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7 DESCRIPTION

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Radar Station B-71 is located approximately two miles south of the mouth of the Klamath River on a comparatively flat shelf in an otherwise steep hillside about 250 feet above the Pacific Ocean and 100 feet below the dirt road along the coast, at a point southeast of Flint Rock Head and northeast of White Rock, southwest of Flint Ridge and about due west of the headwaters of Richardson Creek, although on the opposite side of the ridge from the creek. Before the station was built the site was crossed by the old and longabandoned Trinidad-Klamath wagon road, which descends northward through the station to the mouth of the Klamath River. The road is thoroughly overgrown with brush, vines and grasses, as is the vicinity of the radar station.

The station consists today of three buildings: a power building disguised as a farmhouse, an operations building disguised as a barn, and a functional wood frame two-stall privy or outhouse, the latter a partially collapsed ruin.

The two major buildings were constructed for the Army by a private contractor to serve as an aircraft early warning radar station, and consist of concrete block walls roughly two feet thick covered with wood-framed gable roofs with wood shingle finish. As an inherent part of their design, both were disguised as farm structures, the operations building as a barn and the power-supply building as a farmhouse; the "built-in" camouflage features are unusual as most camouflage consisted of disguising existing buildings, rather than designing camouflage into new construction.

The larger of the two buildings, roughly 22 feet wide and 70 feet long, which served as the operations building for the radar station, housing the oscilloscope and the operating personnel, was disguised as a barn by means of its shape and a false barn door at the north end over which was an extension of the roof gable simulating the track for a traveling pulley hoist which in a genuine barn would be used for moving bales of hay. The exterior walls of the "barn" were disguised with a false wood wall whose outer edge was five or six inches beyond the outer face of the concrete block wall; this false wall was of vertical one inch thick planks. The gable ends of the "barn" had board and batten exterior finish. On the west side there was an additional room of concrete blocks extending about nine feet out from the main rectangle of the building and about 21 feet wide. Adjacent to the south side of this extension is an additional extension consisting of a crudely built wood framed shed of horizontal planks which was probably an addition to the structure by some local rancher after its abandonment by the army.

The interior of the operations building was divided into about seven rooms. The rooms had acoustic tile ceilings. At least one of the rooms, and perhaps more, also had acoustic tile walls. The interior has been largely gutted in salvage of materials for use elsewhere, and/or by vandals. Furthermore, it has been partially inundated by a flow of mud from the north door and an east window to a depth, varying from several inches to several feet; whether this occurred all at once or accumulated from many recurrences is unknown. The false barn door on the north end of the building is gone, the opening filled with a partition probably of post-war construction. Most of the exterior plank false-siding is gone also, except on the south third of the east wall and part of the south end of the building and the gable ends. This false siding was probably salvaged by local residents for use elsewhere. The operations building is oriented slightly off of a magnetic north-south axis by about six degrees, so that its

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DATE ENTERED

APR 1 4 1978

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

longer axis is positioned slightly northwest to southeast.

The Power-Supply Building is located about 148 feet south of the Operations Building (measured from the northwest corner of the former to the southwest corner of the latter), and seems to be oriented along a magnetic north-south axis. A concrete block structure rectangular in floor plan, this building has no windows but a door at the north end. It measures about 38 feet long by 22 feet wide, and is camouflaged or disguised by design to look like a farmhouse. Its wood-shingled gable roof has two false dormer windows on the seaward side; that is, there are two dormers but each entire dormer structure sits on top of the shingled roof--they do not penetrate through the shingles to the attic of the structure; the dormers are for the purpose of making this building appear to be a residential structure when in fact it was an industrial structure housing an electrical generator to power the radar. The gable ends and exterior false walls were of vertical board and batten siding on a wood frame secured to the concrete block walls, and these false walls featured a number of fake windows which did not penetrate the concrete block walls. The false wall is missing from the entire west side of the building, its lumber probably salvaged for use elsewhere. The building has a shed-roofed entrance at the north end which may have been a post-war modification, and a small shed-roofed addition near the southeast corner on the east side, also possibly a post-war addition.

