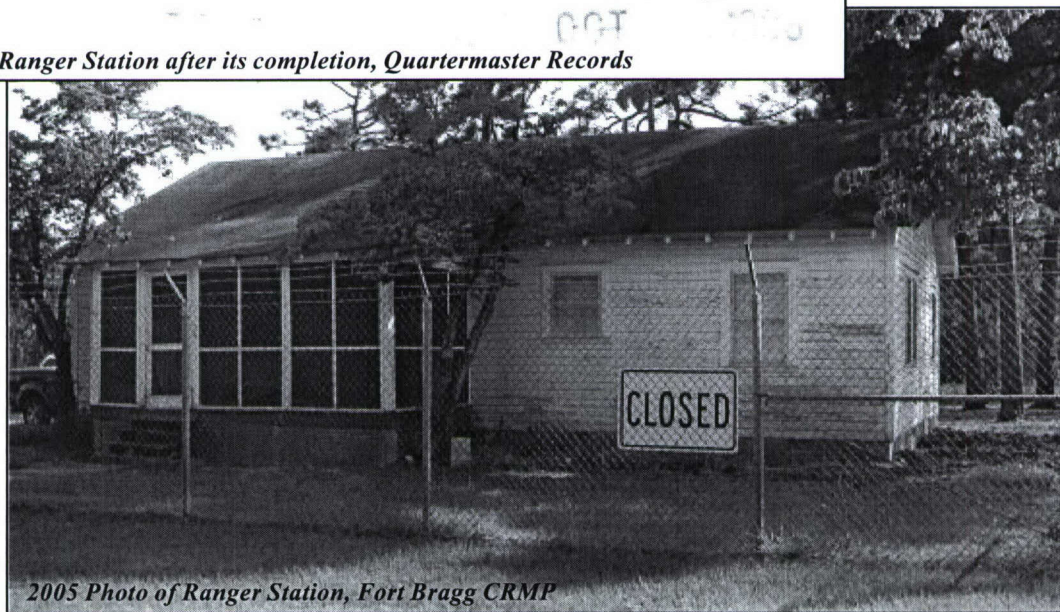


Ranger Station 2
Determination of Eligibility
for the National Register of Historic Places



1938 Photo of Ranger Station after its completion, Quartermaster Records



2005 Photo of Ranger Station, Fort Bragg CRMP

Fort Bragg, North Carolina
Heather McDonald and Jeffrey Irwin
Fort Bragg Cultural Resources Management Program
May 2006

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14. ABSTRACT This report focuses on the National Register of Historic Places Eligibility of the single remaining historic ranger station structure on Fort Bragg, Ranger Station 2. The report provides a brief summary of the history of the Forest Ranger program at Camp Bragg and Fort Bragg from the 1920s through the 1980s as well as an in-depth architectural description of the interior and exterior of the building.

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INTRODUCTION

Ranger Station 2, located on the western boundary of the Fort Bragg Military Reservation in Hoke County, North Carolina, was constructed in 1937. It served as a ranger station for nearly four decades and as such was both a single family residence and a station from which ranger activities were based. This report evaluates the building's eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The history of the Forest Ranger Program and Ranger Station 2 is summarized in a report by Irwin and McDonald that includes information derived from interviews with former rangers and their spouses. The reader is referred to this report for more information on the history of the Ranger program at Fort Bragg and the historical context of Ranger Station 2.¹ A brief overview is provided below.

A forest ranger program was established early at Fort Bragg with rangers in place by 1922. The primary responsibilities of these rangers were to patrol the expansive training areas and insure civilians were not in harm's way from artillery fire, to guard government property, to prevent illegal activities such as poaching and illicit liquor stills, and to monitor for forest fires. The early rangers, consisting of Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) and enlisted men, conducted daily patrols on horseback. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s and likely through World War II, rangers were active duty troops from Field Artillery units stationed on Fort Bragg. NCOs served

¹ Jeffrey Irwin and Heather McDonald, *Range Riders and Game Wardens: A Brief History of Fort Bragg's Forest Ranger Program*. Fort Bragg Cultural Resources Management Program, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, May 2006.

years as rangers while the enlisted men served temporarily on six-month duty detached from their units.

