

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This book is an edited version of the LAMS-2532 report written in 1946 and 1947, originally titled, *Manhattan District History: Project Y, The Los Alamos Project*. Editors at the Laboratory in Los Alamos have added material declassified since the original report was issued, and have made minor alterations to the text in the interest of clarity and readability. In no way has the original factual material been changed.

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Project Y: The Los Alamos Story

PART I

Toward Trinity

BY DAVID HAWKINS
With a New Introduction by the Author

PART II

Beyond Trinity

BY EDITH C. TRUSLOW
AND RALPH CARLISLE SMITH



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Preface

THIS VOLUME tells an important part of the story of one of the greatest scientific achievements in history—the story of the founding of the Laboratory at Los Alamos through the successful completion of its secret mission to create the first atomic bomb. The celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of the Laboratory provides an appropriate occasion to reprint this important and significant historical report, compiled in 1947, from internal documents. Few individuals, even those who are knowledgeable about that early era, will read this work without feeling a sense of profound discovery at the importance of those daily events which led to the most dramatic technological development of this century.

The United States and the free world in general, owe a great debt to those who, prior to World War II, saw that science and technology could be vital for the preservation of freedom. It was such a group that assembled at Los Alamos. Science and technology have long shaped the outcome of international conflicts, domestic policies, and society in general. But World War II created two important watersheds. First, the magnitude of developments from the world of science was far greater than those in any previous conflict. Second, the public recognition of the positive results of scientific developments was extensive, deep, and profound. Those results have created the problem of how science and society can best survive and prosper together. We constantly struggle with this issue, sometimes successfully, sometimes with less serenity about the outcome.

This account covers three critical periods: the initial formation of the Laboratory, the successful completion of the monumental task assigned to Los Alamos, and the sudden changes that occurred in the sixteen-month period after the abrupt end of hostilities brought about by the technological developments produced at Los Alamos. Each of these periods created tremendous strains for those who guided the activities at Los Alamos during these years. Each period was successfully managed by the hand of a wise leader supported by brilliant and dedicated workers.

This history does not pretend to provide the entire record of the activities at Los Alamos, nor is it couched in the rich language appearing in some of the histories that have been compiled since the publication of this volume. Time did not allow such polish. But this history has an authenticity, readily apparent to the reader, that flows directly from its foundation resting in the extensive documentation provided by the reports of the technical divisions and from other material written at Los Alamos.

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circuits for printing timing marks on film, sweep circuits, and circuits to delay starting a sweep for a specified time.

Another important Electronics Group job was production of portable counters and other health instruments.

CHAPTER 7

The Ordnance Division

June 1943 to August 1944

ORGANIZATION AND LIAISON

Before its formal organization in June 1943, the Ordnance Engineering Division occupied two or three small rooms in Building U. It was concerned with procurement, gun design, and instrumentation, but its main activity was discussion and analysis of the work that lay ahead, thereby labeling and organizing the elements of the new field.

In May, Captain W. S. Parsons (USN) made a preliminary visit. His transfer to Los Alamos was then requested by General Groves, recommended by Conant and Bush, and approved by the Governing Board. He returned in June as Ordnance Division Leader.

The original groups of the new division were these:

E-1	Proving Ground	E. M. McMillan
E-2	Instrumentation	K. T. Bainbridge
E-3	Fuse Development	R. B. Brode
E-4	Projectile, Target, and Source	C. L. Critchfield
E-5	Implosion Experimentation	S. H. Neddermyer

Parsons selected a competent chief engineer to head Group E-6, George Chadwick, who for 20 years was Head Engineer of the Navy Bureau of Ordnance. Although Chadwick never lived at Los Alamos, from June to September 1943 he was a prospective head engineer, and he worked with the Bureau of Ordnance and the Navy Gun Factory in designing and fabricating the first experimental guns, consulted at Los Alamos about design of the Anchor Ranch Proving Ground, and in August, was asked to help hire machinists and draftsmen from the Detroit area. At this time, he decided not to take the Los Alamos position. The connection with Chadwick in Detroit remained, however (Chap. 7).

