NPS Form 10-900 (Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior tional Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property
historic name Southwestern Proving Ground Building #4
other names/site number Gun Shelter (stockade), Site #HE0755
2. Location
street & number 259 Hempstead County Road 279
city or town Hope vicinity
state Arkansas code AR county Hempstead code 057 zip code 71801
3. State/Federal Agency Certification
5. State rederal Agency Certification
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this is nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide accally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.) Signature of certifying official/Title Arkansas Historic Preservation Program State or Federal agency and bureau In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State or Federal agency and bureau
4. National Park Service Certification Liberalist control that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet
☐ determined eligible for the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet
determined not eligible for the National Register
removed from the National Register.
other, (explain:)

Southwestern Proving Ground Name of Property	nd Building #4	Hempstead County, Arkansas County and State	
Classification			
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in count.)	
private public-local public-State public-Federal	□ building(s)□ district□ site⋈ structure	Contributing Noncontributing	buildings
	object	1	structures objects Total
Name of related multiple p (Enter "N/A" if property is not part We've Gotta Get Tough: Hi	of a multiple property listing.)	Number of Contributing resources previously in the National Register	_
Efforts in Arkansas, 1941-19			
6. Function or Use			
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	
Defense/Fortification		Agriculture/Subsistence/animal facility	
0			
7. Description			
Architectural Classificatio (Enter categories from instructions Other/Plain Traditional		Materials (Enter categories from instructions) foundation concrete	
Outen transferral		walls Concrete, wood	
		roof Metal	
		other	

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

ding #4 Hempstead County, Arkansas
County and State
teria Levels of Significance (local, state, national) Local Local
vents that have made he broad patterns of Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions) Military
Engineering the lives of persons
ctive characteristics of construction or cer, or possesses ents a significant and
components lack Period of Significance 1941-1945
history or history.
Significant Dates 1941
tion or used for
Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked) ocation.
Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)
ject, or structure.
Architect/Builder
achieved significance Howard, Needles, Tammen & Bergendorff, Architect W.E. Callahan Construction Company, Builder
nce t one or more continuation sheets.)
nces
used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)
Primary location of additional data: Individual listing (36 State Historic Preservation Office Other State Agency Ital Register Federal Agency Ital Buildings Survey Primary location of additional data: State Historic Preservation Office Other State Agency Local Government University Other Name of repository:
Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked) ocation. Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked) ject, or structure. Architect/Builder Howard, Needles, Tammen & Bergendorff, Architect W.E. Callahan Construction Company, Builder nce none or more continuation sheets.) nces used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.) NPS): primary location of additional data: State Historic Preservation Office Other State Agency all Register by the National University Local Government University Other

recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record #

Southwestern Proving Ground Building #4				ad County, A	rkansas
Name of Property		C	ounty and	State	
Geographical Data		_	147		
Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre					
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)					
1 15 443747 3734216		3			
Zone Easting Northing			Zone	Easting	Northing
2		4			. 2
			☐ Se	ee continuation s	sheet
Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)					
Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)					
11. Form Prepared By					
name/title Katie Worrell, Intern, and Ralph S. Wilcox, National Regis	ter & Ci	TUPV	Coordin	ator	
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program	ici te si		date	June 16, 200	18
street & number 1500 Tower Building 323 Center Street			ohone -	501-324-9	
city or town Little Rock	state	A)		zip code	72201
City of lowir Diffic Rock	state	n		zip code	72201
No. 170		_			
ditional Documentation omit the following items with the completed form:		-			
Continuation Sheets					
Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's	location	n			
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large a	creage (or mu	nerous r	esources.	
Photographs					
Representative black and white photographs of the property.					
Additional items					
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)					
Property Owner					
Property Owner					
Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)				telephone	870-722-5421
Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.) name Rene England	state		AR	telephone	

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

Southwestern Proving	Ground	Building #4
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SUMMARY

Building #4 of the Southwestern Proving Ground consists of seven stalls that were built in 1941 and utilized as a gun shelter and stockade. These stalls are all of single-story height, although they have no roofs, and are constructed of reinforced concrete with continuous cast concrete foundations. There are three ancillary structures which served as electrical and fire control buildings. The buildings are all one-story tall with weatherboard walls and cast concrete foundations. Each has a single door and one six-pane window. The gabled roofs are constructed of wood and metal.

