

**United States Department of the Interior
National 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 #5
other names/site number Fixed Ammunition Magazine, Site #HE0754

2. Location

street & number 259 Hempstead County Road 279 not for publication
city or town Hope vicinity
state Arkansas code AR county Hempstead code 057 zip code 71801

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date
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

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain): _____ _____ _____	_____	_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s), district, site, structure, object

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Table with columns: Contributing, Noncontributing, buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total. Values: 1, 1.

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

We've Gotta Get Tough: History of WWII Home front Efforts in Arkansas, 1941-1946

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Defense/Arms Storage

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/Subsistence/Storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other/Plain Traditional

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete, walls Concrete, Earth, roof Concrete, Earth, other

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B.** removed from its original location.
- C.** birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

Local

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Military

Engineering

Period of Significance

1941-1945

Significant Dates

1941

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

Architect/Builder

Howard, Needles, Tammen & Bergendorff, Architect
W.E. Callahan Construction Company, Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>443877</u>	<u>3734146</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation 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 Kathleen Swaim, Intern , and Ralph S. Wilcox, National Register & Survey Coordinator
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date May 12, 2009
street & number 1500 Tower Building 323 Center Street telephone 501-324-9787
city or town Little Rock state AR zip code 72201

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Rene England
street & number 360 Hempstead 23 telephone 870-722-5421
city or town Hope state AR zip code 71801

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 with 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.

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National Park Service

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Section number 7 Page 1

Summary

Southwestern Proving Ground Building #5 was constructed in 1941 as a fixed ammunition storage bunker for the east firing stockade. 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. This magazine is one story with cast concrete walls and a continuous foundation of the same material. The building has a rounded roof which is covered with earth along with a steel door that completes the construction.

Elaboration

Building #5 of the Southwestern Proving Ground is located near the community of Oakhaven, approximately five miles northwest of Hope, Hempstead County, Arkansas, and approximately 340 feet southeast of the owner's home. The building consists of a traditional construction resting on a continuous cast concrete foundation of rectangular shape. The building is of single-story height. The walls are composed of cast concrete covered by earth material. The roof is rounded and made of concrete and covered in earth due to its use as a bunker. There is only one entrance on the northwest side and exit on the same side of the building which consists of one steel door. The structure is entirely functional in nature, and therefore is lacking in any form of ornamentation.

Integrity

Overall, Building #5 is in good condition. The reinforced concrete walls are entirely intact and in excellent shape. Fencing surrounds the building because of its agricultural usage. Also, a ramp has been added to the entrance to the building. Although, earth still covers the top of the bunker, trees have grown on the earthen roof. The door is still intact in its original form and has not been altered in any way.

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 the building. Most likely the only threat to this structure is further private development and deterioration.

Southwestern Proving Ground Building #5 retains good integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship. The building still stands on its original location on the eastern side of the old Southwestern Proving Ground. The exterior of the building has not been altered however the building is now enclosed by fencing due to its agricultural location. The building is located in a rural area similar to its surroundings in

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the 1940s. Despite the fact that the Southwestern Proving Ground is no longer in operation, this building's utilitarian design gives observers the feeling of its historic use. Many of the buildings on the Southwestern Proving Ground have been destroyed over the years, but there are still a few nearby including the Southwestern Proving Ground Officers' Quarters Historic District, which consists of twenty homes built in 1941 as officers' quarters, and the Southwestern Proving Ground Airport Historic District, which consists of several airplane hangars.

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National Park Service

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Section number 8 Page 1

Summary

Building #5 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 #5 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 and **Criterion C** for its design, which adhered to prevailing trends in military architecture on the eve of World War II. Also, the Southwestern Proving Ground Building #5 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.”

Elaboration

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.³

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.⁴

³ *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Southern Arkansas*. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1890, p. 379.

⁴ Turner, Mary Nell. Information on Hope, Arkansas, found at: <http://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=895>.

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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 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.⁵

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.⁶

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

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

⁶ 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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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 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.)⁷

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.⁸

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.⁹

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 reintering 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.¹⁰

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

Southwestern Proving Ground Building #5

Name of Property

Hempstead County, Arkansas

County and State

⁷ Hope, p. 9.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

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area. The editor of the *Hope Star* at the time, Alex Washburn, understood the need for the facility in terms of United States defense, but also understood the plight of the people who were displaced by the construction.

