VANCOUVER BARRACKS, CAMP KILLPACK
Vancouver
Clark County
Washington

HABS No. WA-226

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Columbia Cascades Support Office
National Park Service
909 First Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98104

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

VANCOUVER BARRACKS, CAMP KILLPACK HABS No. WA-226

Location: Camp Killpack is part of the Camp Bonneville Military Reservation, a subinstallation of Fort Vancouver which is a subinstallation of Fort Lewis, Washington. The Camp Bonneville Military Reservation (known historically as the Vancouver Barracks Target Range and Camp Bonneville) is located in Clark County, Washington. It embraces approximately 3,900 acres of land on the western slopes of the Cascade Mountains in the valley of LaCamas Creek. It lies some eight miles northeast of Vancouver.

Significance: As part of the Camp Bonneville reservation, Camp Killpack serves a purpose in military training; however, despite the scant information regarding its establishment and use, it appears to be only tangentially related to developments in the American military between the two world wars. Therefore, the Washington State Historic Preservation Officer has determined Camp Killpack ineligible for inclusion in the National Register. (6/12/86)

Description: Camp Killpack is typical of many training facilities erected by the Army during the period between the two world wars. The nineteen original structures were designed to be temporary. They are referred to variously in Army records as T/O and T-10 type buildings, presumably meaning they were built from plans drawn for the Theater of Operations series or from plans for temporary buildings contained in the Handbook for Quartermasters. In this context, these structures reflected the larger efforts of the Quartermaster Corps during this period to standardize plans for Army posts and other military facilities to expedite the training and mobilization of troops.

The buildings consist of eight identical barracks, one mess hall and kitchen, one infirmary, one office and supply building, one recreation hall, two latrines, one officers' quarters, one officers' garage, one library, one incinerator building, and one pump house.

The dimensions and floor plans for the buildings are as follows. The barracks are 20' x 63'-6" with a front storm porch and open rear porch; they can hold twenty-five men in the open interior. The mess hall and kitchen is 20' x 126' and was designed to seat 200 men. The kitchen, 30' x 43', has a small wing, 9' x 13', for the refrigerator. The building has three entrances, two of which are open porches and the other a storm porch. The infirmary's dimensions are 20' x 63'-6" and it provides space for

medical attention and hospitalization; it also has space in the rear for the cooks' quarters. The building has a front and rear open porch. The office and supply building is 20' x 63'-6" and provides space for company administration and the storage and supply of clothing and equipment. The rear of the building has space for the company store. The building has three entrances, each with an open porch. The recreation hall's dimensions are 20' x 63'-6" and has front and rear entrances with open porches. Each of the latrines, measuring 20' x 40'-2", contains seven toilets, eight showers, a wash rack, and a drying room, but no porches. The officers' quarters measure 20' x 40' and contain a living room and four bedrooms, and a fireplace. The building also has a wing, 10' x 12', that houses the toilet, shower, and sink. The officers' garage could hold four cars; it is a shed-type structure, with three walls. The library was built to the standard size of 20' x 63'-6" and was partitioned to provide a reading room, class room, barber shop, and sleeping quarters for office personnel. The structure has a front and rear entrance with open porches. The incinerator building, 12' x 14', houses a brick incinerator as well as a 220 gallon hot water tank. The pump house is 8' x 15' .

All of the buildings were constructed with drop siding exteriors and paneled plywood interiors, except for the officers' garage and the two latrines. The former was built with 1" x 12" exterior siding and no interior siding; the latter two buildings were lined with VCV 1' x 4" ceiling. The pump house has a shed roof. All of the buildings have concrete block foundations except the officers' quarters, which has a concrete foundation. The latrines have concrete floors.

Finally, the buildings were arranged on a single grid, so they faced each other, with a central walk between; this was also fairly typical of standardized site plans for army camps, although in this case on a much smaller scale.

Historical Context: In 1909, the Army expanded Vancouver Barracks, perhaps the most significant site associated with the military in the history of the Pacific Northwest. That year the Army leased approximately 3,020 acres of land then lying some fifteen miles northeast of Vancouver for use as a field and rifle range for soldiers stationed at the barracks. During the next decade the government began to improve the area in order to make it a more permanent facility. To this end, it purchased the reservation in 1919, and over the next several years carried out road work, installed electrical, water, and telephone systems, and improved the general condition of the target range.