ELABORATION

Building #4 of the Southwestern Proving Ground is located in the community of Oakhaven, approximately five miles northwest of Hope, Hempstead County, Arkansas. It consists of three stalls with two foot thick inforced concrete walls, resting also on a continuous cast concrete foundation. The stalls have no roofs and are of single-story height. Each stall is further divided by concrete walls, creating seven separate sections in all. The structure is entirely functional in nature, and therefore is lacking in any form of ornamentation.

Front/Southeast Facade

At the front of each stall is a single entrance. Through each entrance there is a T-shaped wall which divides the stalls into separate bays.

To the right of each stall entrance are three small buildings which were used originally as fire control and electrical equipment storage buildings.

Side/Northeast Façade

The Northeast façade of Building #4 consists of a simple concrete wall. There are no windows or entrances, nor is there any form of ornamentation.

Rear/Northwest Facade

The rear of Building #4 is characterized by seven openings formed by the four main walls of the bays and the four walls which divide them. As one enters these areas, they may turn left or right once they reach the back wall and exit through the Southeast entrance.

Fire Control/Electrical buildings

On the Southeast façade of the stalls to the right of each entrance are three small buildings which served as re control and electrical equipment storage buildings. These buildings are plain in form, consisting of a single, rectangular room atop a continuous concrete foundation. They are each one story tall and the gabled roof of each of them is constructed of asbestos. All three buildings are of frame construction and the walls are of weatherboard material. Present on the southwest side of each building is one door and one window.

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Integrity

Overall, Building #4 is in fair condition. The reinforced concrete walls are entirely intact and in excellent shape. On the northwest side, gates have been added to the seventh and eighth walls to create a hog pen. The fire control and electrical equipment buildings have deteriorated somewhat, with several planks of the weatherboard siding loose or missing. What was once white paint on their exterior is worn and in some places completely gone. The walls also have become slightly overgrown with vines. The windows have been boarded up and the doors now have chicken wire in the panes where glass would have originally been. The combination metal and wood roofs are still intact.

This structure is privately owned and is currently being used for agricultural purposes, specifically storage. Various items such as tires, scrap metal and fertilizer are being stored in most of the stalls, with the last stall inctioning as a hog pen. Most likely the only threat to this structure is further private development.

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SUMMARY

Building #4 of the Southwestern Proving Ground is important for its association with World War II-era military activity in southwestern Arkansas. The Southwestern Proving Ground was an important World War II military facility used as an airfield for bombers and a testing ground for artillery shells and air bombs. (The Southwestern Proving Ground Airport Historic District was NR-listed on June 10, 1999.) Building #4 of the Southwestern Proving Ground is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with local significance under Criterion A for its associations with World War II-era military activity in Hempstead County. The Southwestern Proving Ground Building #4 is being submitted to the National Register of Historic Places under the multiple property listing "We've Gotta Get Tough: History of WWII Home front Efforts in Arkansas, 1941-1946."

TELABORATION

European settlement in what became Hempstead County began in the early 1810s with the arrival of John Campbell from Tennessee, Benjamin Clark from Kentucky, and William Yates and his son, George, from Missouri, in 1812. The number of settlers in the area continued to grow during the 1810s and Hempstead County was officially organized in 1819 under the provisions of an act of the Missouri Territory legislature approved on December 15, 1818. The county was named after Edward Hempstead, the first Congressional delegate from the Missouri Territory. Originally, it encompassed the land southwest of the Little Missouri River extending south to the Louisiana state line and west to the line of the Indian Territory.