The program would evolve over the years. By the 1950s rangers were assigned to the 503rd Military Police Battalion. The program had grown in scope to include, in addition to general law enforcement, agricultural operations for wildlife habitat management, a seasonal predator trapping program, and management and monitoring of hunting season activities. By the early 1970s the program would contract, as farming operations were transferred to civilian government employees. Eventually the trapping program would cease as well, and by 1982 the program would end as an active duty Military Police operation. Civilian game wardens working for the Post Engineers would assume the law enforcement responsibilities and would become part of a Wildlife Management Program that survives today.

Ranger Stations have changed significantly over the years. The earliest stations in the 1920s were old 19th century farmhouses that were acquired by the Army when Camp Bragg was established. In 1937 three new stations were constructed on Fort Bragg by the Civilian Conservation Corps. These stations were strategically situated and designed specifically for Ranger Station living arrangements and staffing order. Ranger Station 2 is the only one of the three 1937 stations that survives. Two other ranger stations were established in the 1950s or 1960s. One was an old hunt cabin on Camp Mackall which still stands though it no longer serves as a ranger station. This cabin has been previously evaluated for its eligibility for listing on the NRHP and determined ineligible. Another station was created through renovation of a

temporary World War II day room in the Main Cantonment of Fort Bragg. This building was demolished by the 1970s.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Ranger Station 2 (Building O9007) has been a permanent fixture on the Fort Bragg landscape since 1937. The building marks the western boundary of the reservation as it is the first building one sees when entering Fort Bragg from the Southern Pines/Pinehurst area. It is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of King, Manchester and Morganton Roads near the town of Southern Pines. A modern chain link fence surrounds the building with double entrance gates located on the front and east sides providing access to the property. Ranger Station 2 is set back approximately 65 feet from Morganton Road and sits amongst pine trees and dogwoods.

Ranger Station 2 was constructed in 1937 and portrays vernacular elements of the early twentieth century Craftsman architectural style. The one-story, side-gable building is wood construction with drop siding (also known as German siding), an asphalt shingle roof with wide eaves and a rear ell. Simple flat corner boards add decorative trim to the Ranger Station along with exposed rafter ends. The building foundation originally consisted of concrete piers, but today it has been infilled with brick. All of the windows have been replaced in-kind with six-over-six, double-hung, wood sash windows. The bathroom windows on the north and east elevations are shorter six-over-six windows. The windows are accented with a simple flat surround and a molded cap and sill. Rectangular wood vents are located on the gable ends of the main building and rear ell.

The façade (north) is five-bays with one entrance bay and four window bays (see Figure 1). A partially engaged screened porch is on the northeast corner of the façade enclosing the front door and the paired window. Wood steps and a wooden screen door provide entry onto the porch. The front door is a six-paneled steel door which replaced the original half-glazed wood door, which had six lights and three horizontal panels.

The east elevation is five bays with two entrance bays and three window bays (see Figure 2). Originally there was a partially engaged screened porch on the rear ell. Today, only a small portion of the screened porch remains. The porch has wood supports and an entry opening which originally contained a wood screen door. Wood steps lead to the back door. The back door is a six-panel steel door which replaced the original half-glazed wood door with six lights and three horizontal panels. The remainder of the porch has been enclosed for a small interior laundry room accessed from the kitchen and a shed addition accessed from the outside. The addition extends to the east and has drop siding with an asphalt shingle roof. A five paneled wood door provides entry into the shed addition. Also on this elevation is a simple, square brick chimney of stretcher bond attached to the shed addition. This chimney is not original to the building. Originally, there was a centrally located interior brick chimney with a decorative cap. The chimney and the shed addition were probably added when the boiler heating system was installed in the building in 1954.² The south elevation contains three window bays with a single window on the rear ell and a single as well as a paired window on the main block of the building (See Figure 3). The west elevation also contains three window bays with a single short window on the rear ell and a single and a paired window on the main block (See Figure 4). The west

² Building O-9007 Property Card, Real Property Records, Real Property and Planning Branch, Directorate of Public Works, Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

elevation of the rear ell has one window bay. The west elevation of the main building is two window bays with a paired window on the northwest corner and a single window on the southwest corner.

Overall the exterior maintains considerable integrity with few significant modifications. The most notable is the partial enclosure of the rear porch and the construction of the shed addition and chimney. In general the exterior appears as it did in 1937.

The interior of the building has been renovated, though the floor plan has undergone only minimal alterations. Renovations have included the modernization of the kitchen and bathrooms, the removal of the interior chimney, and the installation of new sheet vinyl floors, wood paneling on the walls and simple flat wood door surrounds.

