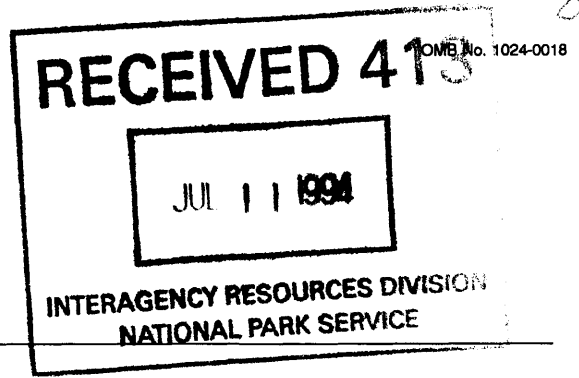


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



1. Name of Property

historic name: Kalispell Flour Mill

other name/site number: 24FH

2. Location

street & number: 506 West Center St.

not for publication: n/a
vicinity: n/a

city/town: Kalispell

state: Montana code: MT county: Flathead code: 029 zip code: 59901

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 forth 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.)

Maurel Shup MT SHPO 6-28-94
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Montana State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency or bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> see continuation sheet	<u>Edson H. Beall</u> Signature of the Keeper	<u>8-24-94</u> Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> see continuation sheet	Entered in the National Register	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> see continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> see continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other (explain): _____	_____	_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: X private ___ public-local ___ public-State ___ public-Federal

Category of Property: X building(s) ___ district ___ site ___ structure ___ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>3</u>	<u>2</u> building(s)
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> structures
<u>6</u>	<u>6</u> objects
<u>10</u>	<u>9</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic and Architectural Properties of Kalispell, Montana

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:
PROCESSING/manufacturing facility

Current Functions:
PROCESSING/manufacturing facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification:
other: commercial-industrial

Materials:
foundation: stone, concrete
roof: metal, asphalt
walls: brick, metal, wood/weatherboard
other: n/a

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Kalispell Flour Mill complex has been greatly altered over the years as the business has changed. The flour mill and the 1898 wooden grain elevator no longer exist. The six reinforced concrete storage tanks, built in 1909, dominate the site. Each tank is approximately 24' in diameter and 85' high. The bins are circular, as is typical of concrete tanks (unlike wooden cribbed tanks). They are no longer connected by a passageway at their top to the grain elevator to the north, as that elevator no longer exists. Instead, they are connected to modern metal storage tanks. The buildings to the west of the concrete elevators include (from east to west) an office and scales building (constructed between 1927 and 1956), flour warehouse no. 1 (1899-1903), the first floor of the mill (1902), and flour warehouse no. 2 (1901). The one-story brick buildings have little ornamentation except for some corbelling. The foundation of the warehouse on the west is random native rock. The original brick mill building was used by Equity as a feed mill, and now it is used as a warehouse. None of the original flour mill equipment remains inside.

In the early 1980s Equity Supply built new steel tanks and a new scale house to the east of the historic buildings. The fertilizer plant to the west of the elevators was built in the early 1960s and was added on to in the 1970s.

The Kalispell Flour Mill was originally powered by steam (the company pumped water out of Spring Creek). The company converted to electric power in the late 1940s.

See the attached sketch map and copies of the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (1899-1963) for clarification of the changes in facilities at the Kalispell Flour Mill.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Areas of Significance: Commerce, Architecture

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): n/a

Period(s) of Significance: 1899-1942

Significant Person(s): n/a

Significant Dates: 1899-1903, 1909

Cultural Affiliation: n/a

Architect/Builder(s): unknown

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Kalispell Flour Mill is significant under Criterion A because of its important role in the development of Kalispell as the trade center of the Flathead Valley. It is also significant under Criterion C because the six 80'-high grain elevators, built in 1909, are an early example of the use of concrete for this purpose. The brick flour warehouse to the west of the elevators, built in 1901, contributes to the significance of the elevators. The first flour mill in Kalispell was built on this site in 1893, and although none of the original buildings remain intact, the complex still conveys some of the atmosphere of the "industrial district" composed in the early years of the Kalispell Malting & Brewing Company complex to the south, the flour mill, the Missoula Mercantile warehouse to the east, and the Great Northern Railway roundhouse and turntable to the north. The Kalispell Flour Mill is a visual symbol of the vital economic link between Kalispell and the surrounding agricultural community in the Flathead Valley. Its location along the railroad tracks reflects Kalispell's origins as a railroad town. In fact, the business using the complex today is one of the few in Kalispell that still relies on the railroad.