Initially, Hempstead County's county seat was located in Washington, but once the Cairo & Fulton Railroad's line was constructed through the county, the center of the county's commerce and business moved to the rail corridor. The community grew out of a workmen's camp for the railroad and was named Hope after the daughter of James Loughborough, the railroad's land commissioner. The first passenger train came to the community on February 1, 1872, and the railroad drew the town's plat and began selling lots on August 28, 1873. Hope was officially incorporated on April 8, 1875, and by 1880 Hope's population was 1,233. Throughout the first part of the twentieth century, the community kept growing, reaching a population of 6,008 by 1930. Eventually, after several controversial elections, in 1939 the Arkansas Supreme Court declared Hope Hempstead County's new county seat.²

The onset of World War II brought big changes to the Hope area, especially when the June 7, 1941, edition of the *Hope Star* announced on the front page that "Hope Obtains Big War Plant." The magnitude of what it

¹ Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1890, p. 379.

² Turner, Mary Nell. Information on Hope, Arkansas, found at: http://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=895.

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meant for Hope was apparent in the telegram that Senator George Lloyd Spencer sent the *Star* from St. Louis on June 5, 1941, which said:

I have communicated with the War Department several times yesterday and today. They now authorize me to announce that a site north of Hope has definitely been selected for the proving ground.

The area will be five miles wide and 15 miles long and will cover approximately 37,000 acres.

The contract will be let as quickly as possible with the hope that work may be started by July 15.

The project will represent an expenditure of approximately 15 million dollars and construction will employ 4,000 or 5,000 persons. It will permanently employ 500 or more.

I am gratified that Arkansas has received this additional plant and am particularly pleased that my home county was selected. Governor [Homer] Adkins should be given full credit for his help in this matter.³

The Southwestern Proving Ground (and its sister facility the Jefferson Proving Ground in Indiana) were important components of America's World War II efforts on the home front. As tensions escalated in Europe in the late 1930s, it became more and more of a reality that the United States would likely enter the conflict. During the escalation of tensions, even though the United States was not actually at war, it was still involved in the war effort by providing war materials to its Allies. In preparation for such an event the U.S. Government instituted the National Defense Program, which provided factories for the manufacture of munitions, airplanes and tanks. The National Defense Program is what directly led to the construction of the Southwestern Proving Ground in Hope as it was used to test those products for the war effort.⁴

After the news of the construction of the proving ground was released in June 1941, a map of the proposed facility was published showing that it would cover 37,650 acres of land encompassing private landholdings of 244 individuals and firms and 937 acres of state-held property. The reservation was bounded on the south by a line four and a half miles north of Hope, which ran about three and a half miles east and west. The area

Yurner, Mary Nell. "Southwestern Proving Ground 1941-1945. Journal of the Hempstead County Historical Society. Volume TX, Spring 1986, p. 3. The Southwestern Proving Ground supplemented the Jefferson Proving Ground located about 5 miles north of Madison, Indiana.

⁴ Hope, Holly. "Southwestern Proving Ground Airport Historic District, Hope, Hempstead County, Arkansas." National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. From the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 1998, pp. 8-9.

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widened at its northern extension by about 15 miles, brushing the towns of Washington and Ozan. The northern boundary line from east to west was about five and a half miles wide, leaving Belton a half mile north of the northern boundary line, McCaskill one and a half miles east from the line and DeAnn two and a half miles east of the line. (After the initial evacuation order the War Department decided that there was not a proper site for an airport so they surveyed 4,000 more acres southwest of the reservation. After the addition of the airport complex several more acres were seized bringing the total to 50,780.27 acres.) ⁵

The land needed for the development of the Southwestern Proving Ground would be acquired by the Real Estate Department of the War Department through condemnation proceedings for those sections that were needed to do immediate work. Each person's land was appraised and then negotiations were undertaken with the land owner to determine the amount of compensation that they would receive for the land, any improvements, and for the crops that were growing. Evacuation of the residents began in July 1941, and a total of 404 families were eventually relocated by the July 24th deadline.