During the first half of 1943 a mobile SCR-270B radar antenna, consisting of a rectangular metal grid mounted vertically on a pole of traingular metal framework, the whole assembly carried on a wheeled trailer to make it mobile, was installed uncamouflaged about 30 feet west of the operations building. The layered metal grid antenna reminded some of a set of gigantic metal bedsprings. This system was replaced later by two different "permanent" radar systems in succession, their antenna locations and other features not at present known. There is nothing to mark the site of the mobile radar today, although careful examination of the ground, perhaps by an archeologist, might reveal its precise location.

The privy, or outhouse, a two-stall design, is located about 95 feet northeast of the northeast corner of the operations building. It is a ruin which has partially collapsed. It was a wood frame structure.

About 225 feet south-southwest of the southwest end of the power building is the remains of a circular pit about twelve feet in diameter which may have been the location of one of the three 50 caliber machine guns on anti-aircraft mounts which protected the station. About 100 feet northwest of the operations building is the remains of a similar circular pit which is believed to be the site of a second 50 caliber machine gun. The third site of a gun mount has not yet been located, but should be identifiable.

Just west of the "farmhouse" is a small depression containing deteriorated wood; what it represents is unknown.

The Operations Building is Park No. HS-4-1; the Power Building is HS-4-2; the privy is HS-4-3.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Klamath River Radar Station is of regional architectural and military historical significance as a rare survivor of a World War II early warning radar station. Its architectural significance lies in the camouflage element in its design and construction; its significance in military history lies in its role as a part of the pioneering World War II radar air defense network, the first step towards today's far more sophisticated radar early warning defense network. The Klamath River Radar Station survives as a typical example of a radar station in America's earliest radar defenses, most of its sister stations having long since disappeared.

When World War II began, radar was a comparatively new defense development pioneered independently during the 1930s by the British, French, Germans, Japanese and Americans. In the United States, the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Army's Signal Corps ran independent development programs.

Earlier aircraft warning systems, relying on sound detection devices and ground spotters, were tested on both the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts in 1937 and 1938, but it was not until the Signal Corps had developed a mobile radar system known as SCR-270 that the War Department in May 1940 directed army commanders to select sites for locating radar stations along the coasts and to adjust the existing Aircraft Warning Service plans to the use of radar. On August 2, 1940, the War Department approved a plan to provide the continental coastal frontiers with 31 mobile detectors, beginning with eleven sites along the northeast Atlantic Coast and ten along the Pacific Coast. The four Army Air Corps interceptor commands worked feverishly to create a coastal radar net and a supporting corps of ground observers. By December 7, 1941, sites had been picked for thirteen radar stations along the East Coast and eight of these were nearing completion; on the West Coast, there were ten stations to cover 1,200 miles from Canada to Mexico, supplemented by 2,400 ground observers.

The Japanese brought America into World War II with their attacks on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and on the Philippines. By early January, 1942, the Army had allocated almost all of its available mobile radar (SCR-270) to continental defense, having emplaced 31 sets along the East Coast and 27 along the West Coast. Still further expansion of this network may have been in part a result of a devastatingly critical report on American coastal air defenses by Robert Watson-Watt, Scientific Advisor on Telecommunications to the British Air Ministry, who had been detailed to make a detailed analysis of American air defense. Anyway, by mid-July 1942 there were 41 radar stations on the East Coast and 31 on the West Coast, and the number was still to grow.