The original flour mill was built with financial help from several Kalispell institutions anxious to see a market developed for local wheat and the demand for flour supplied locally. In 1893, the only other flour mill in the Flathead Valley was located in Columbia Falls. The Kalispell Townsite Company donated the land for the mill, the town's three banks subscribed \$1,200, and local businessmen contributed \$1,000. W. H. Thomas of Genessee, Idaho, agreed to build the mill in the spring of 1893 (Thomas had previously been associated with the Pillsbury mills at Minneapolis). The wood frame mill was three stories high and was originally equipped to handle 125 barrels a day using "the very latest roller process machinery." The mill was equipped with Nordyke & Marmon machinery. The mill began grinding flour in December of 1893 under the direction of millwright Moister and miller Shermier. When it began operations the mill could manufacture rye, buckwheat and graham flour, plus two grades of wheat flour. Princess flour, the best grade, was guaranteed equal to the product of "the best Dakota mills" and sold for \$2.75 per hundred pounds. The second grade of flour, Pride of the Valley, was guaranteed to equal the best from Spokane and sold for \$2.50 per hundred. Grade No. 3 was separated from the bran and sold for \$1.50 per hundred.

In the fall of 1893 the company bought a large amount of grain from farmers who needed the cash, even though the mill at that time had to store the grain in warehouses unconnected with the mill. Much of this wheat was sprouted and musty and thus unsuitable for flour. The mill proprietors, Ike and Ed Thompson and their partner C. F. Moffitt, attempted to find a market for the damaged wheat as chopped feed.

In June of 1894 Lafayette Tinkel of Holyoke, Colorado, purchased the Thompsons' interest in the flour mill. The new firm at once began the erection of a grain elevator with a 50,000-bushel capacity (with flour stored on the lower floor). When the grain elevator was completed in the fall of 1894 the Great Northern Railway built a spur line to the flour mill (and also to the adjacent Missoula Mercantile warehouse).

In November of 1895 C. F. Moffitt left the flour mill and moved to Indianapolis, and the mill was soon known as Tinkel & Co. Tinkel made a number of improvements on the mill in 1896 and 1898, including increasing the capacity of the mill and the quality of the flour. The storeroom was enlarged and made mouseproof (it could store 20,000 sacks of flour on the first floor, and it stored oatmeal, cornmeal, graham flour and hominy on the second floor). The office was doubled in size,

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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and above it were constructed a bedroom, sample room, and sack storage area. A bran room was built that could store 100 tons of bran. New equipment included a set of double rolls, bolts, and a new scalper.

In 1899 the flour mill, then known as the Kalispell Roller Mills, went under new management. It was owned by George Fenwick and William Hammond, and C. A. Peplow came from Missoula to become the new manager. Peplow remained until 1901 when he moved to Astoria, Oregon, and began plans to build a large flour mill in Seattle.

In 1900 the elevator of the flour mill (wood sheathed with corrugated metal) was destroyed by fire, along with 35-40,000 bushels of wheat and several thousand barrels of flour. Peplow had a new elevator and warehouse built and repairs made to the mill for approximately \$20,000 that same year. In 1901 he had the brick warehouse that still exists constructed to the west of the original flour mill for a cost of approximately \$6,500. After the rebuilding and replacing of machinery, the mill was able to process 180 barrels a day. Peplow added some "modern labor-saving machinery" so that from the time the wheat was unloaded until the sacks were tied the product was not touched by human hands.

A significant change in the ownership of the flour mill occurred in the fall of 1901, when the Royal Milling Company of Minneapolis bought for \$60,000 both the flour mill at this location and its competitor, the water-powered Kalispell Industrial Company mill located just 1 1/4 miles northeast of the center of town. The Royal Milling Company, with its Montana headquarters in Great Falls, closed down the latter mill but kept the existing facility in operation. With this purchase the Royal Milling Company became the owner of all the flour mills in northwest Montana, thus eliminating competition. Previously, the company had been shipping its wheat stored in a Kalispell grain elevator to Great Falls to be ground and then shipping it back to the Flathead to market to the local trade, so the consolidation saved the company much freight expense.