The tight time schedule did cause a few problems. The National Guard had to provide 45 tents and running water on 20 acres of land in Washington for some families who could not find other places to live, and that there was not enough time to build temporary housing for. In August 1941 there were half a dozen families living in the 1874 courthouse in Washington.⁷

However, relocating the families was not the only problem that the government had to deal with. There were seven cemeteries in the area that the government had to relocate. Licensed undertakers bid on the job of removing and reinterring the bodies at new cemetery sites approved by the Constructing Quartermaster and the State Board of Health. The original tombstones were required to be reinstalled in concrete as they were on the old grave on a site that was to be equal or better than the former, and graves would be placed in their original alignment. All of the relocations had to be completed by June 1, 1942, since firing in the area was supposed to begin then.⁸

The development of the Southwestern Proving Ground was initially greeted with tremendous enthusiasm by the local community due to the economic impact that it would bring to the area. However, criticism did arise from the area's residents, especially during the confusion associated with the relocations. In addition, it was also rumored that Senator Spencer had encouraged the placement of the facility to encompass his farm in the area. The editor of the *Hope Star* at the time, Alex Washburn, understood the need for the facility in terms of nited States defense, but also understood the plight of the people who were displaced by the construction.

⁵ Hope, p. 9.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid.

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He wrote that, "... anybody can see things about the Proving Ground to break your heart - but it is admittedly the biggest thing in South Arkansas since the El Dorado oil boom in 1921 ..."

The construction of the Proving Ground was awarded to the W. E. Callahan Construction Company, which began hiring 4,000 construction workers on July 15, 1941. The architects and engineers for the project were Howard, Needles, Tammen & Bergendorff of Indianapolis, and among their employees were Herb Blemker, chief engineer in building the Jefferson Proving Ground, and one of his assistants, Harry Fritchie. The project director was W. K. Mellyor, and he worked out an agreement with Senator Spencer to guarantee preferential treatment of local citizens in consideration for jobs. ¹⁰

The number and variety of buildings necessary to operate the facility was mind-boggling. Hundreds of buildings ranging from powder magazines and turret houses to shop buildings and a hospital were constructed to carry out the various missions and operations at the installation. In addition, residential buildings were needed, which included at least one barracks building (Building #208) and officer's quarters (Buildings #300-319), which comprise the Southwestern Proving Ground Officers Quarters Historic District. It

Due to the December 7, 1941, bombing of Pearl Harbor, the opening festivities at the Proving Ground were delayed, and it was not until April 5, 1942, that Hempstead County residents were able to pass through the gates. In a two-hour period, 1,250 cars carrying 6,250 people passed through the gates, although nobody was allowed to leave their cars. Washburn wrote in the Hope Star wrote that "Sunday's visitors who, celebrating Army Day, were permitted to go through the completed SPG saw there a graphic example of American efficiency and speed - for what was rolling prairie and timberland only last August is today a functioning war plant. ...But the record will show that the SPG location here was announced May 1941; executive officers began arriving in July; workers were hired in August and the first gun fired January 1, 1942. ...Like our Anglo brothers over in England, we Americans languish slow in the arms of peace - rise slowly to the act of war. But brother when we get going!ⁿ¹²

¹⁹ Hope, p. 10, and Turner, Mary Nell. "Southwestern Proving Ground 1941-1945. *Journal of the Hempstead County Historical Society.* Volume X, Spring 1986, p. 10.

¹¹ Turner, Mary Nell. "Southwestern Proving Ground 1941-1945. *Journal of the Hempstead County Historical Society*. Volume X, Spring 1986, pp. 16-17.

¹² Turner, Mary Nell. "Southwestern Proving Ground 1941-1945. *Journal of the Hempstead County Historical Society*. Volume X, Spring 1986, p. 14.

Ibid.

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Artillery Stockades have been used as a form of defense for nearly as long as there has been a need for military fortification. Their purpose is to provide a form of shield from fire while also allowing those behind it to return fire safely. Stockades are ideal for temporary fortification because they provide relatively good protection despite the short time and little effort needed for their construction.