In 1926, the Army named the rifle range (known as the Proebstel Target Range) Camp Bonneville in honor of Benjamin L.E. Bonneville. Bonneville was a noted Army explorer in the mid-nineteenth-century American West. As Lieutenant Colonel, 4th Infantry, he commanded Vancouver Barracks (then Columbia Barracks) in 1852. As Brigadier General Paul A. Wolf wrote, the "naming of this range" for Bonneville "would be of considerable historical and advertising value to the Army. In my opinion it [would] be a fitting tribute to a gallant officer who was formerly an officer of the 4th Infantry of this Brigade. (5th Brigade, 3rd Division)."

General Wolf also noted that the range was "very popular" with civilian rifle clubs, and more importantly, it was "an ideal location for training camps of any sort." Evidently, the conditions were right for further improving the range for training. With the added benefit of federal appropriations for military construction in the late 1920s, the Army established two cantonments on the reservation between 1927 and 1935. The first of these was known as Camp Bonneville, the second as Camp Killpack.

The Army established Camp Bonneville first. Between 1927 and 1933, more than thirty temporary structures, including barracks, mess halls, latrines, warehouses, recreation buildings, and related facilities, were erected. While little is known of the exact details surrounding Camp Bonneville's planning and construction, we know that it continued to receive heavy use from troops stationed at Vancouver Barracks as well as from other members of the military. Civilian groups, such as the Citizen Military Training Camps and the Reserve Officer Training Corps, used the camp as well.

Thus, it seems likely then that the Army constructed Camp Killpack in 1935 to meet the growing demands for a facility to train and house troops and others for extended periods of time. According to available records, the initial impetus for Camp Killpack was to house a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) company at the rifle range. The CCC camp was part of the Vancouver Barracks CCC District. The Office of the Quartermaster at Vancouver Barracks, it seems, supervised the project, which was completed using possibly both CCC and troop labor, and using Emergency Conservation Work funds. In general, it seems that the camp was constructed from Headquarters Ninth Area Corps Army camp plans. Construction began on June 25, 1935, and was completed on November 15, 1935. Funds allotted through the Emergency Conservation Work

program paid for the project. Finally, the Army named the camp in honor of Captain Harry W. Killpack, who was killed in August 1935 while working with the CCC.

During World War II, the Army continued to use the Camp Bonneville Reservation to train troops from Vancouver Barracks, then part of the Portland Sub-port of Embarkation. At that time, the camp also housed Italian prisoners of war. In 1946, the War Department surplused the property, but in May 1947, the military withdrew the camp from the status because of continued need for its training facilities. In 1950, the Army renovated many of the buildings and systems at the reservation in order to prepare for weekend and summer training by Army Reserve units from southern Washington and northern Oregon. Over the next several years, the Army expanded once more the training possibilities of the post when it leased 840 acres from the state of Washington, bringing the area up to some 3,900 acres. In 1957, the Army returned twenty of these acres to the state. Two years later, the responsibility for Camp Bonneville changed from Vancouver Barracks to Fort Lewis, when the former became a subinstallation of the latter.

Up until the reservation's recent closure in the late 1990s, the Army has used Camp Bonneville for essentially the same mission: as a training area for a variety of military units, and federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, as well as a recreation area for civilian groups. The two cantonments, Camp Bonneville and Camp Killpack, were constructed to aid in this enduring mission as it evolved over time. Their temporary structures, in the end, served a permanent role.

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Project Information: The National Park Service, Columbia Cascades Support Office (NPS-CCSO), prepared this Historic American Buildings Survey recording project for the Department of the Army, Headquarters I and Fort Lewis, Public Works (Army). The project is the product of an interagency agreement between the NPS-CCSO and the Army, in which the NPS-CCSO is providing the Army information required to make a National Register of Historic Places eligibility determination for buildings and related landscape features at Camp Bonneville and Camp Killpack at Camp Bonneville, Washington. These Facilities are a training camp associated historically with Vancouver Barracks, Washington.