The Royal Milling Company rebuilt the mill building and put in new machinery in its Kalispell flour mill in 1902, increasing its capacity to 200 barrels a day (only the company's mill in Great Falls had a larger capacity). The company used electric power instead of steam for a short time, eliminating the need for "great rows of wood to feed hungry furnaces," but by the winter of 1903 they had converted back to steam power and put in a 175 hp steam plant. In 1923 the company was consuming 2,500 cords of wood annually (see piles of wood in attached copies of historic photographs). A passenger elevator carried people from the first floor to the roof of the new mill on platforms attached to an endless belt. The new mill could handle about 1500 bushels of wheat daily, so the company had to expand its market to the coast and compete with Dakota wheat. Montana markets were developed as well; for example, in 1904 the Kalispell flour mill received the contract to supply 100,000 pounds of flour to the troops stationed at Fort Assiniboine. In 1905, the capacity of the mill was reported to be 400 barrels a day, and the company planned to sell Kalispell flour in west coast markets and from the Northern Pacific Railroad line north across the Canadian border. By 1909 the company was also marketing Rex flour, which used Montana hard wheat in its manufacture. Other brand names of flour produced at the mill included Rex, 3-X, and Gold Medal.

In February of 1903 workers at the Kalispell Flour Mill went out on strike for two days. They had been earning \$2.50 a day for ten-hour days, and they asked for eight-hour days for 30 cents an hour. The negotiations resulted in a compromise; the men got the wages they requested, and any work over eight hours was time and a half, but Sunday work was not double time. In 1904, a local newspaper mentioned that the mill employed only union members.

The six reinforced concrete grain elevators were built in 1909 because of rapidly increasing business. The elevators were claimed to be "the largest elevator west of Minnesota" at that time (although the Royal Milling Company planned to build eight similar elevators in Great Falls the next year). Each elevator is built of concrete reinforced with heavy steel beams every six inches. The elevators were built by Hickok & Sons of Minneapolis, and the construction was supervised by William Heath of Minneapolis. The Kalispell elevators are approximately 85' high and 24' in diameter, and in 1910 they

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reportedly had a capacity of 140,000-250,000 bushels (the figure varies with the source of information). A steel passageway surmounted the structures and connected with the wooden grain elevator to their north (this was used by workers who would drop a tape down the tanks to measure the grain level in the tanks). These elevators had a much greater capacity than the original two elevators of the company, which could hold about 75,000 bushels combined. In addition, the company felt that the concrete tanks were "absolutely air tight" so that grain could be stored without spoilage even when put into the tanks damp. In 1909 the company also had the old elevator remodeled and raised 25' in height.

According to a local newspaper article, in 1910 the Kalispell Flour Mill enjoyed a corner on the market for Flathead Valley wheat. The mill reportedly processed 450,000 of the 500,000 bushels of wheat raised in the area tributary to Kalispell. Besides flour, the company also manufactured a variety of mill feeds to meet the local demand. The market for the flour extended to Spokane, Seattle, San Francisco, and Japan. The flour mill sometimes provided seed wheat to Flathead Valley farmers, such as Turkey Red and Marquis that were shipped in in the 1910s. In 1913, there were 16 flour mills in operation in Montana, with an annual total yield of approximately 100,000 barrels. The Royal Milling Company at that time hoped to take advantage of cheaper freight rates through the almost-completed Panama Canal by shipping Montana flour through the canal to markets in the eastern United States. There was optimistic talk of doubling the capacity of the Kalispell flour mill, but this did not happen, as the capacity remained at approximately 500 barrels per day through at least 1927.

Not much is known about the hours the mill operated. In 1923, a newspaper article mentioned that the mill was running three eight-hour shifts a day to keep up with the increasing business. In 1935 the mill employed 30 men, "all of them with families." In the 1940s, the mill also operated three shifts a day. In the 1940s the company reportedly paid Kalispell workers 10 cents an hour less than their Great Falls employees.

From 1905 until his retirement in 1937 Thomas C. Hand was the manager of the company. He had been in Kalispell since 1891, and he had previously owned the Flathead Bottling Company, the Kalispell Warehouse & Cold Storage Company, and a grocery.

In 1928 the Kalispell Flour Mill again participated in a merger. In that year the Royal Milling Company and six other regional companies combined to form General Mills.