The earliest stockades were created by taking timbers and burying them in rows so that several feet of them were below ground and six or more feet were above ground. Sometimes two of the walls were built about two feet apart and the space between them was filled with earth or stones for even greater strength of protection. To prevent assailants form scaling stockades, the tops of the timbers were often sharpened to points or barbed wire was added. To further hinder the enemy, ditches could be dug in front of the stockade, ving those behind the stockade the higher ground and thus the advantage. ¹³

Stockades provided excellent temporary protection from attack and consequently they were used for many centuries, but they were not perfect. Because they were made of wood, they could easily be burned or torn down should the enemy come close enough to it, and of course, they were only temporary. Furthermore, as weapons technology advanced, so did the need for improved stockades. Stronger materials, like concrete, had to be used to ensure that stockades could effectively shield from attack.

Building #4, as part of the Southwestern Proving Ground, would not have been used in an actual combat situation, but it was necessary for it to be built to the same standards as authentic stockades to ensure that any tests of its ability to withstand fire and also to test fire would be accurate. It was constructed of concrete which made it rather resilient to many World War II weapons, and like its wooden predecessors, it needed to be able to shield its occupants while allowing them to fire at their assailants. The multiple bays would have served the purpose of separating both troops and weapons; therefore, if some of the artillery was to catch fire or explode in one bay, the others would be protected. Its walls were also tall enough to prevent scaling, although they lacked further defenses such as spikes or barbed wire.

Building #4 would have been an integral part of the facilities needed at the proving ground and an essential building needed for the testing of weapons and artillery. The stockade would have provided the necessary facility to carry out the testing while also providing protection to the military personnel. The use of the stockade and the testing of the weapons and artillery would have provided valuable insights and development of weapons necessary for our troops during World War II.

On May 7, 1945, Germany surrendered and on August 14, Japan surrendered, bringing an end to World War II and also bringing an end to operations at the Southwestern Proving Ground. By August 20 the proving

¹³ Leach, Smith Stallard, Engineer Field Manual. Government Printing Office, 1912, p. 380.

¹⁴ Leach, Smith Stallard, Engineer Field Manual. Government Printing Office, 1912, p. 380.

ground was ordered closed within 30 days and by September the only staff present would be a skeleton crew

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to write up final reports. The Army declared the proving ground surplus but in December 1945 the sale was stopped as the city of Hope was told it would receive the SPG airport. The remaining acreage would fall under the policies of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and the Surplus Property Corporation.¹⁵

After the Southwestern Proving Ground was closed and declared to be surplus, the War Assets Administration came in to clear the property of military supplies and equipment as well as any remaining explosives. The land and all the buildings on it were then sold to the Hope Development Corporation, which in turn, sold the property to industrial companies and citizens.

outhwestern Proving Ground Building #4 was an important component of the Southwest Proving Ground. "As such, it remains as an important reminder of the work done in Arkansas to support America's effort during World War II. Building #4 illustrates the variety of support buildings that were needed in addition to the factory buildings at Southwestern Proving Ground, and is a good example of a World War II military stockade.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Building #4 of the Southwestern Proving Ground is important for its association with World War II-era military activity in southwestern Arkansas. The Southwestern Proving Ground was an important World War II military facility used as an airfield for bombers and a testing ground for artillery shells and air bombs. (The Southwestern Proving Ground Airport Historic District was NR-listed on June 10, 1999.) Building #4 of the Southwestern Proving Ground is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with local significance under Criterion A for its associations with World War II-era military activity in Hempstead County. The Southwestern Proving Ground Building #4 is being submitted to the National Register of Historic Places under the multiple property listing "We've Gotta Get Tough: History of WWII Home front Efforts in Arkansas, 1941-1946."

¹⁵ Hope, p. 10.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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each, Smith Stallard, United States War Department. Engineer Field Manual. Government Printing Office, 71912.