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 ..."¹¹

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.¹²

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.¹³

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* 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!"¹⁴

Southwestern Proving Ground Building #5

Name of Property

Hempstead County, Arkansas

County and State

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² 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.

¹³ Turner, Mary Nell. "Southwestern Proving Ground 1941-1945. *Journal of the Hempstead County Historical Society*. Volume X, Spring 1986, pp. 16-17.

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

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Prior to WWII, ammunition was stored in insulated buildings. The outbreak of the war and the increasing threat of enemy air strikes made it necessary to protect the ammunition.¹⁵ Building #5 stored fixed ammunition which was a cartridge case that was attached permanently to the projectile with a tin strap used by medium artillery weapons such as the 155mm Howitzer. Even though Building #5 was not used in actual combat situations, it was built to the same standards as authentic magazines to ensure that any tests of its ability to withstand fire were successful and to simulate real combat simulations.

The designs of buildings constructed on military testing facilities across the country just prior to World War II were greatly influenced by military architectural standards established at Picatinny Arsenal. Picatinny Arsenal, a 6,500-acre military installation established in 1880 near Dover, New Jersey, “earned a reputation as the Army’s authority on the manufacturing of ammunition” by the end of World War I.¹⁶ In addition to manufacturing ammunition, Picatinny Arsenal’s research and development facilities provided plans and training for the construction and operation of other munitions facilities during World War II. A 315-acre section of the Picatinny Arsenal property was used to construct the Navy’s Lake Denmark Powder Depot in 1891. Several additional magazines were constructed at the Lake Denmark Powder Depot after World War I to house the Navy’s vast reserves of unused ammunition. Ammunition storage facilities on the East Coast were dangerously overloaded in order to house this large amount of leftover explosive materials, which would contribute to the severity of the lightning-ignited blast at Lake Denmark in July 1926. Following this catastrophic explosion, the U.S. Navy instituted new safety policies for the storage of combustible materials. The revised policies limited the amount of highly explosive material stored in any given magazine required a distance of 500 feet between highly explosive magazines, and established new design standards for munitions storage buildings.¹⁷ Most buildings were originally designed using “permanent, fireproof” construction methods like concrete foundations and floors, internal concrete walls, concrete or steel framing, and infill walls of hollow clay tile.

Only 42 of the 108 buildings on the Southwestern Proving Ground were made of masonry, concrete, or brick. The remaining buildings were constructed with “bull” pine, prompting N. P. O’Neal, the owner of the Hope Brick Company, to question the permanency of the Southwestern Proving Ground. Obviously, part of his concern for the permanency of the facility had to do with his company’s failure to receive a contract to provide the brick for the buildings. (Buildings #32 and #33 are identical to Building #5, but they are not being nominated because owner permission could not be obtained).¹⁸

Southwestern Proving Ground Building #5

Hempstead County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

¹⁵ Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record, “Hamilton Field, Ammunitions Bunkers, Around base of Igloo Hill, Novato, Marin County, CA,” Library of Congress, http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=hhdatapage&fileName=ca/ca2600/ca2692/data/hhdatapage.db&recNum=1&itemLink=D?hh:3:/temp/~amme_m_uYN0: (accessed May 12, 2009).

¹⁶ Thurber, Pamela. HAER NJ-36 for Picatinny Arsenal, p. 5.

¹⁷ Thurber, Pamela. HAER NJ-36 for Picatinny Arsenal, p. 1, 5, 18-23.

¹⁸ Turner, Mary Nell. “Southwestern Proving Ground 1941-1945.” *Journal of the Hempstead County Historical Society*. Volume X, Spring 1986, p. 11.

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On May 20, 1942, the War Production Board adopted a directive intended to establish tighter priorities for construction. Even defense related construction would receive approval only if it followed specific guidelines. Approval was given if:

it was essential for the war effort; postponement of construction would be detrimental to the war effort; it was not practical to rent or convert existing facilities; the design for the structure was of the simplest type. All construction should be of the cheapest, temporary character and should use materials which were most plentiful.¹⁹

This explains why only concrete was used but the necessity of a resilient door allowed for steel to be used in this situation.

The other two buildings that were used as fixed ammunition magazines are located on the western side of the proving grounds in a similar geographical area to Building #5. All of the fixed ammunition magazines are located on the southern side of a circular drive and were built next to the same type of other storage buildings. These buildings included a small tool and equipment building and a fuze magazine. Both of these types of buildings were necessary to assemble the artillery weapon to fire on the range.