In 1935 the Royal Milling Company had a daily capacity of 350 barrels of flour and it could store 300,000 bushels of grain in its elevators. The company would ship in wheat from eastern Montana and blend it with the local wheat (which was lower in protein) to get the right protein content (13-14%) before milling. Brand names of the mill's products in the 1940s included Rex, Gold Medal, Soft-As-Silk (cake flour), Princess, and Wheat Hearts (a breakfast hot cereal).

The Royal Milling Company (under the name of General Mills) owned the property until 1964, when it was purchased by the current owner, the Equity Supply Company.

9. Major Bibliographic References

See continuation sheet

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 (City of Kalispell)
- University
- Other - Specify Repository: Flathead County Library, Kalispell

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than one

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	11	699060	5341510

Verbal Boundary Description

The Kalispell Flour Mill is located in Tract 8C, Section 7, Township 28 North, Range 21 West, Montana Principal Meridian.

Boundary Justification

The legally recorded boundary of this property encompasses the significant resources.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kathy McKay, Historian	date: March 1993
street & number: 491 Eckelberry Dr.	telephone: (406) 892-1538
city or town: Columbia Falls	state: Montana zip code: 59912

Property Owner

name: Equity Supply Company
street & number: PO Box 579
city or town: Kalispell state: Montana zip code: 59903

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Daily Inter Lake: March 4, 1892; May 5, 1893, p. 5; December 1, 1893, p. 4; December 8, 1893, p. 4; December 29, 1893, p. 4; June 15, 1894, p. 4; September 14, 1894, p. 4; November 15, 1895, p. 3; November 18, 1898; "The New Flour Mill," September 12, 1902; February 6, 1903; November 14, 1910, p. 9; "Thomas C. Hand Passes Suddenly," November 27, 1942, p. 4.

Eckelberry, Keith (employee of Equity Supply from 1968-present), interview with Kathy McKay, June 3, 1993.

Flathead Herald-Journal: "A Mill At Last," May 5, 1893; "The Mill A Certainty," May 12, 1893; "Our New Mill," June 30, 1893, p. 1; July 4, 1896; May 7, 1896; "To Widen Flathead Flour Market," June 15, 1905; October 21, 1897; September 14, 1905, p. 8.

Flathead Monitor: November 24, 1899; December 1, 1899; August 10, 1900; October 18, 1923, p. 4; July 18, 1935, p. 3.

Kalispell Bee: December 20, 1900, p. 11; December 18, 1901, p. 12; October 5, 1900, p. 4; October 29, 1900, p. 2; August 7, 1900, p. 1; December 14, 1901, p. 2; "The Deal Is Closed," September 7, 1901, p. 3; February 22, 1902, p. 8; "How They Make Good Flour," January 8, 1901, p. 3; December 25, 1901, p. 2; June 27, 1902, p. 8; November 13, 1903; November 27, 1903, p. 5; May 24, 1904, p. 5; July 1, 1904, p. 8; "May Be 3 Flour Mills," January 9, 1909, p. 1; "Flour Mill Building Addition," May 13, 1909, p. 1; August 13, 1909, p. 8; "Royal Milling Co. Enlarges Plant," December 10, 1909, p. 6; "Capacity of the Kalsipell Flour Mills to be Doubled," December 12, 1913, p. 1.