The obvious immediate necessity of guarding American coastlines once America entered the war was perhaps even more urgent on the Pacific Coast than on the Atlantic in view of

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its Outposts.	(Washington: Offic	ce of the Chief o	f Military History, 1964)
pp. 61-65, 82 The United St	-93. (This volume ates <u>Army in World V</u>	is part of the Ar <u>Nar II</u> and part o	my series of histories entitled of the subseries entitled <u>The</u>
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE

Japan's ability to assault American territory so dramatically demonstrated at Pearl Harbor and again in landings in the Aleutian Islands of Alaska. The threat was further demonstrated when a Japanese submarine shelled an oil refinery north of Santa Barbara, California, on February 23, 1942, when another Japanese submarine shelled Estevan Point in British Columbia, Canada, on June 20, 1942, and again when a Japanese submarine shelled Fort Stevens, Washington, on July 21, 1942. With respect to aerial attack, there was early in the war the possibility of Japanese carriers launching a strike against the Pacific Coast, but even discounting this threat, there was the undoubted ability of Japanese submarines to launch single seaplane strikes, demonstrated on September 9, 1942 when one such submarine-launched aircraft dropped incendiary bombs on Oregon forests a mere 40 miles or so north of the Klamath River.

The radar station south of the Klamath River, in what is now Redwood National Park, was built in late 1942 and early 1943 as the northernmost California station in a network of 72 proposed stations, 65 of which were actually built, stretching from the Canadian border into Mexico. The Klamath station was designated by memorandum dated November 6, 1942 from the Office of the Commanding General, IV Fighter Command, as Station B-71, named "Trinidad". It was also referred to as the "Klamath River" station.

The station appears to have been initially equipped, probably in July 1943, with an SCR-270B portable long-range (120 to 150 mile) radar system moved in from its previous location, probably Station B-38 on Santa Rosa Island (one of two radar stations on that island). Between December 1943 and April 1944, the SCR-270B was replaced with a "permanent" SCR-271 system.

The station consisted of two major buildings, one of which housed the power generating equipment and was disguised to look like a farmhouse, and the operating building, disguised to look like a barn. There was also a two-hole privy. The buildings were erected by a private construction firm under Army contract, and their camouflage features were built-in, including false wooden siding and false windows over concrete-block construction, and false dormer windows on the power building roof. From the air, the station appeared to be a farm with barn, except for the portable radar located in 1943 in the open and uncamouflaged about thirty feet west of the operating building.

The station was manned by members of the Army Air Corps quartered in barracks near the town of Klamath. It was commanded during part of 1943 by a 2nd Lieutenant Neff, later replaced by one or more 1st lieutenants in succession. One day's operation of the station required a crew of about 35 men to cover the 24 hours in shifts. The station reported by direct phone to an Aircraft Warning Service Filter Office in Berkeley, California. The station was guarded by a detachment of military police, member of which carried rifles and had, in the words of a corporal who served there, "viscious dogs". The station was also protected by three 50 caliber machine guns on anti-aircraft mounts. All of the Army Air Corps men also carried rifles, and the station had one submachine gun always loaded and ready for use.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DATE ENTERED APR 11 9 1973	

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

As the threat of Japanese attack waned towards the end of World War II, the coastal early warning radar stations began to be phased out. But with the need for early warning radar decreasing, the need for air-sea rescue radar increased, and effective July 1, 1944, the Klamath station was converted to emergency rescue service, with the SCR-271 radar replaced with RC-150 IFF equipment. Station B-71 was thus one of only 22 radar stations on the Pacific Coast which remained operational until the end of World War II.

Following World War II military technology swiftly rendered the old SCR-270 series radar with its 150-mile range obsolete, as the world entered an age of jet bombers and unmanned ballistic missiles of intercontinental range, requiring in defense immensely more sophisticated radar systems similarly of intercontinental range, and ultimately "spy" sattelites in orbit in space far above the earth. The primitive little radar station south of the Klamath River with its 150-mile range, product of a wartime emergency, was abandoned, its role in America's pioneer early warning radar system finished. Old station B-71 reverted to local ranch ownership, was stripped of part of its wooden camouflage siding by local residents who had other uses for the wood, and sheltered sheep which occasionally wandered into the buildings. Mud slides from the steep hillside above inundated its east walls and flowed into the interior of the operating building. It was this decayed historic property which the National Park Service acquired after creation of Redwood National Park.

