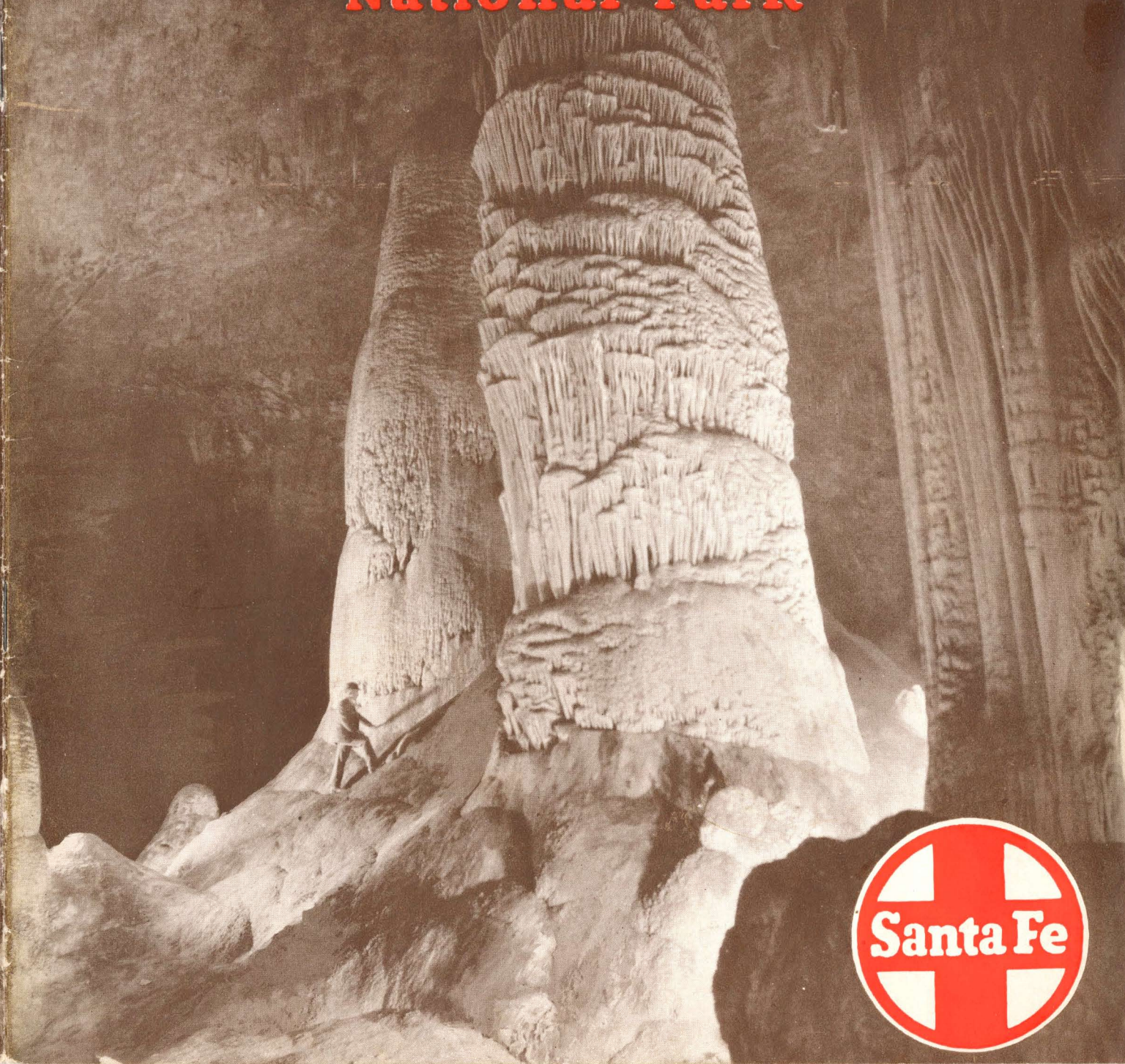


# Carlsbad Caverns

## National Park



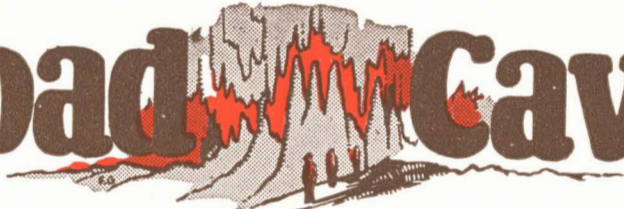




**For details on Santa Fe service  
DIRECT to Carlsbad, New Mexico,  
for a delightful and economical  
visit to Carlsbad Caverns,  
see page 17.**

**SANTA FE is the ONLY railroad to CARLSBAD**

# Carlsbad Caverns



**Carlsbad Caverns National Park, New Mexico**

SCARCELY a year passes without the necessity of revising the list of the world's supreme natural marvels to give high place to some fresh entry from the silent hills and mountains of the Santa Fe Southwest.

Here, as in a vast laboratory, Nature produces the unexpected and the seemingly impossible. The land has been lifted, depressed, and raised again eon after eon. Oceans have been filled and emptied. The worn body of the earth has been convulsed and tossed about. Yet always the slow chisel of the wind, the trickle and rush of water and the fingers of the frost are at work changing and softening, adding an indescribable beauty to the raw play of titanic forces.

There is only one Grand Canyon. There is no other natural arch with the giant setting and the same sweeping majesty of proportion of the Rainbow Bridge in the Navajo Country. The haunting witchery of color in Arizona's Painted Desert is matchless. The jeweled trunks and fragments of the Petrified Forest have no counterpart.

To these attractions, comparable only in that they seem to float in color against the deep blue of the sky, the Santa Fe Southwest now adds a subterranean marvel—the Carlsbad Caverns of New Mexico.

In the length of their galleries and passages, in the height and size of their enormous rooms, in the delicate coloring and bewildering variety and perfection of their formations, the Carlsbad Caverns are without a peer among the famous caves of the world.

Words have yet to be coined, photographs have yet to be taken that will do full justice to Carlsbad Caverns—but through the pictures and text of this booklet we hope you will be able to realize the unmatched and breath-taking glories found in this amazing “Underworld.”









