

Hamilton Field, Cold Storage
(Facility No. 301)
Rail Spur north of Escolta Avenue and
2nd Street intersection
Novato
Marin County
California

HABS No. CA-2398-AH

HABS
CAL
21-NOVA,
IAH-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HAMILTON FIELD
Cold Storage
(Facility No. 301)

HABS
CAL
21-NOVA,
IAH-

HABS No. CA-2398-AH

Location: Hamilton Army Air Field
Novato, Marin County, California
Cold Storage
Facility No. 301 (Rail spur north of Escolta Avenue and 2nd Street intersection)

U.S.G.S.: Novato, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1954 (revised 1980)
Petaluma Point, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1959 (revised 1980)
UTM Coordinates: Zone 10; A: 542100/4213620; B: 544720/4212220;
C: 542760/4210650; D: 541040/4212600

Significance:

This building was constructed in 1943 for cold storage of bulk supplies and is significant for its association with World War II.

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) for a comprehensive Statement of Significance and individual report HABS No. CA-2398-A for a condensed Statement of Significance.

Description:

The building is a one-story frame building partially elevated on a concrete loading dock foundation. It measures 145 feet 7 inches by 70 feet. It has a flat composition roof and wooden siding covered with asbestos shingles. There is a covered loading dock on the southeast front, with double-door loading bays leading into the refrigeration and storage areas. There are three sets of fixed nine-light windows and an elevated loading bay along the north and south sides of the building. Loading docks are accessed by six concrete stairs. The northwest side of the building is not elevated; the building backs up to a hill that is retained by a rock wall. This side has two double doors protected by a 20-foot-long overhang. A concrete slab is present between these doors and the retaining wall.

The rock wall is made of mortared fieldstone and extends along the hill behind the building and then curves to follow the hill west. It varies between 18 inches and 24 inches in height and is 12 inches wide. It is 145 feet long.

The interior of the cold storage building consists of a series of insulated concrete rooms on either side of two corridors. The floors are concrete slab and concrete posts support the roof. Six-inch thick insulated doors sealed the six refrigerated rooms. A small condenser room is present on the northwest side of the building, in the center, and has one nine-light

fixed window and a louvered wood door. Another room served as an office and has an interior 8/8 pane window looking out to the main storage space. Interior walls are shiplap horizontal boards with a concrete wainscot. Refrigerated rooms, storage facilities, and corridors are lit with eight-foot, two-tube florescent fixtures with metal hoods suspended by chains from the ceiling.

Two bathrooms serviced the building. The main latrine has one flush-valve toilet enclosed in a wood stall, one urinal, one wall-mounted hand sink and one mop sink, all made by Standard. Fixtures on the sinks and toilets are ceramic and are original to the building. Lights are wall-mounted single incandescent bulbs with a porcelain canopy. A small bathroom with one wall-mounted sink and one flush-valve toilet is attached to the office and is separated by a hollow-core door.

Use of the building as a cold storage facility is evident by an I-beam steel track that extends from the loading dock into the meat locker. A Fairbenks Springled Scale is set flush with the concrete floor in the hallway. Four Curtis brand cooling system units ere set in a row in one room. A Fairbanks-Morse Air Conditioning Unit is also present.

Historical Context:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398).

This cold storage was finished in December, 1943, for a cost of \$91,108.21. It was immediately put into service to accommodate the massive increase in population (and increased food demands) during the war. Located adjacent to a railroad spur, it remained in use, with little modification, until base closure in 1974.

Sources:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398).

Project Information:

Hamilton Army Air Field is owned by various federal entities including the Department of the Navy, Department of the Army, United States Coast Guard, and General Services Administration (GSA). The Army/GSA parcels are being excessed and sold to private developers. The Navy property is included in Base Closure and Realignment actions.

As part of the Army's undertaking, it has been determined in consultation with the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) that the excess sale will have an affect on properties at the air field, and that these properties are components of a district that is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Based on consultation with the OHP and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, pursuant to 36 CFR part 800, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f), a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was entered into by the interested parties in March 1994. The agreement stipulated that prior to excess sale the Army must contact the HABS/HAER division at the Western Regional Office of the National Park Service, San Francisco, California, to determine the appropriate level and kind of recordation for the subject properties. The MOA further stipulated that copies of the documentation be made available to the OHP and appropriate local archives designated by the OHP. This recordation has been prepared in order to meet those stipulations.

Text prepared by: Mary L. Maniery/Judith Marvin

Title: Historian/Architectural Historian

Affiliation: PAR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, INC., Sacramento, California

Date prepared: July 1995

Photography prepared by: David De Vries

Affiliation: Mesa Technical, Berkeley, California

Date of photographs: April and May 1993

