABS No. TX-3487-E

LOCATION: 4400 Blue Mound Road, Ft. Worth, Tarrant County, Texas

USGS: Haltom City Quadrangle

UTM COORDINATES: 14.655340.3632750

ARCHITECT, BUILDER: United States Navy, Bureau of Yards and Docks

PRESENT OWNER: Federal Aviation Administration

PRESENT USE: Vacant

SIGNIFICANCE: Building 11 is significant under Criterion A, for its association with the United States Strategic Materials Program following World War I. Building 11 contained the valves that controlled the flow of natural gas into and out of the plant, vital steps in the extraction process. It retains its integrity of location, design, materials, setting, workmanship, feeling and association.

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Specification Number 3800, "Argon Production Plant at North Fort Worth, Texas," was created by the Navy Department, and released on February 15, 1919. It contained specifications for Building 11:

The pressure reducer house will be one story in height and shall have concrete walls, roof, and floor; steel sash, metal covered hinged doors; sheet metal work, ventilator, built-up roofing, hardware, painting, glazing, plumbing and lighting installation and mechanical equipment.

In 1921, the Bureau of Yards and Docks of the Navy Department published a book that included a detailed description of the buildings at the U.S. Helium Plant after they were constructed (Navy Department 1921:444-445). Building 11, the Pressure-Reducer House, contained the pressure-reducing valves used to control the flow of natural gas into and out of the helium plant. It was a one-story, concrete building, with steel sash. It measured 17' wide, 27' long, and 14', 6" tall (Navy Department 1921:445).

Alterations to the building include the removal of the original steel sash industrial windows, the openings of which were filled, and the addition of a metal entry porch in the 1980s.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS

Record Group 71, Entry 649. Bureau of Yards and Docks, Facility Blueprints. On microfilm file, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

B. HISTORIC VIEWS

Record Group 72, Entry 162, Boxes 1, 16, 25. Bureau of Aeronautics, Helium Plant Material, 1919-1930. On file, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

C. BIBLIOGRAPHY

1961

Cook, Gerhard A. *Argon, Helium, and the Rare Gases - the Elements of the Helium Group; Volume II - Production, Analytical Determination, and Uses*. Linde Company and Interscience Publishers, New York.

1921

Davis, John W., James O. Lewis, and Andrew Stewart. *Report on the United States Helium Project*. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Mines.

1994

Federal Aviation Administration, Southwest Region. *Reminiscences on the Reservation: A History of the FAA Southwest Regional Office*. FAA, Fort Worth.

1976

Federal Aviation Administration, Southwest Region. *Recollections and Reflections*. Public Affairs Office, FAA, Fort Worth.

1989

Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County. *Tarrant County Historic Resources Survey, Volumes I-IV*. Historic Preservation Council for Tarrant County, Texas.

1921

Navy Department, Bureau of Yards and Docks. *Activities of the U.S. Bureau of Yards and Docks, World War 1917-1918*. Government Printing Office.

Record Group 70, Entry 11. Bureau of Mines, General Records, Correspondence, Reports. On file, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Record Group 71. Bureau of Yards and Docks, General Correspondence, Shore Establishments, 1918-1925. On file, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Record Group 71, Entry 649. Bureau of Yards and Docks, Facility Blueprints. On microfilm file, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

Record Group 72, Entry 62. Bureau of Aeronautics, General Correspondence, 1925-1942. On file, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Record Group 72, Entry 162. Bureau of Aeronautics, Helium Plant Material, 1919-1930. On file, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Record Group 80, General Records of the Navy, Secretary of the Navy Correspondence, 1916-1926

D. LIKELY SOURCES NOT YET INVESTIGATED

There are a number of repositories and facilities, both in the state of Texas as well as elsewhere, which have the potential to contain records or information pertaining to the former United States Helium Production Plant located at 4400 Blue Mound Road, in North Fort Worth, Texas. In addition to the following list, the potential for oral history accounts is a promising avenue for further research. The two FAA publications listed in the bibliography above were very useful in preparation of this document, and they contain several accounts from local residents employed at the former Helium Plant, many of which could be pursued as further leads. The following is a list for continuation of, or augmentation to, the results of the research presented in this document. The following list is arranged in no particular order, and should not be considered conclusive.

Various archived/microfilmed newspapers/periodicals in the collections of various state public libraries, particularly in Amarillo, Texas, and Wichita Falls, Texas.