The original floor plan of Ranger Station 2 is largely intact with a few minor changes (See Figure 5). This floor plan was unique as it was specially designed to accommodate the typical ranger staffing order in 1937. This order combined a NCO family with subordinate soldiers who lived with the family and worked for the NCO ranger. The floor plan of Ranger Station 2 was designed to offer separate sleeping quarters for the NCO's family and the subordinate soldiers. Three family bedrooms and a full bath were located on the west side of the building while the soldiers' quarters, with full bath were located on the northeast corner. The living room divided the sleeping areas. The remaining common areas (dining room and kitchen) were on the southeast corner with the kitchen in the rear ell. With access from the rear porch and a wall separating the living room, the floor plan effectively sectioned off a portion of the house where the soldiers could access their room and the kitchen and dining rooms without entering the



Figure 1. Façade (north elevation). Fort Bragg CRMP. 2005.

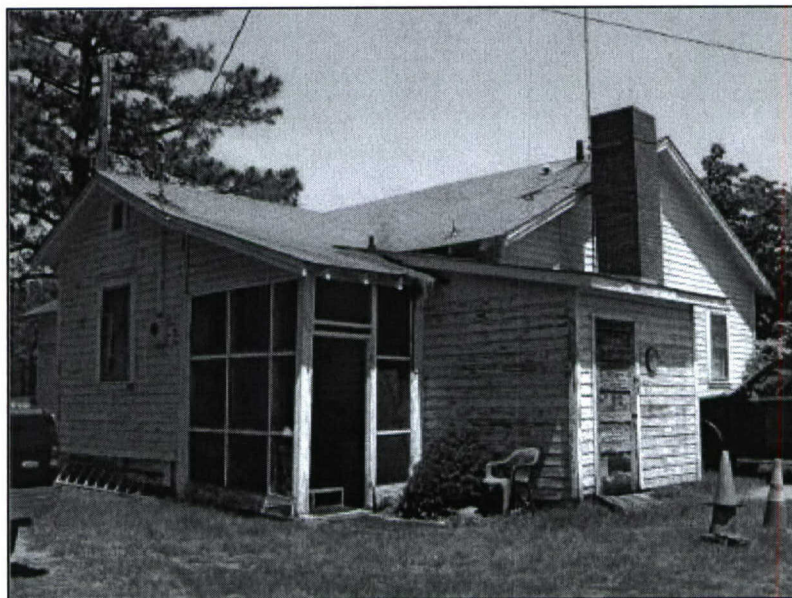


Figure 2. East Elevation. Fort Bragg CRMP. 2004.

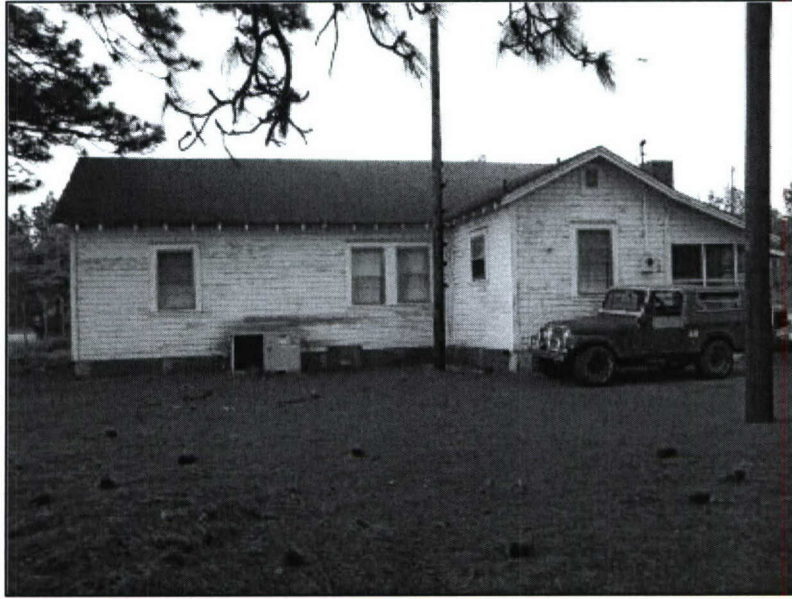


Figure 3. South Elevation. Fort Bragg CRMP. 2006.