*Walnut Canyon Highway in Carlsbad Caverns National Park*

**C**ARLSBAD CAVERNS NATIONAL PARK is 22 miles from the city of Carlsbad, in the rugged foothills of the Guadalupe Mountains of southeastern New Mexico, a picturesque semi-desert range country scarred by arroyos and ragged canyons.

The paved highway connecting Carlsbad and the Park rises from an elevation of 3,100 feet at Carlsbad to 4,400 feet near the cavern entrance. In the final climb, the country behind drops away sharply into the Pecos Valley to the east, while to the west and south the main range of the Guadalupe rises from the desert floor to heights of nearly 9,000 feet.

### **A Bit of the Caverns' History**

The foothills of the Guadalupe Mountains abound in caves formed in the process of erosion by the gradual solution of underlying beds of limestone, gypsum and rock salt. Knowledge of the existence of the greatest

of these, now known as the Carlsbad Caverns, has long been current among the sheepmen and cattlemen of the region. The difficulty of entrance and fear of the unknown, however, prevented early exploration.

For many years this cavern, or series of caverns, was known locally as Bat Cave. In vaults and galleries of little scenic interest and remote from the sections now visited, bats have lived since prehistoric times. Each evening during the summer, on a schedule that has been determined to the minute, these bats leave the caves in whirring myriads. Early each morning they return, fold their wings and shoot downward, to disappear utterly for the day. These bats hibernate in winter.

This flight of the bats, which in the evening lasts for more than two hours, is remarkable and interesting in itself. In all probability, too, it led to the first discovery of the cavern entrance, for the evening flight, clearly discernible from some distance, rises into the sky like





a long streamer of wind-driven smoke. Certain it is that the presence of the bats, indicating the existence of valuable deposits of guano, led to the first penetration and to the ultimate exploration of the caves.

The removal of the guano through the natural entrance proved impossible, for that entrance opened sharply downward like an inverted funnel and was partially blocked by masses of fallen rock. A shaft therefore was sunk through the roof, reaching an enormous vaulted gallery nearly half a mile from the natural portal. In succeeding years nearly 100,000 tons of guano are said to have been removed from a restricted area near the foot of this shaft.

Had it not been for the peculiar and temporary commercial value thus early developed, it is probable that the amazing secrets of the inner caverns would have remained hidden indefinitely.

### Jim White's Explorations

Although the entrance to the Cavern has been known to ranchers for over fifty years, the first explorations are credited to Jim White.

With the artificial shaft as a base, White and a Mexican boy worked steadily deeper into the underground labyrinth, returning from each trip by the guiding strings laid down on the inward journey. The spare time of years was devoted to his slow and hazardous explorations. Few cared to accompany him and often he went alone, equipped with food and compass, a crude miner's lamp, a rope and wire ladder and balls of twine.

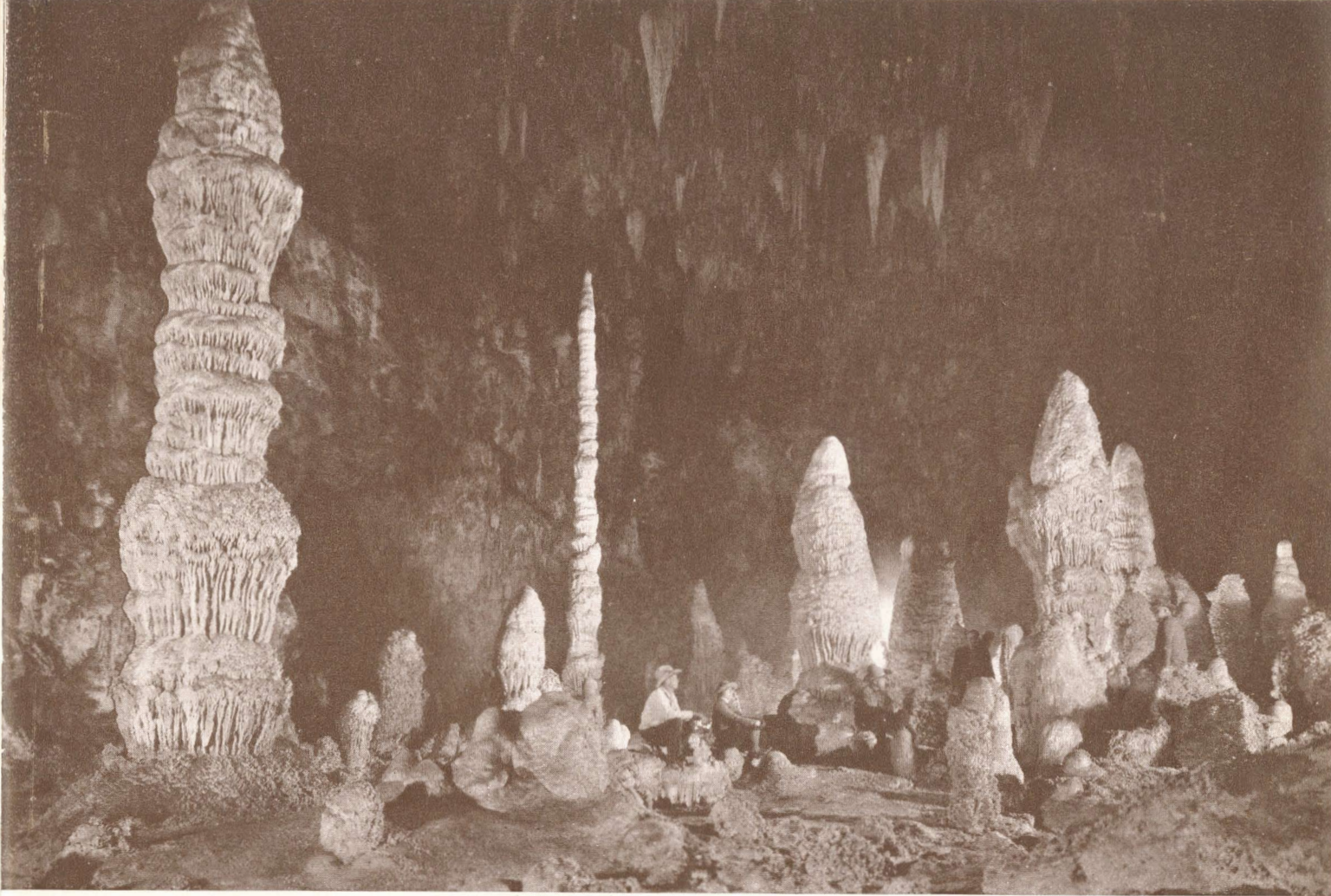
In this manner miles of intricate galleries and passages were covered. Vast chambers were traversed where the light of his lamp was more futile than would be the flame of a single match in the biggest cathedral in the world. Other series of rooms and passages were found above and below. It became apparent that the deeper and farther one went, the more extraordinary and indescribably beautiful became the formations in stalactite and stalagmite, in flowstone and dripstone and cave marble.

