# Form 10-300

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**  
**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**  
(July 1969)

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

*(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)*

### 1. NAME

**COMMON:**

Canyon Creek Laboratory of the U. S. Public Health Service

**AND/OR HISTORIC:**

The Ricketts Memorial Museum

### 2. LOCATION

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

T6N R21W, Sect. 26 (NE^1)

**CITY OR TOWN:**

3/4 of a mile west of the western city limit of Hamilton

**STATE:**

Montana

**COUNTY:**

Ravalli

### 3. CLASSIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY (Check One)</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>Building</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Public Acquisition:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site</td>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>In Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Being Considered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Preservation work in progress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate):**

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Educational
- Entertainment
- Government
- Industrial
- Military
- Park
- Private Residence
- Religious
- Residential
- Scientific
- Transportation
- Other (Specify)

### 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

**OWNER'S NAME:**

Dr. William L. Jellison

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

504 South Third Street

**CITY OR TOWN:**

Hamilton

**STATE:**

Montana

**COUNTY:**

Ravalli

### 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

**COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:**

Ravalli County Courthouse

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITY OR TOWN:</th>
<th>STATE:</th>
<th>CODE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

**TITLE OF SURVEY:**

State Inventory

**DATE OF SURVEY:**

Sept., 1968

**DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:**

Montana Fish and Game Department

**STREET AND NUMBER:**

Sam Mitchell Building

**CITY OR TOWN:**

Helena

**STATE:**

Montana

**COUNTY:**

Ravalli
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONDITION</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Deteriorated</th>
<th>Ruins</th>
<th>Unexposed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☑</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Altered</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unaltered</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moved</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Site</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance.

Brick structure (see attached) school, converted to laboratory. Condition, excellent.

The local Neighborhood Youth Corps has supplied attendants each summer.

The grounds, building, and exhibits are being gradually improved. There are flower beds, three fish ponds, and sprinkler system.

The exhibits feature not only the laboratory work, but include Indian artifacts and costumes, natural science, work of local artists, and Lewis and Clark history.

There is no comparable museum facility in the country.

Some effort is being made through Public Health Service channels to secure financial help for this project. Our representatives in Congress have been kept informed of developments but have not been requested to take any action.

The museum project is listed as Project #100 under the local Resources Conservation and Development Program and has the active support of this agency.
Background information regarding this building is of historical importance. It was originally constructed in 1894 and used as a schoolhouse. Twenty-seven years later, from 1921 to 1928 Dr. R. R. Parker and his staff from the Montana State Board of Entomology and the U.S. Public Health Service occupied this old building about one mile west of Hamilton, Montana. This group engaged in the study and control of spotted fever, a serious and often fatal disease prevalent in Montana and about 10 other Western States. While at this laboratory, the Spencer-Parker vaccine for spotted fever was developed and other important studies on ticks and tick-borne diseases were started (tick-borne tularemia, tick paralysis).

Before vaccine was available, about 400 cases of spotted fever had occurred in the Bitterroot Valley and over 250 of these were fatal. After vaccine came into use only one death was recorded in the Valley in persons who had taken the vaccine, and this was a professional laboratory worker. Similar results from the vaccine were experienced elsewhere in the Rocky Mountain region. Before a vaccine was developed there were six cases of spotted fever in research workers in Montana laboratories and others; all were fatal. Since vaccine became available there have been over 30 cases in laboratory workers with only one death recorded. The work done at this laboratory was a significant part of the medical history of the West.
ROCKY MOUNTAIN LABORATORY, A Brief History of its Growth and Research Activities, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and United States Public Health Service publications

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORNER</th>
<th>LATITUDE</th>
<th>LONGITUDE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NW</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
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<tr>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LATITUDE</th>
<th>LONGITUDE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
<td>Degrees Minutes Seconds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 46°        15'        15"        | 114°       10'        49"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1 acre

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Robert A. Murray, Historic Consultant

ORGANIZATION: Montana Fish and Game Department

STREET AND NUMBER: Sam Mitchell Building

CITY OR TOWN: Helena

STATE: Montana

DATE: Sept. 1968

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National [X] State [ ] Local [ ]

Name: Wesley R. Woodgerd
Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: March 17, 1970

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

CHIEF OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Date: OCT 15 1970

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Date: OCT 12 1970
The work at Hamilton, Montana, has been the basis of a book "Fighting Spotted Fever in the Rockies" by Eleanor Gaskins Price (1947), for a movie, "Green Light", and for numerous articles in magazines and newspapers.

In 1928, the laboratory work was moved from the Canyon Creek site to a new building on the edge of Hamilton. The laboratory has grown from one building to a complex of many units with a physical plant value of approximately $3,000,000 value. It has a staff of over 160 workers. It enjoys a world wide reputation for work on arthropod borne diseases, virus studies and other medical research.

For many years tourists were taken through the laboratory even to rooms where work was in progress. Now tourists are limited to the library and a small museum room and are not encouraged. Professional visitors are received for brief or extended visits.

The restriction on visitors was not a lack of hospitality, but was made because of the danger of infection from some of the diseases being studied including typhus, Q fever and tularemia.

For this reason it appeared desirable to have a public museum where history and work of the laboratory could be exhibited. The Canyon Creek Laboratory seemed most appropriate for this purpose.

The building was acquired in 1966, and the first year was spent in cleaning up the building and grounds. Displays and pictures were borrowed from the Laboratory and from other sources and installed.

The museum has been open to the public for three summers, 1967, 1968, and 1969. No admission has been charged. No "tourist material" has been on sale.

Submitted by Dr. William Jellison
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM
(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

1. NAME
   COMMON: Canyon Creek Laboratory of the U.S. Public Health Service
   AND/OR HISTORIC: The Ricketts Memorial Museum

2. LOCATION
   STREET AND NUMBER:
   T6N R21W, Sect. 26 (NE₁/₄)
   CITY OR TOWN:
   3/4 of a mile west of the western city limit of Hamilton
   STATE: Montana
   COUNTY: Ravalli

3. MAP REFERENCE
   SOURCE:
   Mont. State Highway Dept. County Maps, Ravalli County Sheet 2A
   SCALE: 11/16 inch = 1 mile
   DATE: 1947 Revised 1959

4. REQUIREMENTS
   TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS
   1. Property boundaries where required.
   2. North arrow.
   3. Latitude and longitude reference.
**PROPERTY MAP FORM**

*Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entry Number</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>00/3</td>
<td>7/10/72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STATE:** Montana  
**COUNTY:** Ravalli  
**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

### 1. NAME

**COMMON:** Canyon Creek Laboratory of the U.S. Public Health Service  
**AND/OR HISTORIC:** The Ricketts Memorial Museum

### 2. LOCATION

**STREET AND NUMBER:** T6N R21W, Sect. 26 (NE1/4)  
**CITY OR TOWN:** 3/4 of a mile west of the western city limit of Hamilton  
**STATE:** Montana  
**COUNTY:** Ravalli  
**CODE:** 25  
**CODE:** 081

### 3. MAP REFERENCE

**SOURCE:** USGS  
**SCALE:** 1:250,000  
**DATE:**

### 4. REQUIREMENTS

*TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS*

1. Property boundaries where required.  
2. North arrow.  
3. Latitude and longitude reference.