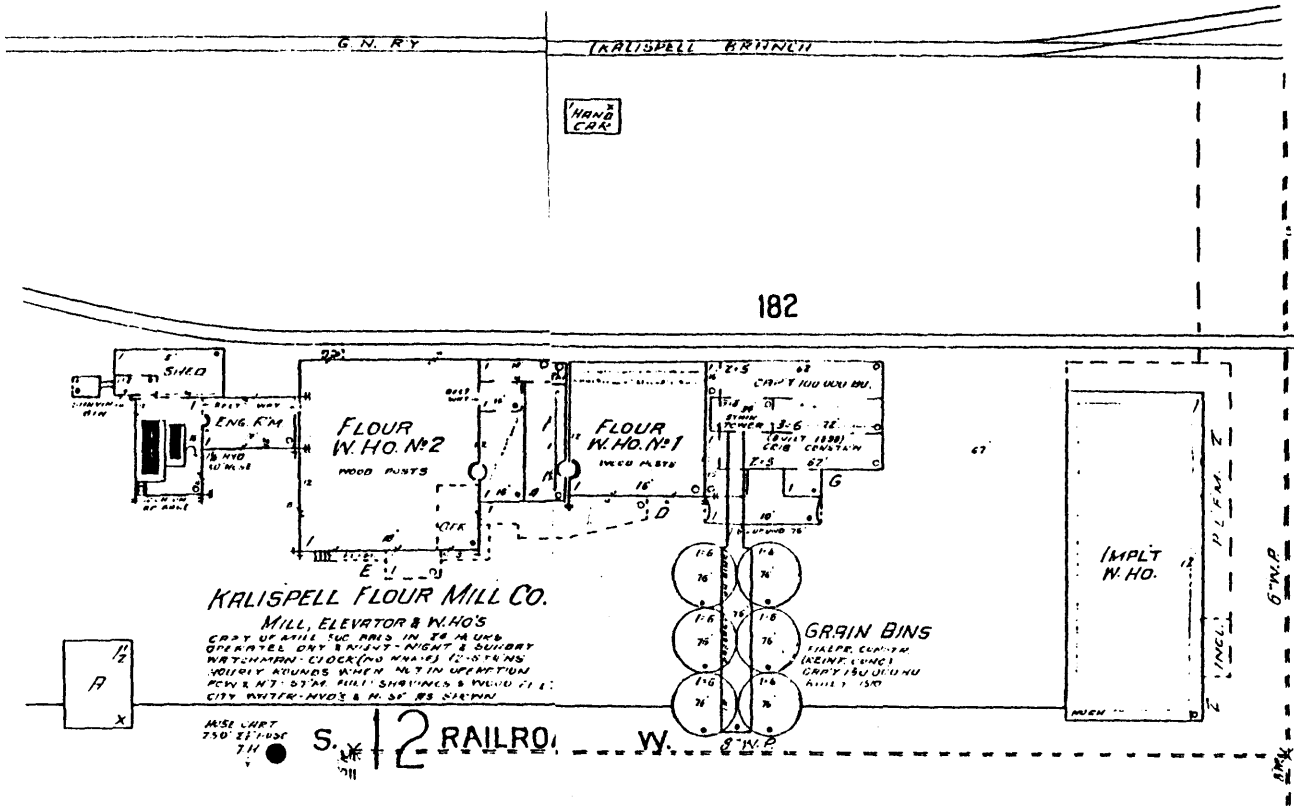
Kalispell Graphic, May 25, 1892, p. 4, advertisement.

Kalispell Journal: May 13, 1909, p. 1; "An Old Timer Comes Back," August 7, 1913, p. 1.

Kalispell Water Department, "10th Annual Water Department Report," (1923), p. 33.

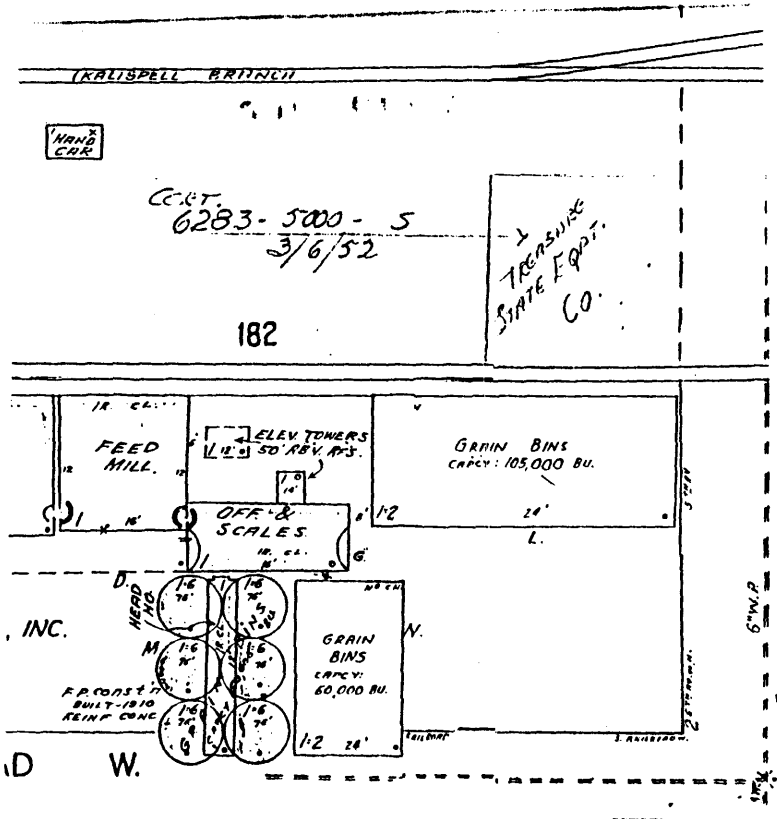
O'Boyle, Fracis T. (employee of the flour mill from 1939-41 and 1946-52), interview with Kathy McKay, October 1991.