Eventually an expert photographer was induced to enter the caverns. Release of the resultant pictures accomplished what verbal statements alone could not hope to do. Interest increased and the attention of influential men was attracted. Among those to follow White through a section of the caverns, in 1923, was the late Dr. Willis T. Lee, of the United States Geological Survey.

### King of its Kind

Knowing the difficulty of making even approximately accurate estimates underground of size and distances,





*A forest of giant totem poles in stone rising from the floor of the Caverns*

Dr. Lee had frankly accepted current descriptions of the caverns' marvels with the greatest reserve. His own report, however, proved more remarkable still and reached an immense audience through the *National Geographic Magazine* for January, 1924. As a consequence of the world-wide interest thus aroused, the National Geographic Society dispatched a fully equipped expedition to the scene.

Six months of scientific study, exploration and survey proved conclusively that earlier and seemingly fantastic estimates, both as to the extent of the caverns and their unusual nature, were not exaggerated. In the *National Geographic Magazine* for September, 1925, Dr. Lee stated that

"Carlsbad Caverns, New Mexico, is the most spectacular of underground wonders in America. For spacious chambers, for variety and beauty of multitudinous natural decorations, and for general scenic quality, it is king of its kind."

### **Carlsbad Caverns National Park**

On October 25, 1923, about 720 acres of semi-arid land in Eddy County, New Mexico, were set aside by presidential proclamation as the Carlsbad Cave National Monument. In addition, thousands of acres of surrounding public land were withdrawn from entry to protect the results of further exploration of the cavern system. The seemingly endless glories below-ground revealed by subsequent investigation led, in 1930, to the creation of the Carlsbad Caverns National Park by an Act of Congress. In 1939, the Park was enlarged to approximately 50,000 acres, and includes scores of caverns, only one of which is open to the public.

As late as 1925 the principal features of this new playground of the people were a black portal in a rocky hillside, almost impossible of ingress, and the end of a washed out mountain road with grades as high as 30 per cent. The few hardy visitors shunned the natural









*A section of The Big Room, largest known subterranean chamber*

entrance for the doubtful advantages of the artificial shaft some distance away. Here they were lowered by bucket and windlass for 170 feet before they were free to follow string-marked trails over the broken and difficult floor.

Today the bucket and windlass of the artificial entrance are unused and forgotten. The natural portal, a low arch nearly 100 feet across, has been cleared. The old difficulties of descent have been eliminated. There are even electric elevators for those who desire

such service. One hour is saved by using elevators. Easy, springy footpaths follow the old guiding strings. Flood lighting has replaced miners' lamps, torches and candles.

Near the entrance are now grouped the administrative buildings erected by the National Park Service—a power house, quarters of an expert guide corps, the concessionaire's building and rest room. The United States Government has spent more than a million dollars in the development and operation of Carlsbad Caverns.





In 1925, still almost inaccessible, the Carlsbad Caverns were visited by a few hundred only. Now an average of over 18,000 persons a month visit the caverns. The percentage of increase has been phenomenal and is outstanding among the numerous National Parks and National Monuments scattered throughout the United States.

### Open the Year Around

Carlsbad Caverns National Park may be visited at any time of the year. Heaviest travel now occurs in spring, summer and fall, with winter visitation growing steadily. The elevation of 4,400 feet at the entrance to the caverns helps to temper the summer heat, yet is not sufficient to cause extreme or long continued cold in winter. Once underground, the season of the year has no effect, owing to the unvarying temperature of the caves.

### The Air is Cool and Fresh

The air in the Caverns is uniformly cool and fresh. The sense of oppression that is experienced in many other caves is here utterly lacking. In this respect it is impossible to realize that one is at times many hundreds of feet below the surface.

Winter and summer the temperature stands unvaried at 56° Fahrenheit. This pleasant walking temperature means that the caverns are delightfully cool on the hottest summer days and comparatively warm in the coldest winter weather. Though not required when walking, a light jacket or sweater is desirable for the long luncheon halt. Comfortable walking shoes, of course, should be worn.

Progress through the caverns is unhurried. Frequent halts are made on all ascents and descents and at many points of exceptional interest. For the rest the journey is in the nature of a leisurely stroll, prolonged by the unfolding wonders of another world.

### The Underground Trip

The Carlsbad Caverns do not display their full glory immediately upon entrance. It is only when we start down the trail that we realize how completely we have left behind accustomed things for the experiences and sensations of another world.

The entrance to the caverns is made along a wide trail that winds down into the main corridor. Here a brief pause is made while a Park Ranger gives an interesting talk on how the caverns were formed, and acquaints the visitors with the Park regulations.

Visitors then proceed along the trail through the main corridor, past the Iceberg (a giant boulder estimated to weigh 200,000 tons), and enter the Green Lake Room, which derives its name from a small green pool alongside the trail. Next come the Frozen Falls, and then a short tunnel leads into The Palace, consisting





*A corner of the King's Room—world's most beautiful subterranean chamber*

of the King's Room, the Queen's Chamber, and the Papoose Room.

### **Along the Trail**

Here and there powerful electric flood lights pick out points of transcendent beauty on the distant walls and ceiling, as though to reassure us that this great shadow-land really has actual and definable limits.

