

Rocky Mountain Laboratories, Building 5
903 South 4th Street, South Rear
Hamilton
Ravalli County
Montana

HABS
MONT
41-HAM,
2E-

**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 5

HABS
MONT
41-HAM,
RE-

HABS No. MT-101-E

Location: 903 South 4th Street, South 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 1938.

Architects: Public Buildings Branch of the United States Treasury Department
under the direction of Louis A. Simon.

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 Five is a contributor to the Historic District.

Building Five was constructed as part of a major building campaign started at the Laboratories in 1938. \$132,000 was allocated from the Public Buildings Fund and \$407,000 was allocated from the Public Works Administration for expansion of the complex. In addition at this time 26.5 acres of vacant land was purchased to the west and north to serve as a buffer zone between the residential areas of Hamilton and the Laboratories.

Construction on Building Five started in 1938. The structure is immediately adjacent to Building Three to the west. It is connected to Building Three by a small, enclosed passageway. The building was constructed of the same brick as the others in the complex. Building Five is a two story masonry building with regularly spaced windows set either singly or in pairs. The windows are wooden, double hung units with 1-over-1 or 6-over-1 sash.

This is a two story building with large laboratories. The building has a central corridor that is on axis with Building Three and is rectangular in plan.