Sanders, Helen Fitzgerald, *History of Montana* (Chicago, IL: Lewis Publishing Co., 1913), vol. 1, p. 485.



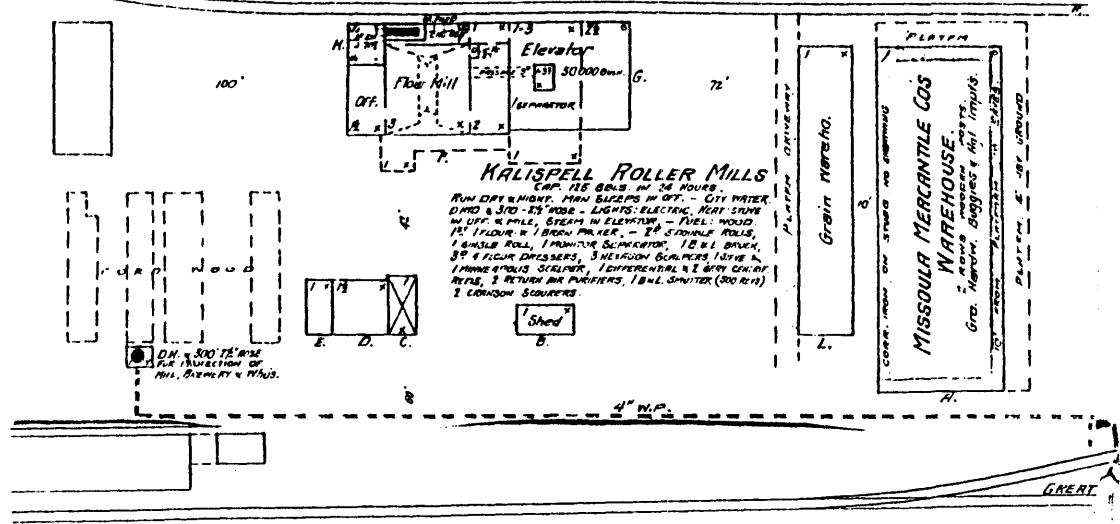
1927

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps



1956

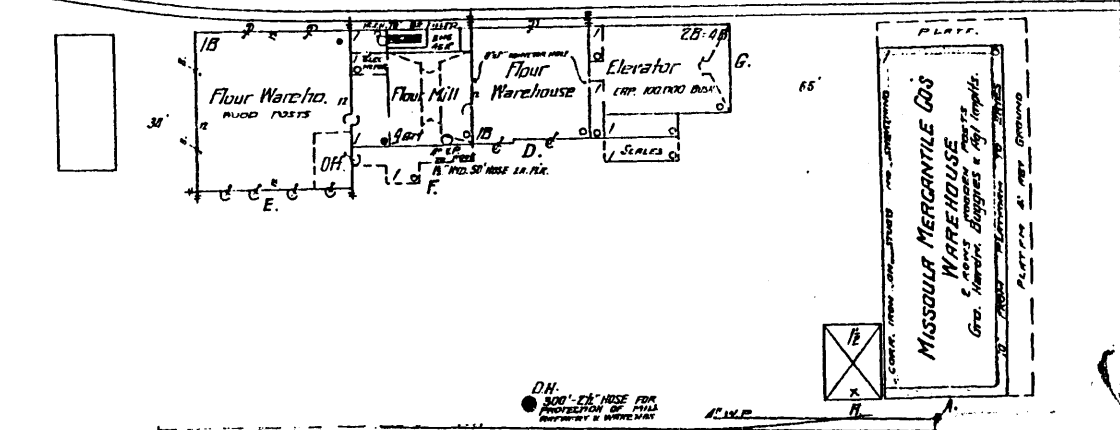
3



ROYAL MILLING CO'S FLOUR MILL

300
CAP. 300 BBL'S IN 24 HRS.
HEAT: STEAM. - LIGHT & POWER: ELECTRIC. - FUEL: WOOD.
NIGHT WATCHMAN WITH CLOCK AND 12 STATIONS. HOURLY ROUNDS
ONLY IN CASE OF SHUT DOWN. - 4" R.P. W. HOSE EACH FLOOR WATER
HOLES & CIRCULAR EXITS EACH FLOOR. - BUILDINGS CLEAN,
PRINTED OUTSIDE & WHITE WASHED INSIDE. -
PAINT OF SHUTTERS TIN CLAD ONE SIDE ONLY, TO BE TIN
CLAD BOTH SIDES.

4



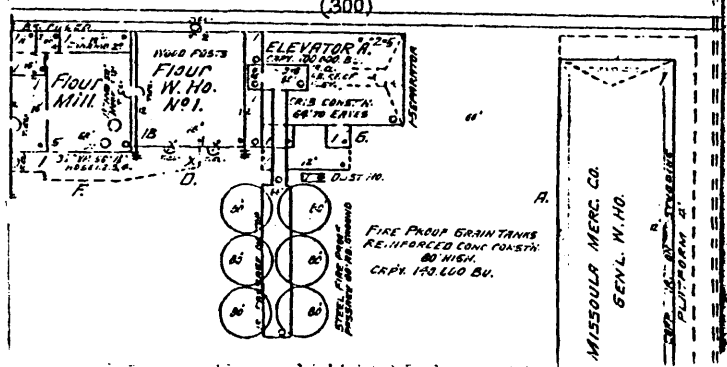
FOUR MILL CO'S. MILL ELEVATORS & W. HO'S.

182
(300)

LS. IN 24 HRS.
NIGHT.