Eerie shapes, sometimes resembling birds or beasts or figures in profile, and again in the form of pillars, fluted and ornate, seem to step into the sharp circle of electric light and then out again. In these weird formations, and the delicate encrustations that cover the huge blocks of fallen rock, we are making our first intimate acquaintance with the wonder-working of water, charged with carbonate of calcium and dripping slowly from the roof through the endlessness of time. Where the water has trickled down the walls, the deposits resemble beautiful waterfalls, frozen in stone.

By now our old life above ground has become as vague and formless as the memory of some former existence. Time, distance and direction are forgotten. An overwhelming sense of the vastness, the sublimity, the unearthliness of our surroundings struggles vainly for expression. The constantly shifting display runs ahead of the imagination and a consuming curiosity prompts a thousand questions. We already take it for granted that light will reveal the unexpected and impossible behind every shadow in the clean, cool night of this buried world.

Questions rattle about the guides like shot on a tin roof. We learn that our round-trip underground will cover nearly seven miles; that this is not half the distance required to cover the cavern maze as it already has been explored; that it may, and probably does, go on for miles beyond any point yet visited by man.

We accept, without question, the statement that the most spectacular part of our trip lies ahead and that there are other marvelous caverns and passages above and



below not yet open to the public. We are told that the freshness of the air is accounted for by the existence of other natural entrances, though their location is still a mystery.

### The Palace

After his first visit to the King's Room, the Queen's Chamber, and the Papoose Room, Dr. Lee described this section of the caverns as follows:

"The chambers about The Palace are separated from the master room by curtains and partitions of gleaming onyx formed by deposition of lime carbonate from waters dripping from the roof. The great dome is so high that it is only dimly illuminated by the torches.

"Most of the ceiling is covered with dripstone. Thousands of stalactites hang singly, in doublets, in triplets, and in groups. They range from a few inches to lengths representing the entire height of the room, and in diameter from that of a small pencil to masses many feet thick. In some places they hang so thickly that they coalesce at the top, forming spiny masses weighing thousands of tons.

"In places the stalactites have grown together laterally and formed curtains. Some of these reach the floor, others seem partly raised to reveal a stage set with actors of fantastic aspect."

At frequent intervals we are to marvel at the beauty of these stone curtains, draped and folded. Many are translucent and little thicker than theater drops, so that lighting behind them suffices to bring out clearly their delicate texture and tints of pink and tea-rose.

From the King's Room we pass to the Queen's Chamber and thence to the Papoose Chamber. Here again the futility of names for minor wonders within the caverns is emphasized. Wherever the lights strike the myriad formations, all that we may already have seen becomes a new succession of entirely unfamiliar pictures.

Leaving the Papoose Room, the trail leads to the Lunch Room through a series of corridors of majestic proportions.

### The Luncheon Halt

Luncheon is served in a cavern room that has been "air-cooled and air-conditioned for a million years." This unique underground dining room, on which more than \$25,000 has been spent, is 320 by 100 feet, 750 feet below the Earth's surface and is fitted with electric lights, running water, benches and tables.

Here, for the first time during our caverns' exploration, we have an opportunity to digest our sensations and impressions, to compare notes, to give free rein to conjecture and curiosity, and to mail postal cards to our friends from "The Underworld."

### The Big Room

Shortly after luncheon we take up the circuitous trails that lead about that enormous cavity in the earth that has appropriately been named the Big Room. To quote again from Dr. Lee's description in the *National Geographic Magazine*:







"The Big Room has astounding proportions. Had I been told before entering it that an open space of such great dimensions was to be found underground, I should have doubted my informant's word as frankly as my readers will probably doubt mine."

There is nothing of the kind on the known globe to be matched against this stupendous subterranean chamber. It is more than three-fourths of a mile long. Its maximum width is over 625 feet. The maximum measured height of the ceiling is over 300 feet. Upon its floor our party is of no more consequence than a line of ants marching through a warehouse.

In dimensions alone the Big Room is awesome, sublime. When we study its decoration, upon which the Great Artist has worked for countless ages with no other tools than the slow drip and trickle of water impregnated with mineral, the Big Room becomes bewildering. No photograph yet taken reveals more than an infinitesimal part of its glories.

The ceiling has disappeared under millions of pendants. These stalactites, resembling icicles, range from needle-like spines to enormous masses whose length and weight cannot be estimated. Against the walls are frozen cascades of flowstone. Jutting rocks support crystalline formations resembling tangled masses of protruding roots, and form a base for columns of living stone many feet long, no thicker than macaroni and more fragile than pipe stems.

The floor of the Big Room is lost under stalagmitic formations of infinite variety in size and shape. There are complicated coralline encrustations, branched and delicate. From smooth mounds of flowstone 200 feet across rise carved and fluted domes sixty or seventy feet in height.

Ghostlike totem poles, tall and graceful, reach upward into the darkness. The irregular basins of old springs, some empty and others filled with water clear and silent as glass, are lined with crystalline onyx marble. Within the boundaries of these pools rise "lily pads"—thin sheets of onyx, built outward in concentric circles and supported on heavy pedestals.

This indescribable glory of form and substance has been created in utter darkness, particle by particle, through perhaps a million years. Yet, against the ultimate coming of light, even the finishing touch of color has been added. There is the smooth whiteness of talc, the blue-green white of ice, the sparkling brilliance of frost; the black and grey and brick red of the basic rocks; the jade green of flowstone; the shell pink and tea-rose in the stone curtains and portieres; the light cream of the great domes and the turquoise blue of the pools.

### **The Return Trip**

After completing the two-hour circuit of the Big Room, including an impressive rest period at the Rock of









© R.V.D.

*In places the ceiling disappears under millions of pendants*

Ages, a short stop is again made at the Lunch Room. Here the party divides. Those who leave by trail are conducted to the surface, over a trail which parallels the entrance route for a short distance. Others take the two elevators to the surface, each of which transports eleven passengers 754 feet in 60 seconds.