Thus the integrity of Radar Station B-71 \forall as been damaged through decay, vandalism and salvage, but the complex still possesses sufficient surviving significant elements to merit entry in the National Register of Historic Places.

Resource Management

CONTINUATION SHEET

The values which require protection and preservation here are the buildings and their surviving camouflage features, the sites or potential sites of other World War II military features such as the locations of radar antennas and other equipment, the sites of the three 50 caliber machine gun emplacements, possible sites of sentry posts, etc.

The radar station was built immediately adjacent to if not partly on top of the historic old Trinidad-Crescent City wagon road, which descends to the station from a higher elevation to the south, and passing the station, descends from the station to the mouth of the Klamath River to the north. A segment of this old road may merit nomination to the National Register.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

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 Vol. I. <u>Plans and Early Operations January 1939 to August 1942</u>. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948), pp. 152-153, 289-299.
 Vol. IV. <u>Men and Plains</u>. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1955), pp. 88-91.
- "History of the Western Defense Command," Vol. 3, Chapter 10, Enclosure 8, pp. 1-2; manuscript in the archives of the Center of Military History, Washington, D.C.; copy in the files of the National Park Service, Western Regional Office, Division of Cultural Resources Management, although the latter copy lacks the map supposedly accompanying this enclosure.
- National Park Service, Park History Files pertaining to Klamath Radar Station in Division of Cultural Resources Management, Western Regional Office, San Francisco; duplicate material at Redwood National Park. See especially data supplied by James N. Eastman, Jr., Chief, Research Branch, The Albert F. Simpson Historical Research Center, U.S. Air Force, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, and specifically:
 - Memorandum No. 132-4, November 6, 1942, Headquarters, IV Fighter Command, Office of the Commanding General (Brig. Gen. Kepner), Oakland, California, signed by Lt. Colonel Russell V. Ritchey, Adjutant, subject: "New Code Designation of Radar Stations.
 - Memorandum to: Brig. Gen. Emil C. Kiel, Chief of Staff, Headquarters Fourth Air Force, Office of the Commanding General, San Francisco, Calif., 11 April 1944, signed by Colonel Robert F. Frost, Deputy Director of Defense, subject: "Status of Radar and Radio Construction of Fourth Air Force.
 - Memorandum to Commanding Officer, San Francisco Air Defense Region, San Francisco, from Headquarters Fourth Air Force, Office of the Commanding General, 22 June 1944, signed by Colonel Robert F. Frost, Deputy Director of Defense, subject: "Plan for IFF Coverage for Emergency Rescue."
 - Data Sheet, untitled, 22 August 1944, listing all West Coast radar stations and their current status as of that date.
 - Terrett, Dulaney, <u>The Signal Corps: The Emergency</u>. (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1956) pp. 46-49, 86-87, 121-129. (This volume is part of the Army series of histories entitled <u>The United States Army in World War II</u> and part of the subseries entitled <u>The Technical Services.</u>)
 - Thompson, George Raynor, Dixie R. Harris, Pauline M. Oakes, and Dulaney Terrett, <u>The</u> <u>Signal Corps: The Test</u>. (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1957) pp. 93-102. (This volume is part of the same series cited above under "Terrett . . .")
 - Webber, Bert, <u>Retaliation</u>: <u>Japanese Attacks and Allied Countermeasures on the Pacific</u> <u>Coast in World War II</u>. (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1975.) pp. 29-31, <u>36-40, 51, 53-78.</u>

(continued)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 3

- Whitehead, O.S., letter, dated December 1, 1976, Lometa, Texas, to Mr. Homer P. Leach, Chief Ranger, Redwood National Park. 1 page. Copy in NPS Park History Files, Western Regional Office, Division of Cultural Resources Management. Mr. Whitehead was a corporal who served at the radar station near Klamath.
- Whitehead, O.S., Response to Questionnaire prepared by NPS Western Regional Historian Gordon Chappell, December 27, 1976. (Copy in files cited above under first listing of "Whitehead . . . " Mr. Whitehead failed to respond to a second questionnaire.