Turner, Mary Nell. Information on Hope, Arkansas, found at: http://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=895.

Turner, Mary Nell. "Southwestern Proving Ground 1941-1945". Journal of the Hempstead County Historical Society. Volume X, Spring 1986.

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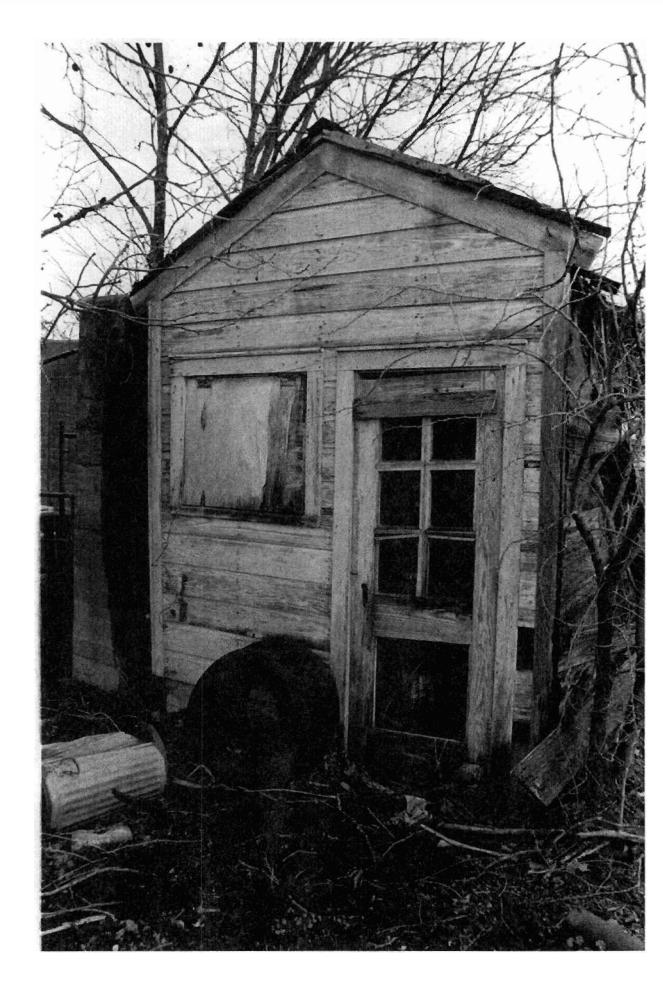
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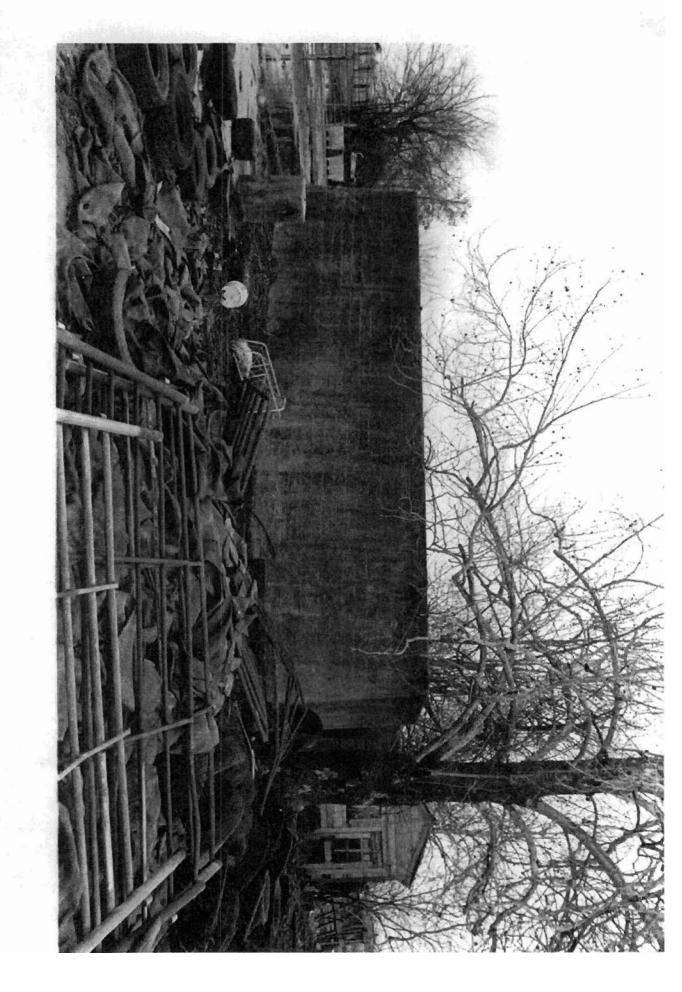
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