Nothing seems the same and we might be going on endlessly through this land of gnomes. So settled is the

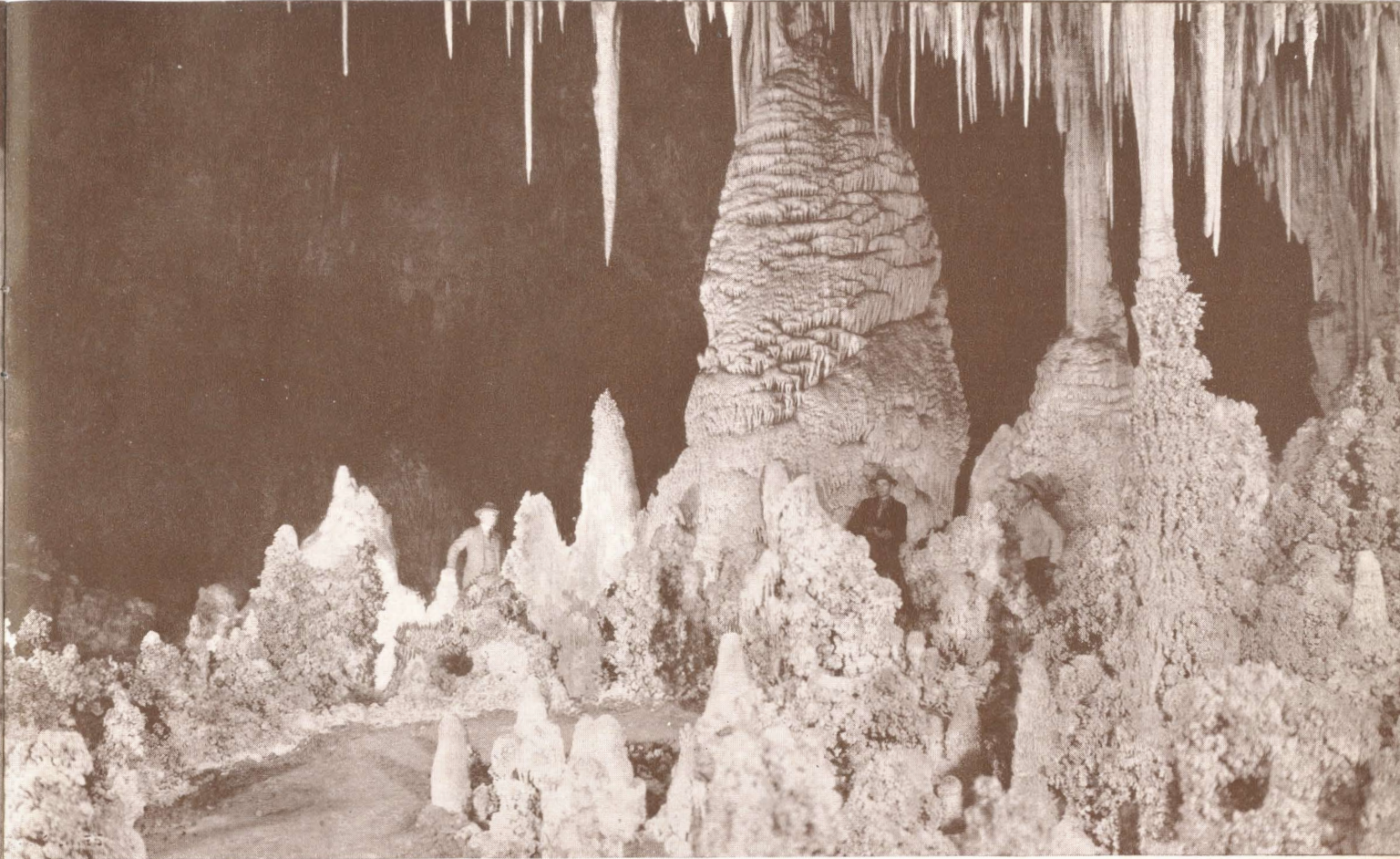
thought that even the first bluish rays of the upper light strike us as some new and startling phenomenon of this startling world.

When that faint blue turns to the blinding mote-shot gold of the entrance, and that again to the wide skies and the wind-stirred air of the hills, we are apt to wonder if the marvels of the Carlsbad Caverns National Park are not, after all, a dream.









*Nature has devoted 60,000,000 years in forming the Caverns' decorations*

### **Cavern Regulations, Guide Fee, Etc.**

Visitors are permitted to enter the Carlsbad Caverns only when in care of National Park Service guides. Under the regulations visitors should be at the Administration Building in the Park by 10.30 a.m., at which time parties commence the under-earth trip.

A fee of \$1.50 each person is charged by the Park Service to cover guide service. Children under 16 years are admitted free when accompanied by parents or responsible guardian.

The Caverns Supply Company serves luncheon in the Caverns at the modest cost of 50c per person.

Charge for elevator service is 25c per person, each way; 50c round trip; children 5 to 12 years of age, 15c.

Nurseries at the caverns and at Carlsbad are available for young children while parents are in the Cave. At the latter point there is ample and convenient parking space for all cars.

