

Rocky Mountain Laboratories, Building 6  
903 South 4th Street, Between 1 & 7  
Hamilton  
Ravalli County  
Montana

HABS  
MONT  
41-HAM,  
2F-

**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 6

HABS No. MT-101-F

HABS  
MONT  
41-HAM,  
2F-

**Location:** 903 South 4th Street, Between Buildings 1 and 7  
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 Six is a contributor to the Historic District.

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Building Six 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.

Located to the west of Building One and to the south of Building Seven, Building Six is also linked to the other buildings in the complex via enclosed walkways. This is a two story, masonry building with a rectangular plan. The windows are spaced regularly and are wood, double hung, 1-over-1 or 6-over-1 sash. Originally, garages occupied a portion of the first floor. Garage doors were located on the north elevation, however these have been subsequently changed

Two story and rectangular in plan this building houses a large freezer room on the first floor. Two large stock rooms are located on the second floor. Electron microscopes are housed in this building. The window shades in the auditorium on the third floor are built-in and were likely installed when the building was constructed. The second and third floor bathrooms have several historic features such as tile flooring, marble panels, and porcelain fixtures. In several areas, historic glazed hollow clay tile is visible.