Various files and collections at Texas Universities

Federal Aviation Administration Records Facility, Cincinnati, Ohio

City of Fort Worth Planning Department - Historic Building Permits

Navy Historical Foundation

Department of the Interior Library

National Science Foundation

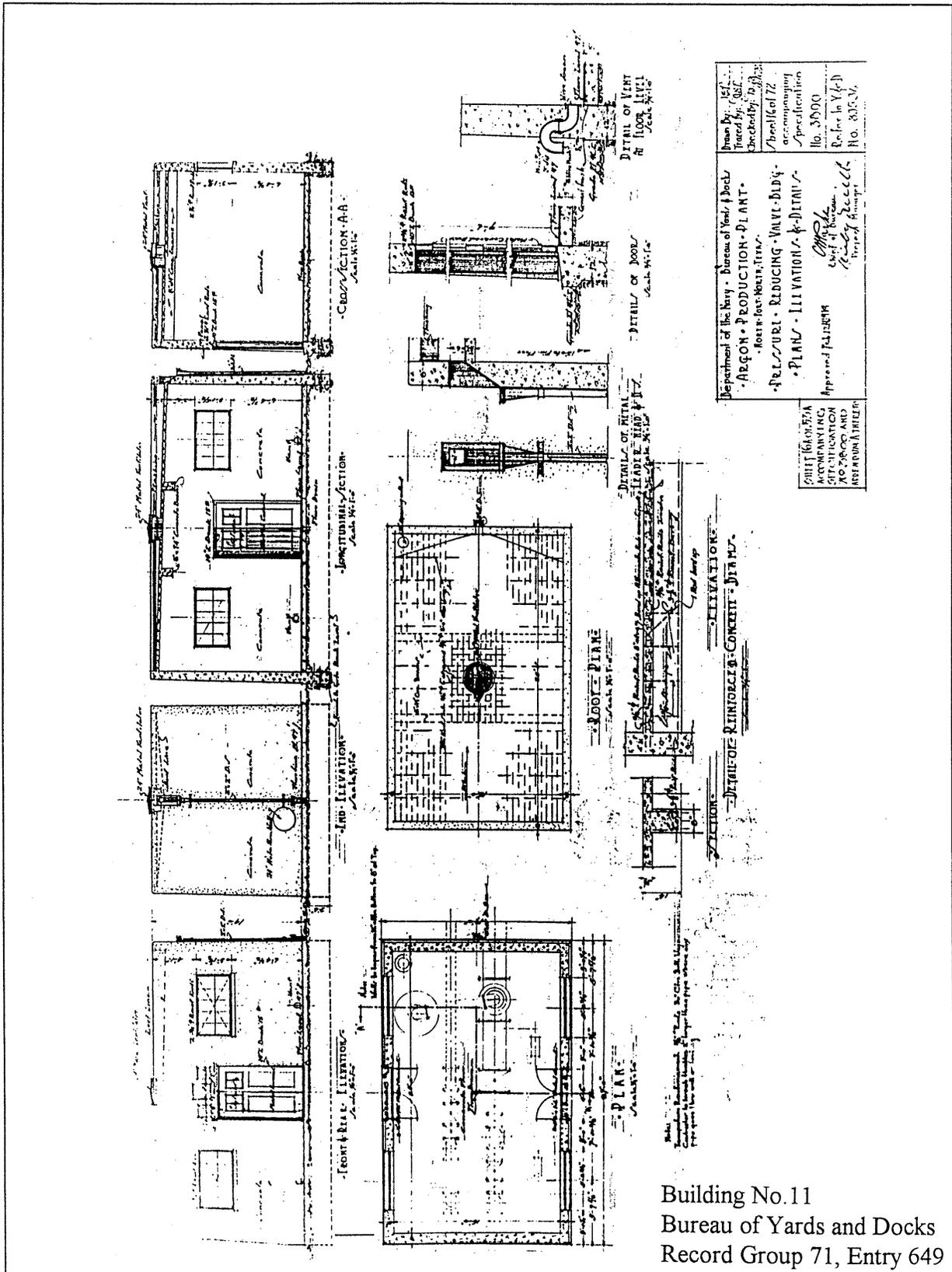
Records of the Lone Star Gas Company

Records of the Linde Company, New York

Records of the Air Reduction Company, New York

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GRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



Department of the Navy - Bureau of Yards & Docks
 ARGON - PRODUCTION PLANT -
 - Pressure Reducing Valve Bldg -
 - Plans - Elevation - Section -
 Approved: *[Signature]*
 Chief of Bureau
 Navy Yard
 No. 3000
 Refer to Y-4-D
 No. 8050

Drawn By: *[Signature]*
 Traced By: *[Signature]*
 Checked By: *[Signature]*
 / Detail of 72
 accompanying
 Specification
 No. 3000
 Refer to Y-4-D
 No. 8050

SHEET 16 OF 25
 ARCHITECTURE
 NO. 3487-E
 BUILDING NO. 11

Building No. 11
 Bureau of Yards and Docks
 Record Group 71, Entry 649