### **Approach by Rail**

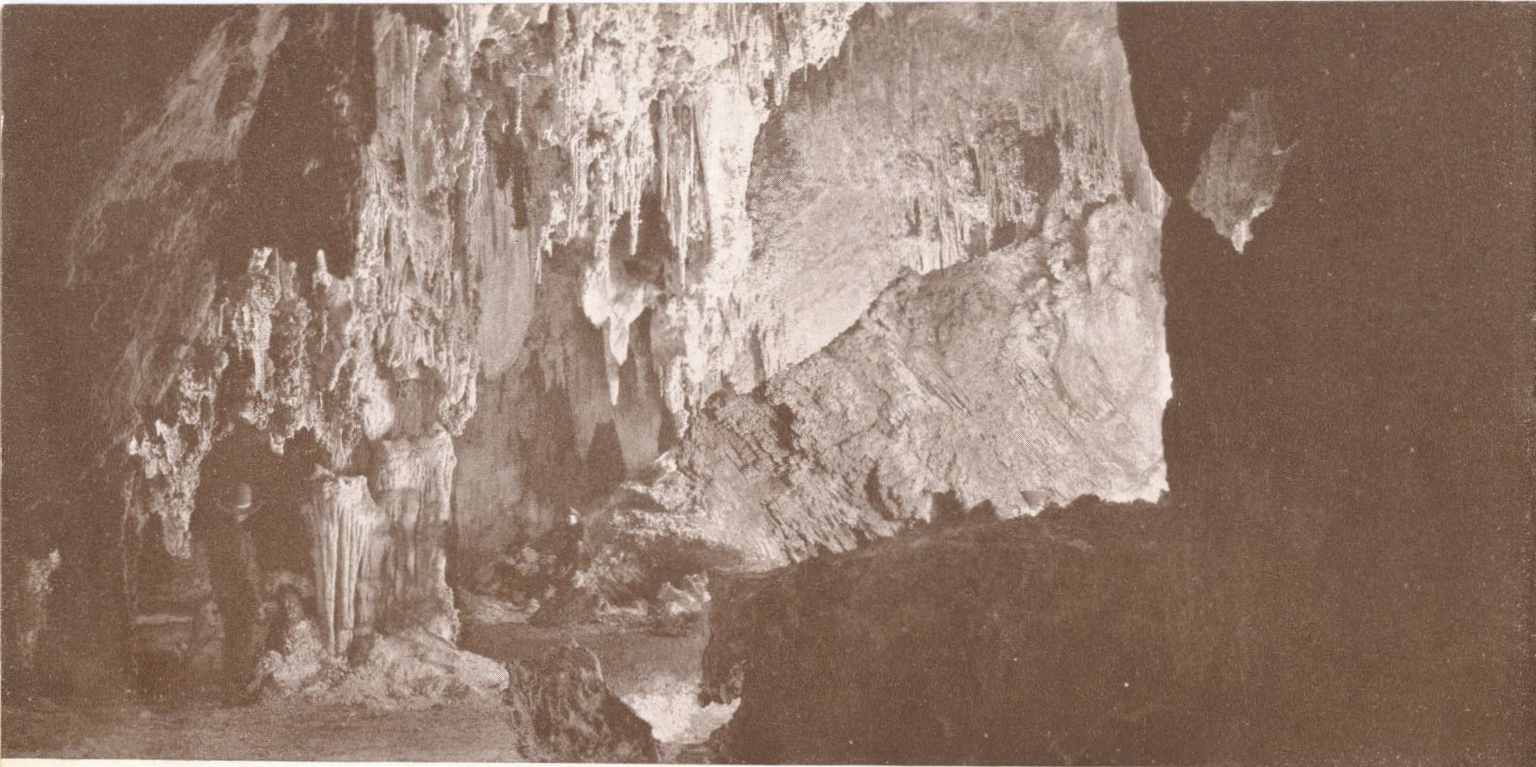
As in the case of the Grand Canyon, the only near approach to the Carlsbad Caverns by rail is over the main and branch lines of the Santa Fe.

To enable its patrons to include Carlsbad Caverns National Park in their rail trip either to or from California, conveniently and economically, Santa Fe provides daily all-expense Carlsbad Caverns side trips via the popular dollar-saving *Scout*, chair car and tourist Pullman daily train between Chicago and Los Angeles.

Through air-conditioned *Scout* tourist-Pullmans leave Chicago and Los Angeles every evening, and arrive Carlsbad the second morning. Hunter Clarkson Inc., motor coaches transport side-trip patrons from the station to the hotels for an unhurried breakfast, and then to the Caverns themselves, approximately 27 miles from the city.

After exploring the gigantic and bewitching Caverns,





*The lighting system in the Caverns is a masterpiece of electrical illumination*

with Park Rangers, and enjoying luncheon in the Caverns, patrons then motor back to Carlsbad for dinner at the hotels before departing on their Santa Fe train the same evening.

### **Here's All the Side-trip Costs**

The all-expense Carlsbad Caverns side-trip, via the Santa Fe *Scout*, costs only \$12.50 (plus a small berth charge for tourist-Pullman patrons). This amazing low price includes rail fare from Clovis, New Mexico, and return; motor service from railroad station to and from hotels; motor service from Carlsbad to the Caverns and return; entrance fee, guide service, and luncheon at the Caverns.

For those who desire to descend into the Caverns in the elevators, or to ride up in them at the end of the Cavern visit, there will be an extra charge of 25c; round trip, 50c.

### **Couriercar Motor Cruises to Carlsbad Caverns from Old Santa Fé**

Passengers on the Santa Fe fast, through, transcontinental trains may, if desired, visit Carlsbad Caverns by Couriercar Motor Cruise without recourse to the side-trip by rail from Clovis to Carlsbad.

These motor cruises, operated by Hunter Clarkson, Inc., leave La Fonda Hotel, Santa Fé, New Mexico, at 8 a.m. on *any day throughout the year*, covering the round-trip of approximately 750 miles—with ample time for exploration of the caverns—in four days.

The motor routes followed contain the maximum of interest to be found in a large and varied section of New Mexico. One stop is made in the mountain village of Lincoln, noted for its connection with Billy the Kid and the Lincoln County War. Other points of outstanding interest which may be included are the ruins of the great mission church and pueblo at Gran Quivira; the ruins of Quarai at Punta de Agua; Manzano, with its famous old apple trees, and the Mexican settlements of Torreon, Tajique, Chililli and Tijeras.

Inquiries regarding this or other unique motor services in the Southwest may be made through any Santa Fe representative, or direct to Hunter Clarkson, Inc., Santa Fé, New Mexico.