The intent of the project is to provide the Army with information to make an accurate assessment of the history, significance, and condition of the

resources associated with Camp Bonneville, which will enable the Army to plan better for the closing and disposal of the facility. The project will also meet the U.S. Army's requirements under Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act to identify, evaluate, and protect cultural resources under federal agency jurisdiction. The project will, in addition, allow for a determination of National Register of Historic Places eligibility for buildings and associated landscape features at this site. David Louter, NPS-CCSO Historian, prepared the outline history. Hank Florence, NPS-CCSO Architectural Historian, prepared the other elements of the report. The report was completed July 1998.

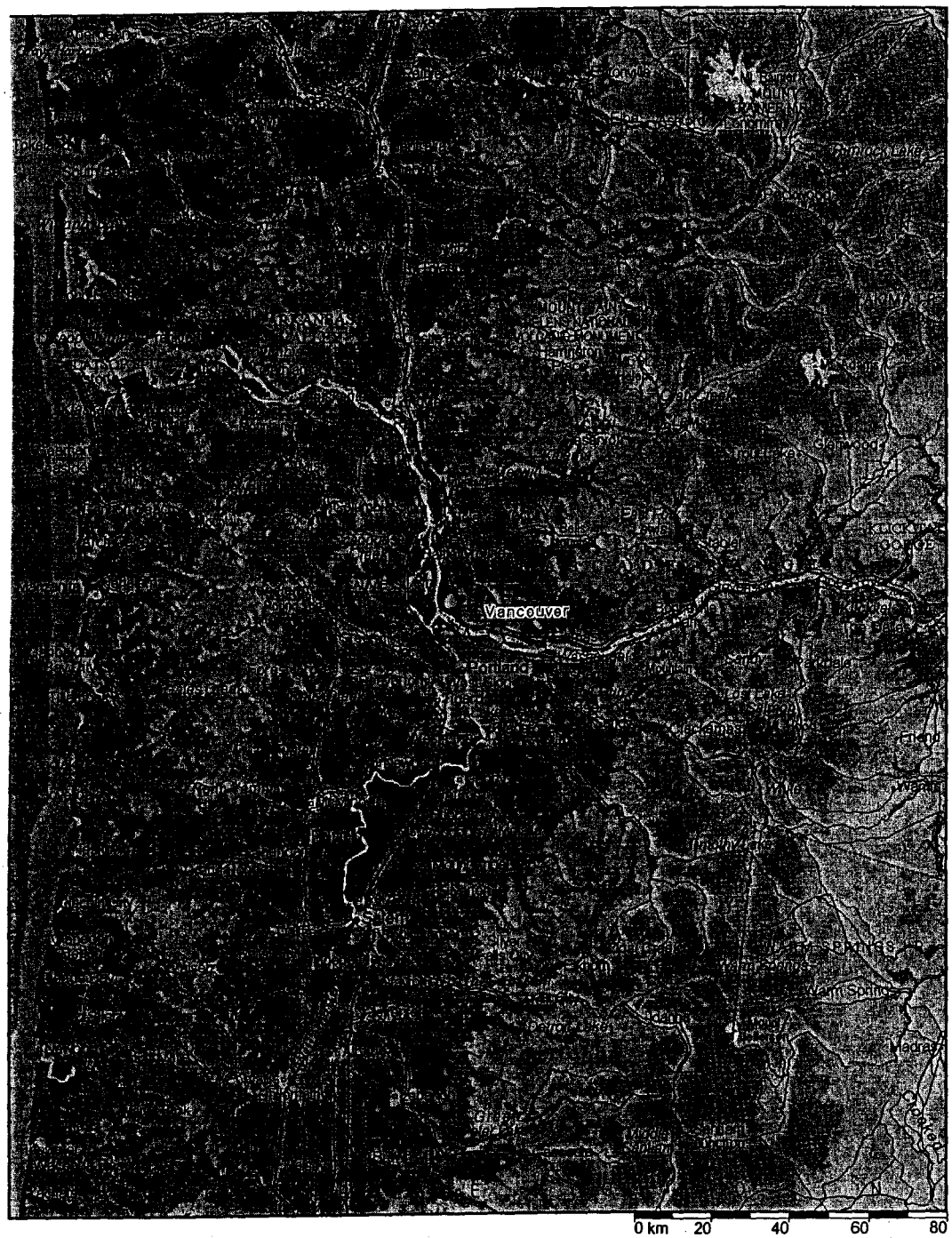


Figure 1. Vicinity Map

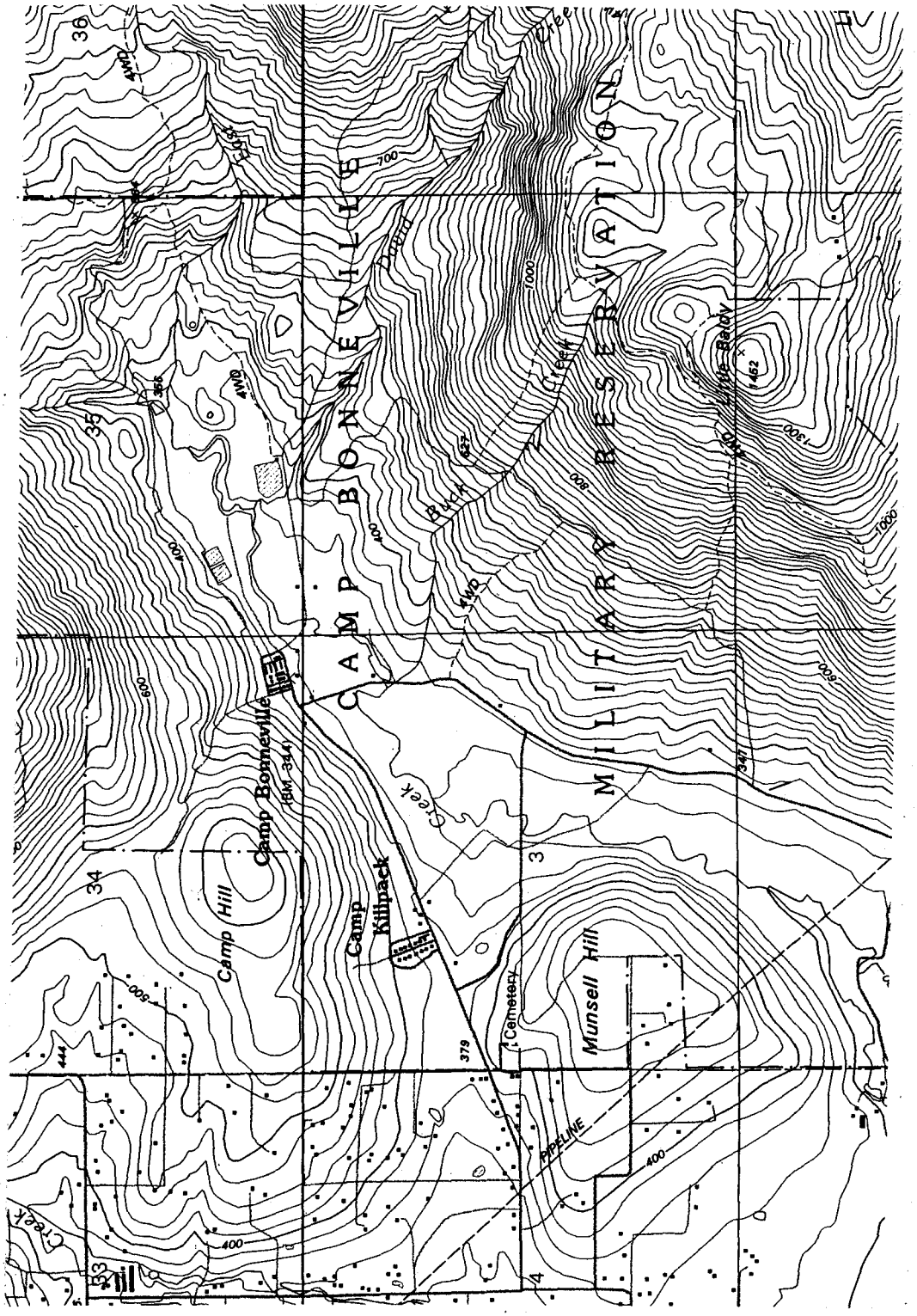


Figure 2. Geological Survey Map Section
LaCamas Creek, WASH
NW/4 Camas 15' Quadrangle
N4547.5-W 12222 .5/7.5

