

Rocky Mountain Laboratories, Building 4
903 South 4th Street, Center Rear
Hamilton
Ravalli County
Montana

HABS
MONT
41-HAM,
2D-

**PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

**HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Rocky Mountain System Support Office
National Park Service
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225-0287**

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY
ROCKY MOUNTAIN LABORATORIES,
Building 4

HABS
MONT
41-HAM,
2D-

HABS No. MT-101-D

Location: 903 South 4th Street, Center Rear
Hamilton, Ravalli County, Montana
USGS Hamilton South Montana Quadrant,
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates for complex:
A. 11.719000.5124400 B. 11.719000.5124120
C. 11.718810.5124100 D. 11.718820.5124360

Date of Construction: Constructed in 1936.

Architects: Built by the Public Health Service (a federal agency).

Present Owner: National Institutes of Health

Present Occupant: National Institutes of Health

Present Use: Medical Research Laboratory

Significance: The Rocky Mountain Laboratories possess national significance due to the pioneering research conducted at these laboratories from 1921-1945 toward the development of vaccines for insect-borne diseases. Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever occurred frequently among the residents of the Bitterroot Valley in Montana. The facility was the primary site for research into the cause of the fever and many prominent members of the scientific community have worked at the laboratories. The period of historic significance for the site extends to the end of World War II as the Rocky Mountain Laboratories played a critical role in supplying vaccines to troops for the duration of the War.

The buildings are of a high quality for a small community such as Hamilton, Montana. The majority of the buildings were constructed by the Office of the Supervising Architect, Department of the Treasury under the direction of Louis A. Simon, a long time architect for the Treasury Department. The Laboratory, which sits at the edge of this small town, offered employment to local individuals seeking work in the 1930's during the Depression. For all of the above reasons, the Rocky Mountain Laboratories Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988. Building Four is a contributor to the Historic District.

In November, 1935, \$132,000 was allocated from the Public Buildings Fund for a third building (and several residences) to be constructed at the Laboratories. This building adjoined the rear of Building Two and was intended for animal quarters, stockroom storage space and a garage.

Constructed in 1936-37, Building Four is of the same common bond brick as the other structures in the complex. This building is a two story building located directly to the west of Building Two and is linked to Buildings One, Two, Six and Seven via enclosed passageways. Fenestration is regularly spaced and set singly or in pairs. The windows are wooden, double hung units, with one over one or six over one sash configurations.

This building currently has laboratory and office space. The plan strays from the normal use of a central corridor for the complex. Several doors of historic character are found throughout the building. Glazed hollow clay tile is used throughout this building in the hallways and several laboratories.