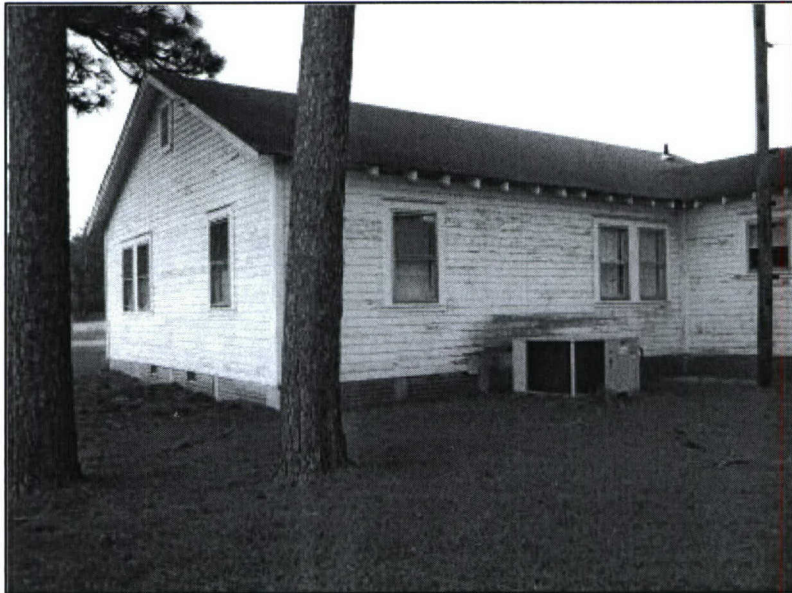


Figure 4. West Elevation. Fort Bragg CRMP. 2006

family living room or bedroom area. All three of the Ranger Stations built in 1937 shared similar organizational aspects. Ranger Station 1 had an identical floor plan to Ranger Station 2. Ranger Station 3 had a similar floor plan to the other ranger stations except for a slight modification in which the soldier rangers had their own exterior access into their quarters via a door located on the front porch.

The room layout has not been altered, but portions of walls have been removed and walls added. First, originally in the living room the east wall extended to the south wall with a door on the east wall providing entry into a small hallway. The hallway allowed access into the subordinate soldiers' quarters and also the dining room. Today, portion of the east wall was removed and the small hallway no longer exists. Another change was the transformation of part of the screened-in porch into a laundry room, described above with respect to the exterior. To accommodate this change on the interior, the window on the south wall of the dining room was enclosed and the window on the east wall of the kitchen was changed into a door. The kitchen has been renovated and a closet along the west wall has been removed. In addition to the kitchen being renovated, the bathrooms have all been renovated as well. See Figure 6 for changes to the original floor plan of the station.

All of the baseboards and door surrounds have been replaced except for the baseboard and closet door surround in the bathroom on the west side of the building (See Figure 7 and 8). The molded door surrounds have been replaced with simple and flat surrounds and the baseboards with a simpler smaller molding. The window surrounds are original. Overall, the interior has

been maintained with the retention of the location of most of the windows and doors and most importantly the floor plan.

There are three outbuildings on the property in addition to the station building (See Figure 9 and 10). A concrete block pump house with a shed roof is located near the rear of the property on the northeast corner. The remaining outbuildings are located to the east of the station building and consist of a one entrance bay wood shed with a front-gable asphalt shingle roof and a one entrance bay concrete block building with a flat roof. The concrete block building was constructed in 1994 as a communication equipment building. The date of construction for the pump house and wood shed is unknown but they were likely built after the construction of the ranger station.

In addition, the property has several concrete foundations scattered around which could have been the locations of the original wood garage, elevated water tank and pump house which are recorded on the 1938 Quartermaster Records for Ranger Station 2.³ The garage appears in the 1938 photograph in the Quartermaster Records to be located to the east of the ranger station. It is also possible that the property contained a barn to house the horses used by the rangers similar to the barn at Ranger Station 1, which was constructed at the same time as Ranger Station 2.