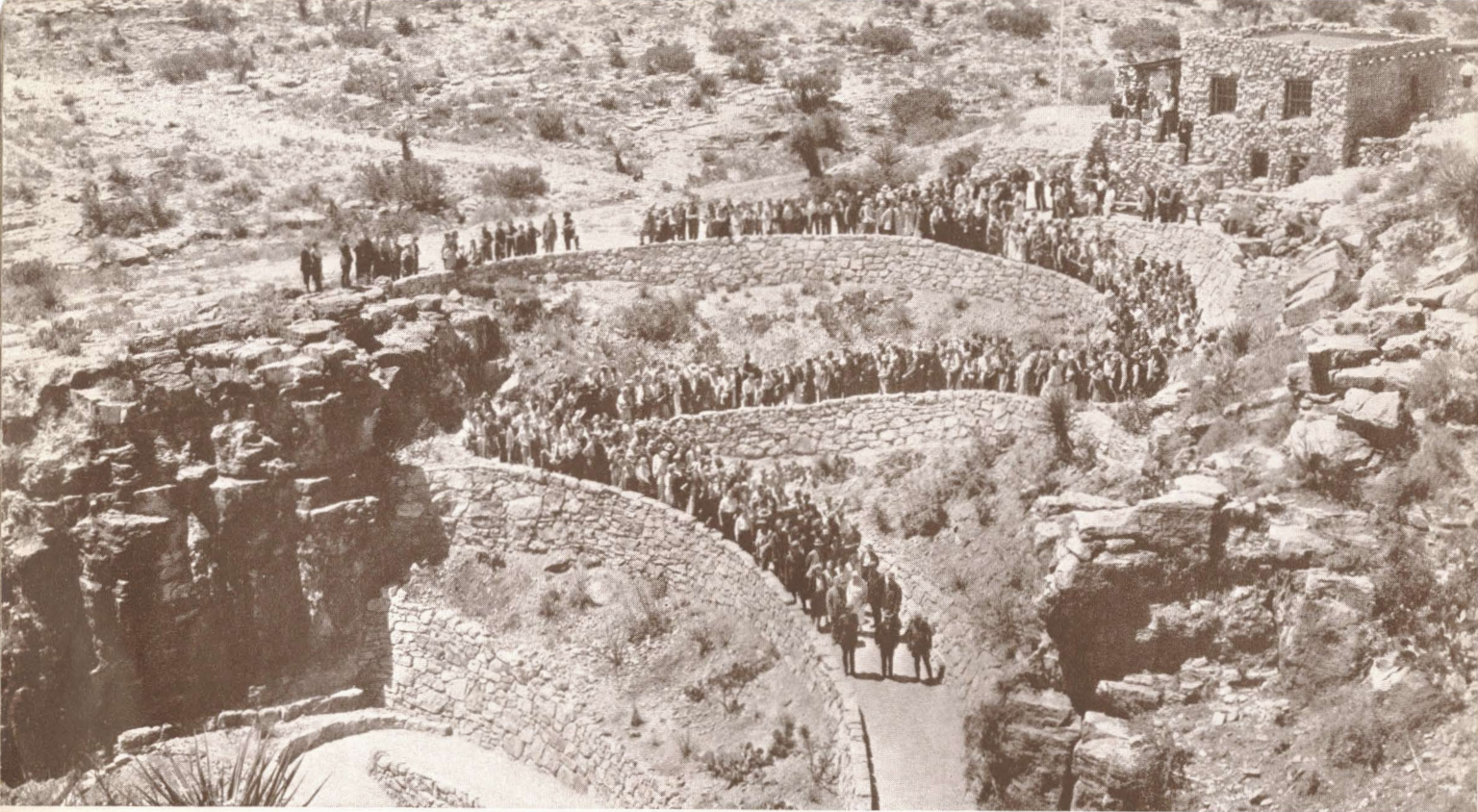
### **The City of Carlsbad**

The City of Carlsbad, popular gateway to Carlsbad Caverns National Park, and the location of the offices and residence of the Park Superintendent, is a growing and prosperous community offering many interesting attractions to tourists.









(Top)—The trail to the Caverns' entrance. (Below)—Street scene in Carlsbad, N. M.





The region near Carlsbad is the source of America's greatest potash production; is in the heart of one of the country's successful irrigation projects; is near the oil fields; and is rich in archaeological and paleontological interests.

The population of Carlsbad is about 8,500. Climatically, it has a mean annual temperature of 63 degrees, and nearly 90 per cent of possible sunshine. Its altitude of 3,110 feet is the lowest in the State.

Several hundred new homes, flanking Carlsbad's broad and shady streets, are of Spanish and South-western architecture and the new Court House is of distinctive Pueblo design. A mammoth new high school and four new elementary schools have been completed within the year. Carlsbad's recently remodeled hotels include The Crawford, 114 rooms, and the La Caverna, 110 rooms.

The Carlsbad Municipal Park offers a feature that is not found elsewhere in the Southwest—a three-mile stretch of water (mostly mineral water) for boating and canoeing and a beach equipped for swimming and aquatic sports of all kinds. Located three miles north-west of the city are Carlsbad Mineral Springs, from which the city was named and whose waters supply the mineral water for the bathing beach.

To the north of Carlsbad is Avalon diversion dam, which is more than one-fourth mile in length and 50 feet high, and two cylindrical tunnel spillways and an overflow weir dam—all of interest to the student and professional engineer and other visitors.

Also north of the city is one of the few wild bird farms in the Southwest. All species of quail, Chukar partridges, Merriam wild turkey and Mongolian ring-necked pheasants are raised for stocking private and public game preserves. Visitors are welcome.

The Pecos River, five minutes from the hotel and residential section, and five near-by lakes, offer fishing and shooting for the sportsman. Nearby Guadalupe mountains are the habitat of deer, wild turkey, mountain lion and bear for the hunter. Mountain sheep, though protected, may be seen.

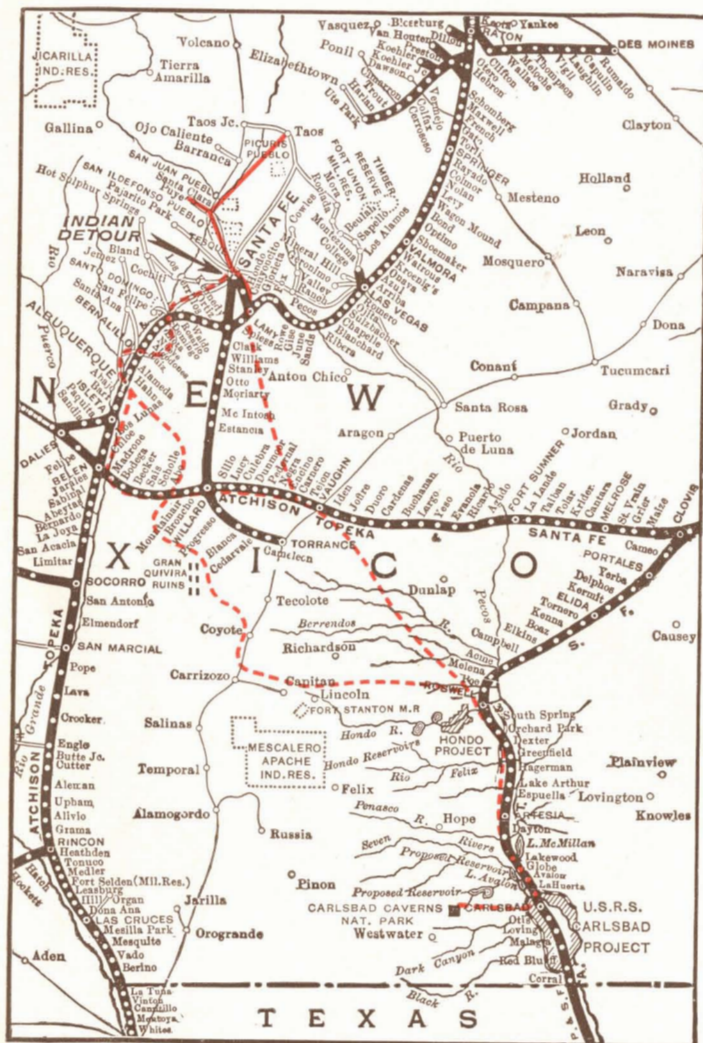
The Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce is energetic and willing at all times to assist visitors in any manner within its power.