Fixed ammunition had been used as early as the 1700s to use in light to medium artillery weapons such as small caliber cannons. This was the most frequently used ammunition during the American Civil War. According to Albert C. Manucy, "Gunners early began to consolidate ammunition for easier and quicker loading for instance, after the powder charge was placed in a bag, the next logical step was to attach the wad and the cannonball to it, so that loading could be made in one simple operation. Toward the end, the sabot or 'shoe' took the place of the wad. It was secured to the ball with a pair of metal straps to make 'semi-fixed' ammunition; then, if the neck of the powder bag were tied around the sabot, the result was one cartridge, containing powder, sabot, and ball called 'fixed' ammunition. Fixed ammunition was usual for the lighter field pieces by the end of the 1700s, while the bigger guns used 'semi-fixed'."²⁰

Fixed ammunition had to be stored in a certain way in order for it to stay dry and prevent an unwanted explosion. According to *The Hand-Book of Artillery for the Service of the United States*, fixed ammunition had to be stored:

Southwestern Proving Ground Building #5
Name of Property

Hempstead County, Arkansas
County and State

United States Department of the Interior

¹⁹ Kuranda, Kathryn M. et.al. "Military Construction and Wartime Logistics." *Historic Context for Department of Defense World War II Permanent Construction*. Prepared by R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates, Inc., Maryland for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Maryland, June 1997.

²⁰ Manucy, Albert C. *Artillery Through the Ages: A Short Illustrated History of Cannon, Emphasizing Types Used in America*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1949, pp.70-71.

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Either in boxes or placed in piles, formed of two parallel rows of cartridges, with the sabots together; in 4 tiers for 12-pdr and 5 for 6-pdr; chock the lower tier with strips of wood fastened with small nails; put a layer of tow two in[ches] thick between the shot; let the piles rest on planks, if there is no floor, and cover them with tarpaulins; have the place swept, and the cartridge-bags brushed off. Leave a passage of 18 in. between walls. Fixed ammunition should not be put into powder-magazines, if it can be avoided; it should be kept in a dry place above the ground floor if practicable; the store-rooms should be always aired in fine weather, the piles should be taken down, and made up again every six months at most, the bags examined and repaired, and damaged cartridges broken up. A ticket on each pile should show the number and kind of cartridges, the additions to the pile, and the issues.²¹

Building #5 was an integral part of the facilities needed at the proving ground and an essential building needed for storing ammunition. There were two other buildings that served the purpose of ammunition storage which shows the need for such structures. The magazine would have provided the necessary structure to keep the ammunition safe from a barrage of gunfire, weather, or other disasters such as fire.

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 ground was ordered closed within 30 days and by September the only staff present would be a skeleton crew 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.²²

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.

Southwestern Proving Ground Building #5 was an important component of the Southwestern 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 #5 illustrates the usefulness of artillery magazines that were needed at the Southwestern Proving Ground, and is a good example of a World War II military bunker.

Southwestern Proving Ground Building #5

Name of Property

Hempstead County, Arkansas

County and State

United States Department of the Interior

²¹ Roberts, Joseph. *The Hand-Book of Artillery: For the Service of the United States*. New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1860, p. 112.

²² Hope, p. 10.

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Statement of Significance

Building #5 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 #5 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 and **Criterion C** for its design, which adhered to prevailing trends in military architecture on the eve of World War II. The Southwestern Proving Ground Building #5 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.”

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Bibliography

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

“History of Military Housing Construction” found at: <https://www.denix.osd.mil/denix/Public/ES-Programs/Conservation/Quarters/three.html>.

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Information on Oakhaven provided by the Honorable Summer Bright, Mayor of Oakhaven. In the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.

James, Elizabeth A. “Maumelle Ordnance Works Bunker #4, Maumelle, Pulaski County, Arkansas.” National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. From the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 2006.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the edge of the owner's driveway at UTM point 15/443858E/3734154N proceed northeasterly for 75 feet parallel to the driveway, thence proceed southeasterly perpendicular to the driveway for 100 feet, thence proceed southwesterly parallel to the driveway for 75 feet, thence proceed northwesterly perpendicular to the driveway for 100 feet to the point of beginning.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This boundary includes all of the land historically associated with Southwestern Proving Ground Building #5.