³ Quartermaster Records, Building No. T-RS-5, NCO Quarters Tem. (Ranger Station), 1938, Record Group 77 Office of the Chief of Engineers, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Figure 5. Original floor plan from the 1938 Quartermaster Records

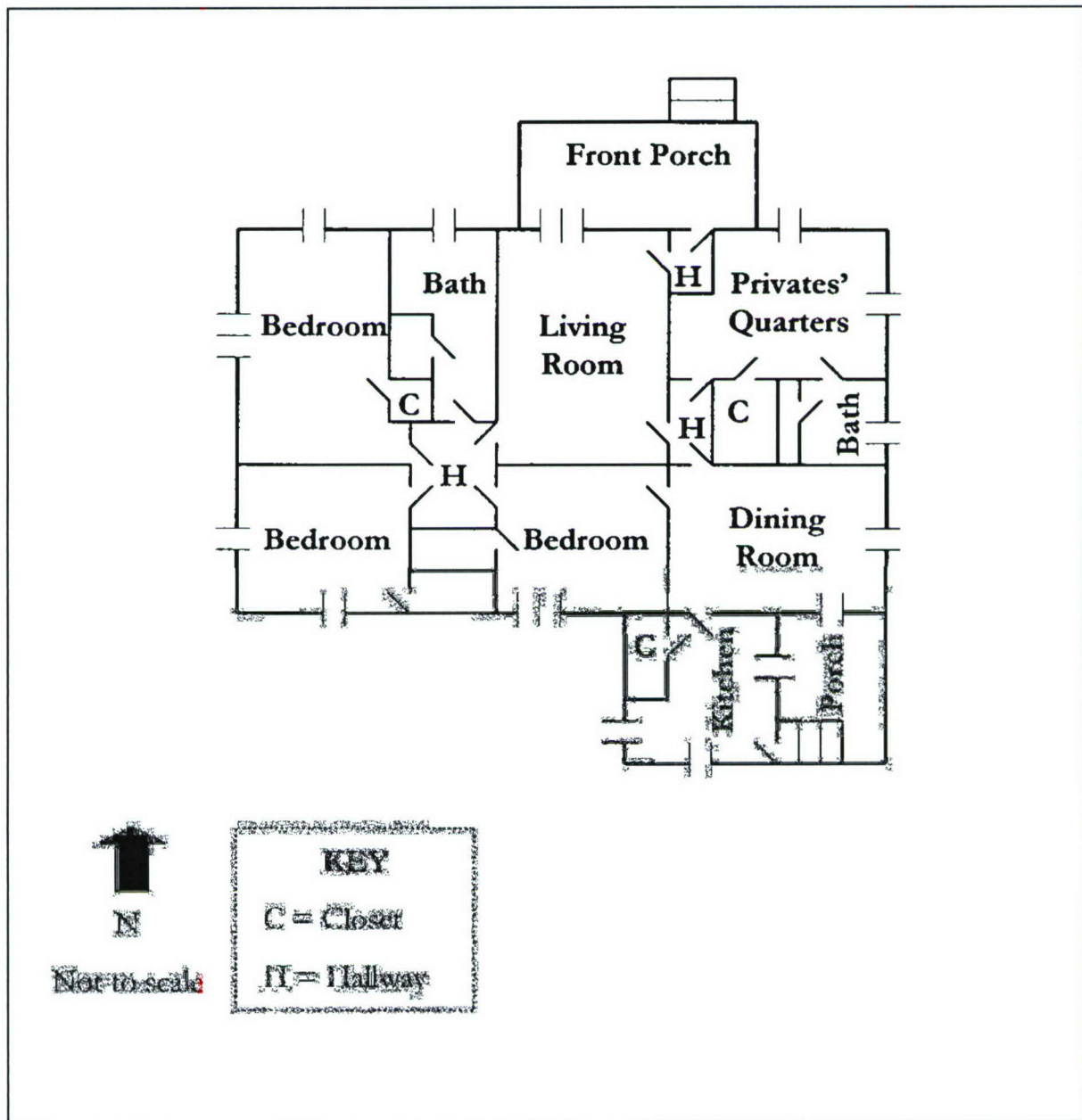
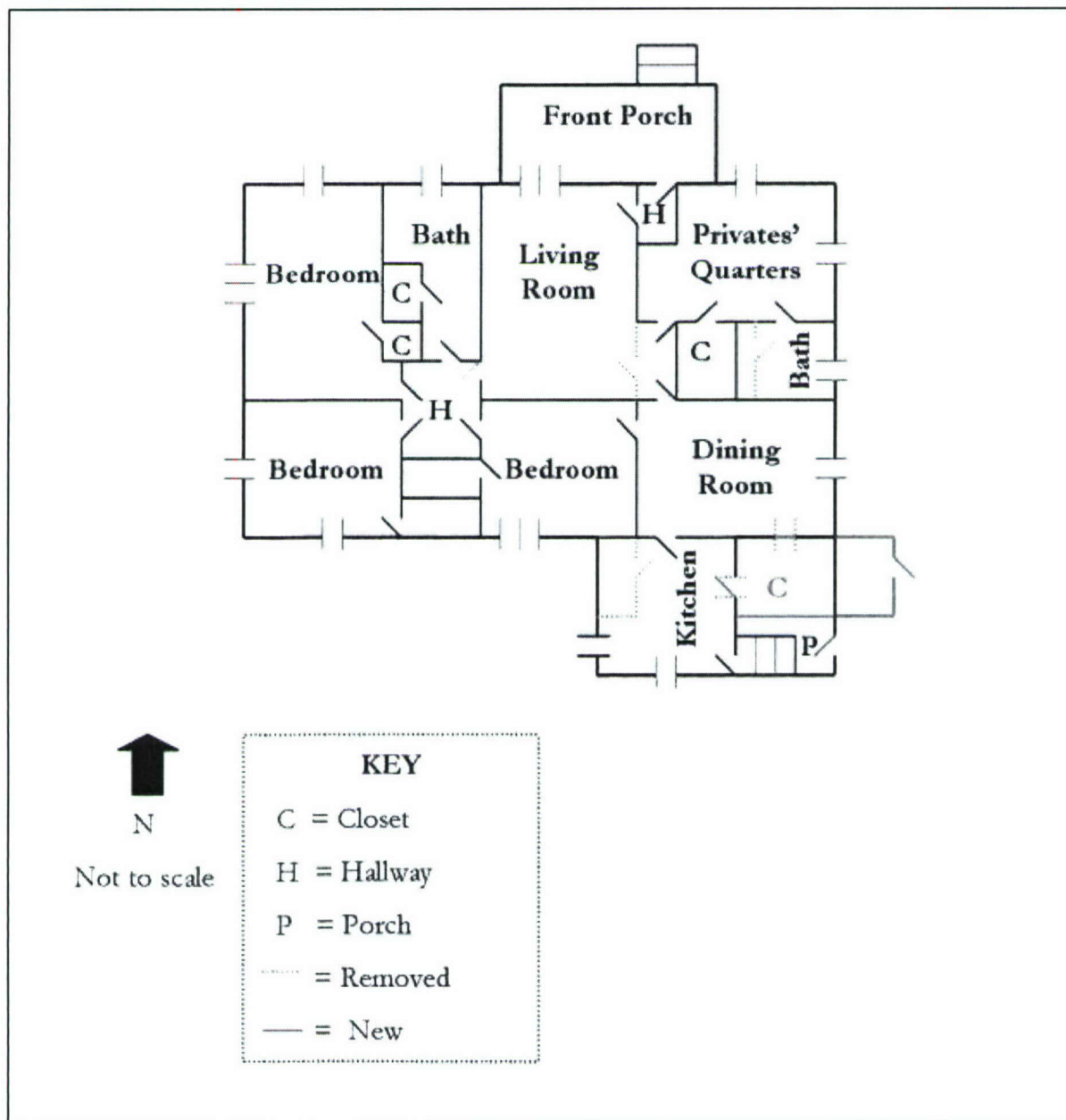
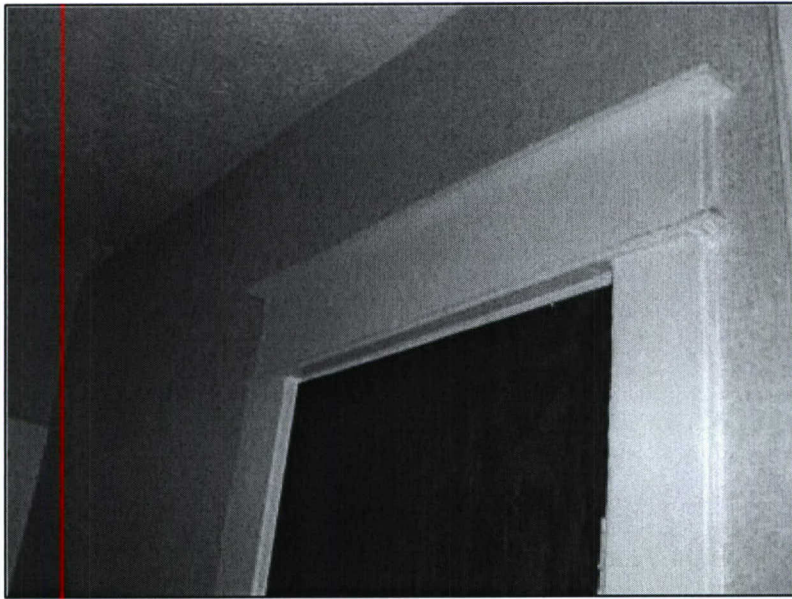