### **Roswell, New Mexico**

Roswell, the third largest city in New Mexico, 79 miles north of Carlsbad, on the Santa Fe, is a growing, progressive community with a population of nearly 14,000. It is the hub of important highways, and centers a rich irrigated farming and cattle shipping district. Here is the eastern gateway to the beautiful Lincoln National Forest.



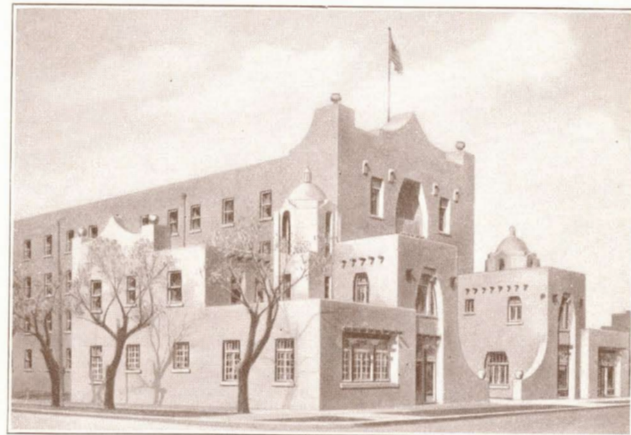




*Indian-detour motor cruise route to Carlsbad Caverns*



*Pecos River*



*La Caverna Hotel*

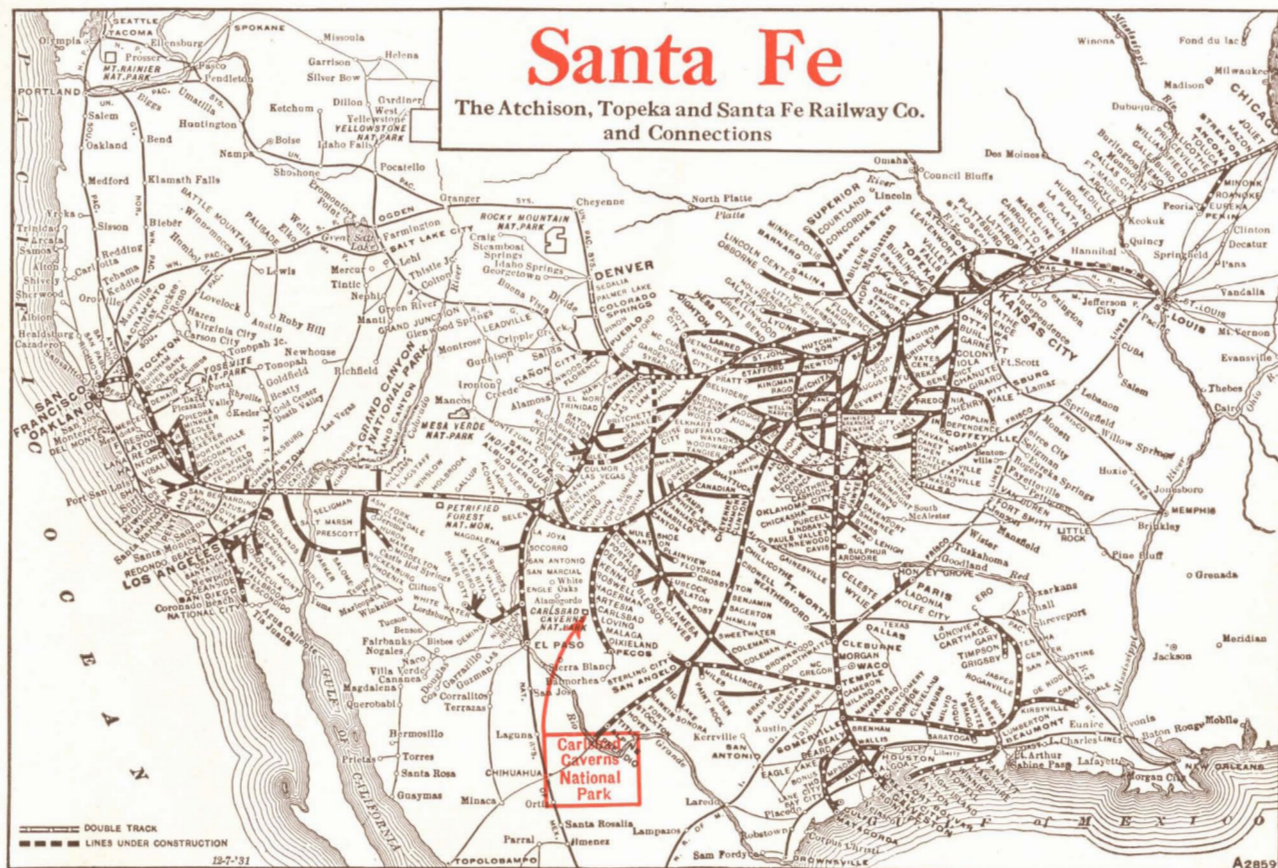


*The Crawford Hotel*



*Carlsbad Court House*





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