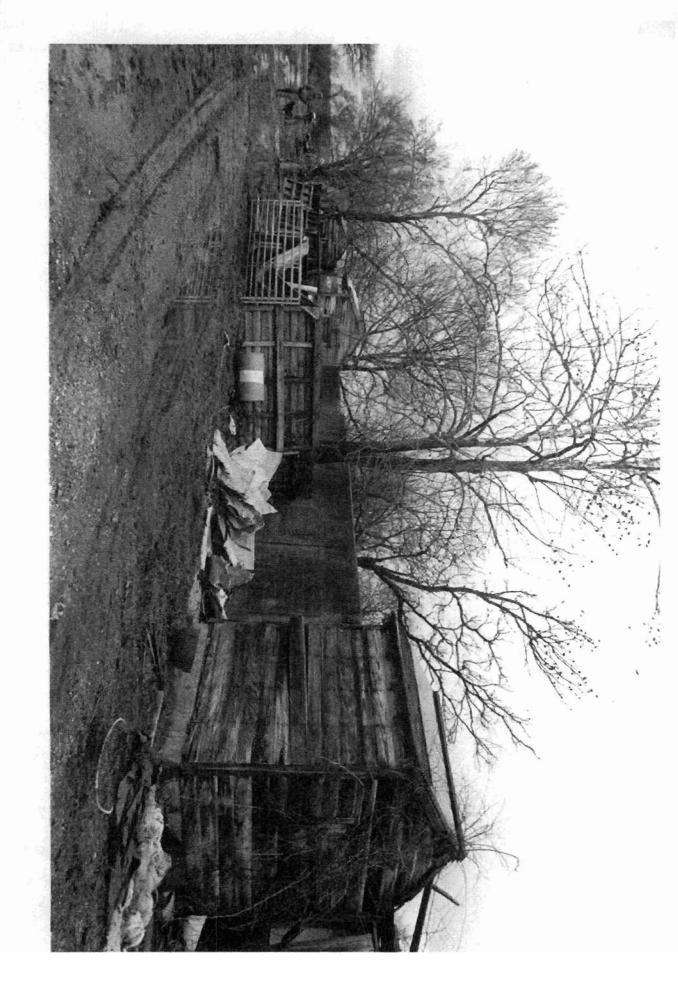
From the southwest corner of the stockade located at UTM 15/443733E/3734205N, proceed northwesterly to the northwest corner of the stockade located at UTM 15/443719E/3734235N, thence proceed northeasterly to the northeast corner of the stockade located at UTM 15/443759E/3734250N, thence proceed southeasterly to the southeast corner of the stockade located at UTM 15/443772E/3734222N, thence proceed southwesterly to the point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This boundary includes all of the land historically associated with Southwestern Proving Ground Building #4.













UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR GEOLOGICAL SURVEY 93°37'30" 35 443000m.E. 444 445 BLEVINS II MI. 33°45' SOUTHWESTERN PROVING GROUND 337 BUILDING #4 34 HOPE VIC., 3734000m.N. HEMPSTEAD COUNTY ARKANSAS BR 3/4 T. 11 S. UTM; 15/443747/37372-16 3733 Substation.-354 Oakhaven 334 10 3731

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3/6/