Figure 6. Alterations to original floor plan





*Figure 7. Close-up of original door surround. West Bathroom Closet.
Fort Bragg CRMP. 2006.*



*Figure 8. Close-up of original baseboard molding. West Bathroom.
Fort Bragg CRMP. 2006.*

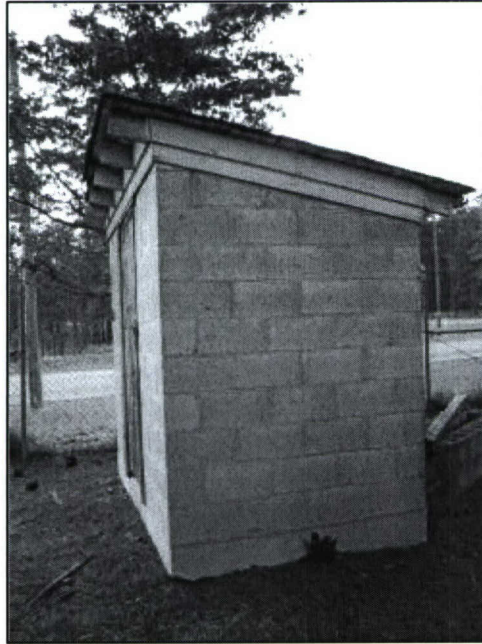


Figure 9. Pump house. East and South Elevations. CRMP. 2006

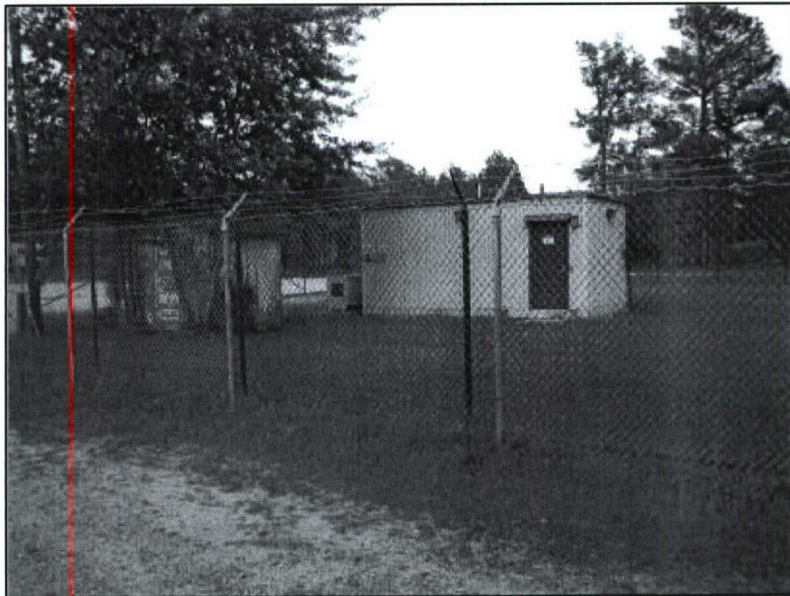


Figure 10. Wood Shed (left) & Communications Equipment Building (right) West Elevations. CRMP. 2006

Ranger Station 2 has undergone changes throughout its history; however those changes have not altered the building's exterior appearance or interior floor plan significantly. Ranger Station 2 (Building O9007) possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association which strengthens eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for military history. The building has a period of significance of 1937 portraying the year it was constructed as a ranger station to house a noncommissioned officer ranger and his family along with subordinate soldiers.

Ranger Station 2 is the remaining example of three ranger stations built in 1937 for the Fort Bragg ranger program. The building was constructed in 1937 specifically as a ranger station which is evident in the unique design of the floor plan and the location of the station on the western boundary of the military reservation. The floor plan was designed to accommodate the 1937 order of the ranger program which consisted of a NCO ranger and his family with subordinate soldiers that lived with the family and assisted the NCO with his duties. Ranger Station 2 is the only historic landmark of the ranger program.

The ranger station is a historic resource for Fort Bragg as it portrays a significant event in military history with the creation of rangers to patrol the remote areas of the reservation to ensure the safety of the soldiers and their families as well as to protect the natural resources of the area from forest fires. Also, its association with the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) strengthens

its significance under Criterion A.⁴ Ranger Station 2 is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A with a period of significance of 1937.

