

CARNEGIE INSTITUTION OF WASHINGTON
DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH
10 FRISBIE PLACE
CAMBRIDGE 38, MASSACHUSETTS

October 21, 1946

Miss Laura Gilpin,
Box 1173,
Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Dear Miss Gilpin,

I am always glad to lend a helping hand. Too often however I do not have the information people want. Just by chance - or I think to settle an argument or to keep the record straight I did take measurements on the Castillo stairways. And the big surprise is that I could locate my notes with the information.

Here is the dope. You must remember that both the west and north stairways were repaired by the Mexican Government. What I mean to infer is that the stairways have been repaired, practically rebuilt and are not as though simply uncovered and in their original state. Also you must remember that measurements taken by someone else will vary from these I give you. If I were to remeasure the stairways I know there would be a variation of several centimeters from my original measurements.

West Side:

Width of stairway only

At Base 28 feet

At top 28 feet, 2 $\frac{3}{5}$ inches

Width of stairway and balustrade

At Base 37 feet

At Top 37 feet, 8 $\frac{2}{5}$ inches

North Side:

Width of stairway only

At Base 26 feet, 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches

At Top 29 feet, 2 $\frac{2}{5}$ inches *

Width of stairway and balustrades

At Base 37 feet, 11 inches

At Top 37 feet, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches

* I question this measurement.

I think the over-all measurements which include the stair proper plus the balustrades are correct. The measurements have been checked against a careful architectural drawing made by André Remondet and I think you will be safe in saying that there is no appreciable difference in measurements at base and top. I do not believe there was any attempt to create the effect of height and make the steps look straight correcting the perspective. The fact that the line of the pyramid is reduced at the top and the stairs remain the same width throughout gives the illusion of the stairway being wider at the top than at the base.

I hope you and Dorothy Stewart have a wonderful trip to the Big Bend. How I envy you!

Let me know if there is anything else you want to know. Sometimes I have the answers.

Very sincerely

Harold Ruffert