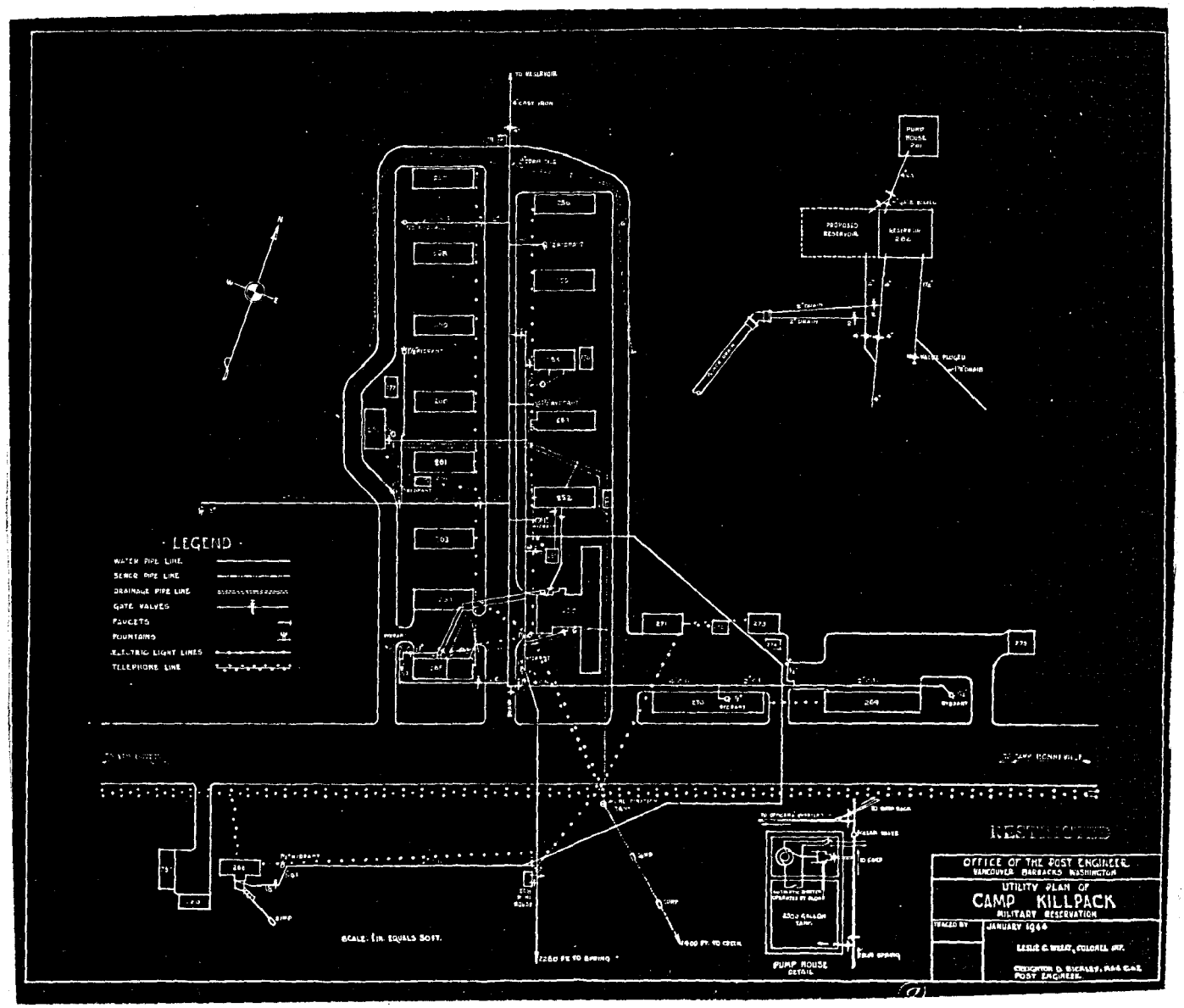
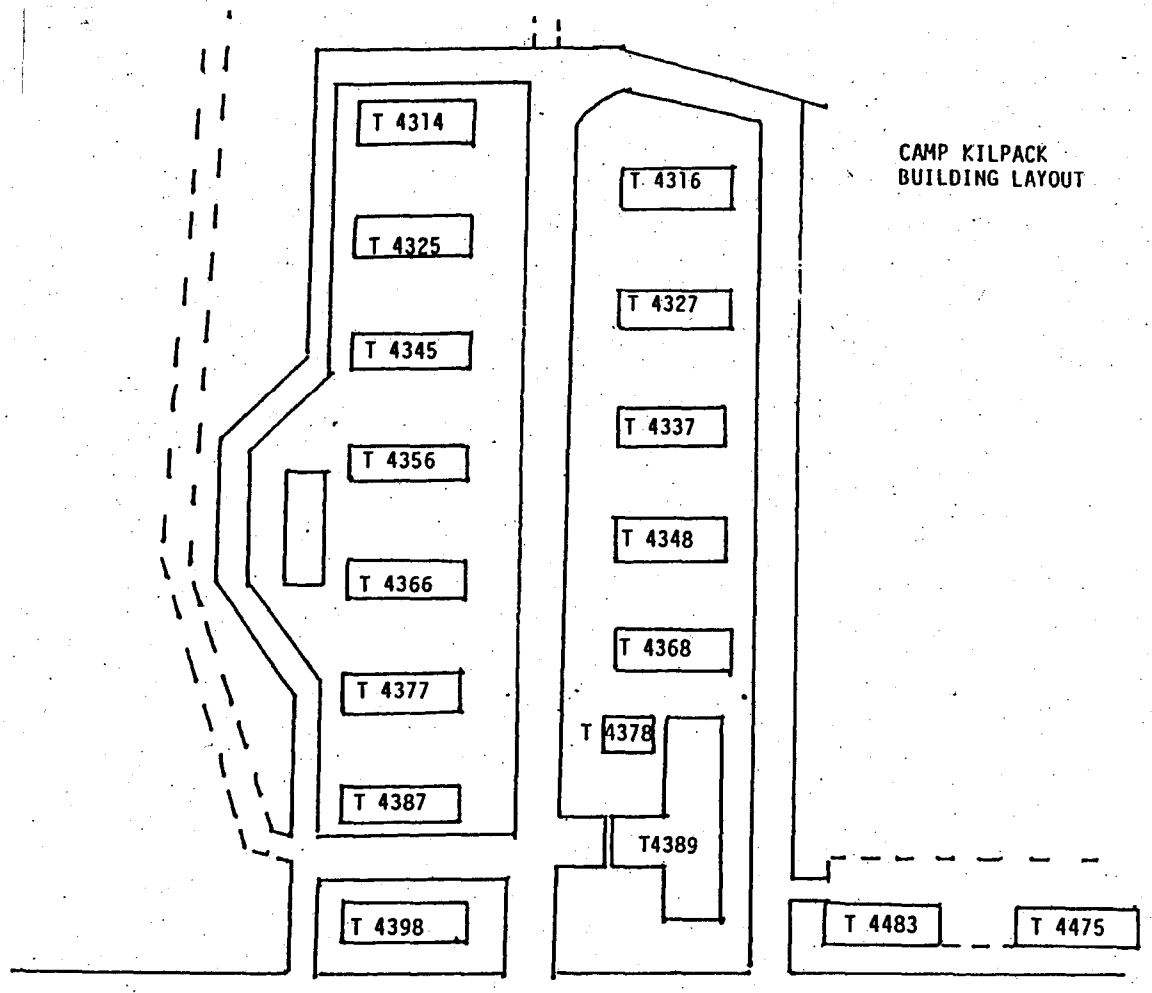


Figure 3. 1944 Utility/Site Map
(likely at height of development)



Bldg #	Use	Max Occ.
T-4125	Storage	
T-4126	Storage	
T-4155	Family Qtrs	
T-4165	Detached Garage	
T-4314	Barracks	30
T-4316	Barracks	30
T-4325	Barracks	30
T-4327	Barracks	30
T-4337	Latrine	
T-4345	Barracks	30
T-4348	Barracks	30
T-4356	Barracks	30
T-4364	Latrine	
T-4366	Barracks	30
T-4368	Command Post	
T-4377	Barracks	30

Bldg #	Use	Max Occ.
T-4378	Incinerator	
T-4387	Range HQ	
T-4389	Mess Hall	
T-4398	Range Control	
T-4475	Vehicle Storage	
T-4483	Vehicle Storage	
T-4522	Pump House	
T-4532	Reservoir	

Figure 4. Site Map Showing Building Numbers
(not to scale)