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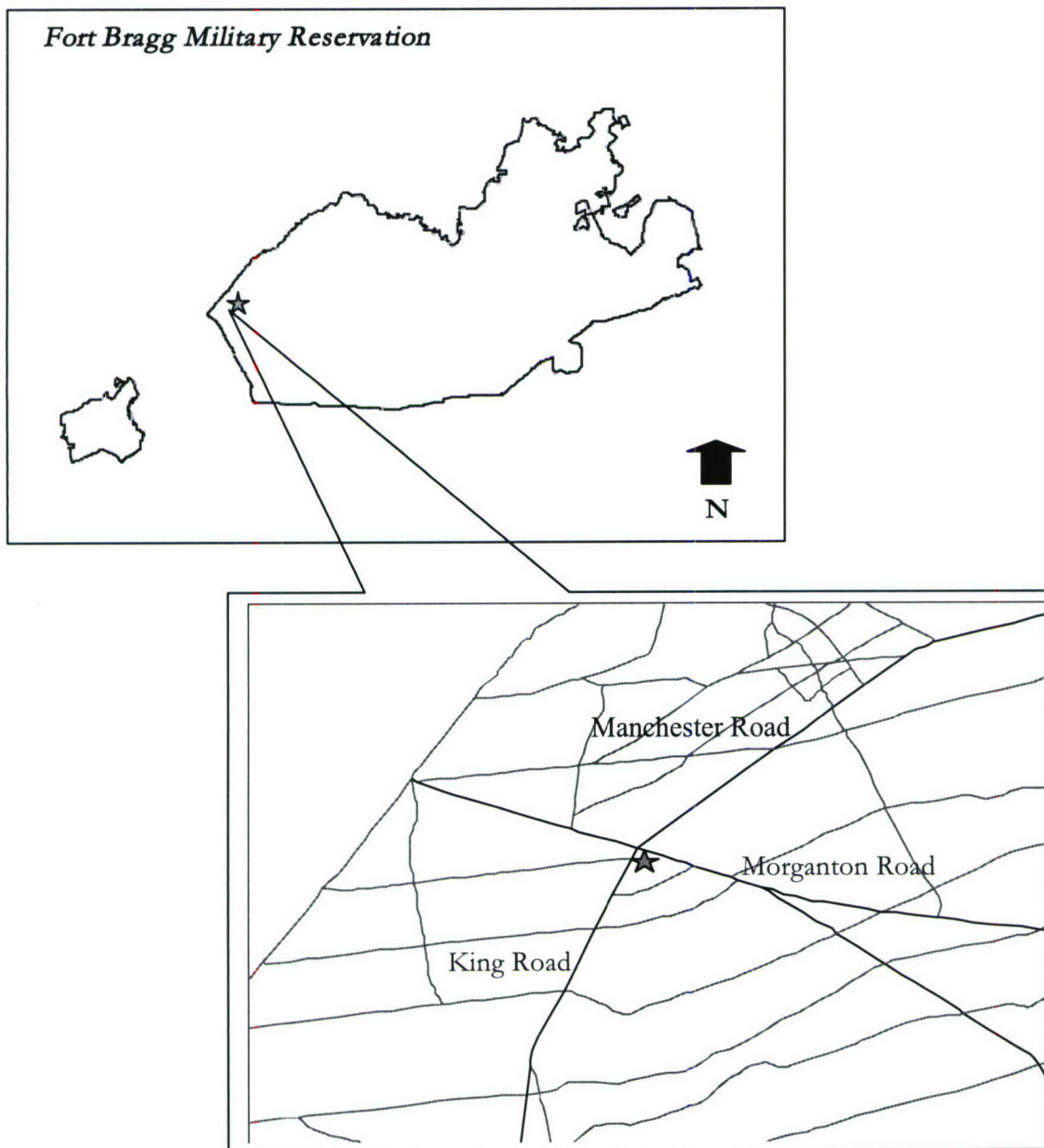
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Quartermaster Records, 1938. Record Group 77. Office of the Chief of Engineers. National Archives Washington, D.C.

Real Property Records. Real Property and Planning Branch, Directorate of Public Works. Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

⁴ In addition to its eligibility under Criterion A, the ranger station has potential eligibility as it was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Further research on the CCC is needed to determine the level of significance.

APPENDIX A – SITE MAP



APPENDIX B – SITE PLAN