CR. 5 STATIONS.
CAP. IN OPERATION
MACHINERY.
HEAT: LIGHTS: EL.
SHOW-N.

MACHINERY IN MILL:
1ST FLOOR: 1-BRAN PACKER, 3-FLOUR PACKERS.
2ND - 6-DBL STAND OF ROLLS, 1-DYNAMO CS VOLTS.
3RD - 4-PURIFIERS, 1-BRAN DUSTER, 1-SCOURER.
4TH - 3-DUST COLLECTORS, 2-REELS, 2-SUCTION PANS
5TH - 3-UNIVERSAL BOLTERS, 5-REELS, 1-WHEAT
WIPPER, 1-DBL STAND OF ROLLS, 3-DUST
COLLECTORS, 1-SCOURER, 1-SEPARATOR.
6TH - 23-ELEVATOR HEADS.

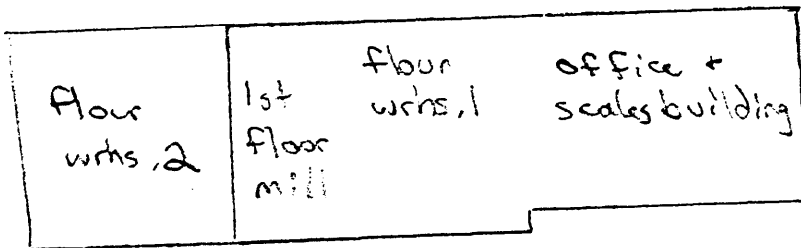
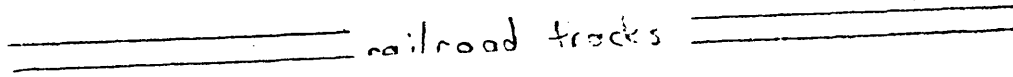
1910



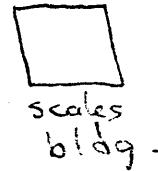
506 W. Center St.

Sketch Map

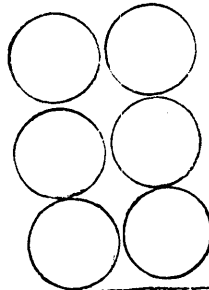
KALISPELL FLOUR MILL
506 West Center Street
Kalispell, Montana



steel tanks



↖
fertilizer plant



concrete grain elevators

West Center Street

not drawn to scale