Scale 1.8 in. = squares are 1/2 mile by 1/2 mile

Hard-surfaced roads —————
 Foot trails
 Site and designation ▼ · VI
 Water supply main —< —< —< —<
 Power line - - - - -
 Firing sites ★
 DP Site []

Number	Site	Division	N/S Coordinate	E/W Coordinate
I	Post Technical Area		100	135
II	Omega	G	93	121
III	South Mesa	G	89	158
IV	Alpha	G	68	108
V	Beta	G	69	94
VI	2-Mile Mesa (upper)	X	74	171
VII	2-Mile Mesa (lower)	Q	69	147
VIII	Anchor Gun Site	O	65	184
IX	Anchor HE	X	65	183
X	Bayo	G	107	71
XI	K	G	38	157
XII	L	X	59	139
XIII	P	G	47	171
XIV	Q	X	52	152
XV	R	X	49	138
XVI	S	X	46	187
XVII	X	G	72	192
XVIII	Pajarito	O-X	45	91
XIX	East Gate Lab	R	93	72
XX	Sandia	G	77	82

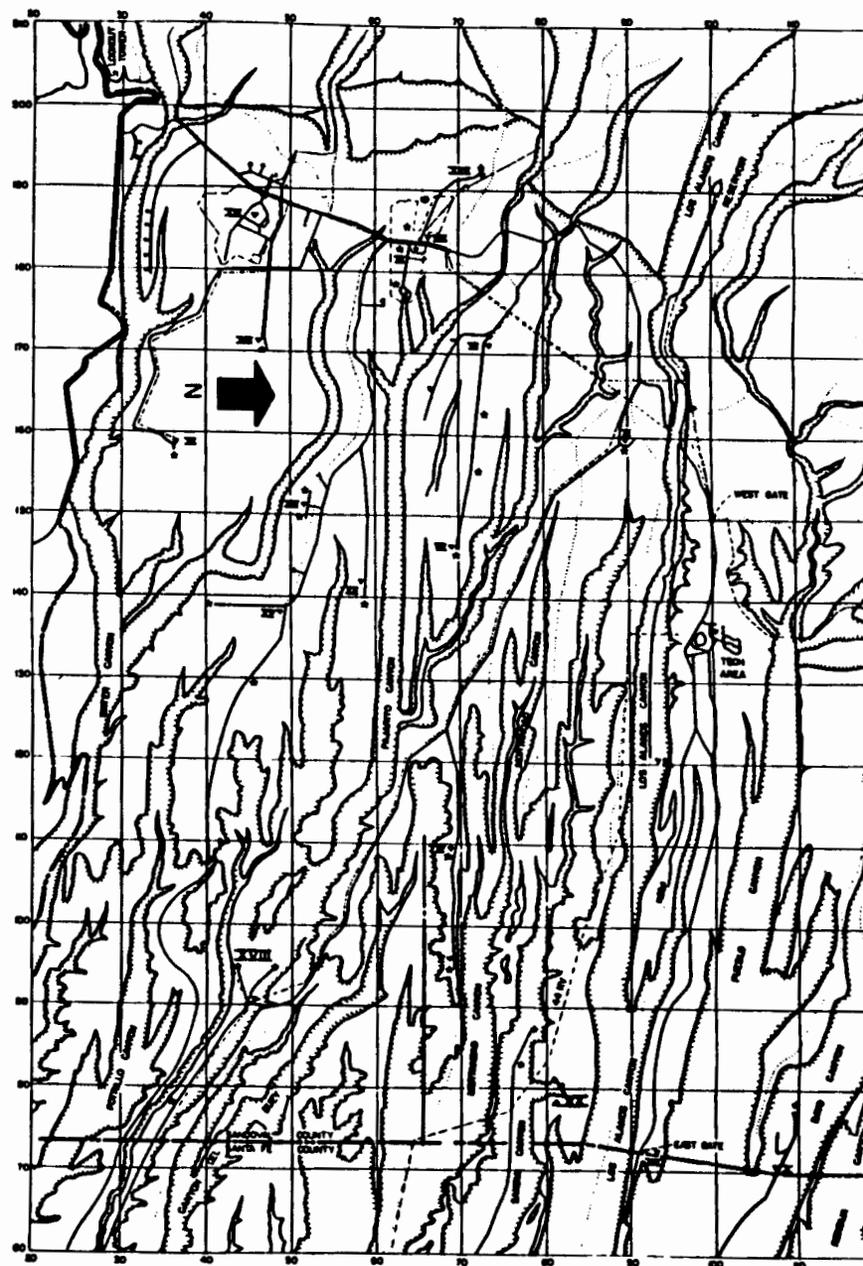


Fig. 3. Site map.