

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PHO 674630

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED MAY 10 1979  
DATE ENTERED JUN 19 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Frequency Changing Station

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

E. 1420 Celesta Avenue

--- NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Spokane

--- VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

5th - Thomas S. Foley

STATE

Washington

CODE

053

COUNTY

Spokane

CODE

063

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER: vacant

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Alan B. and Sherry Martin Kimball

STREET & NUMBER

Box 38

CITY, TOWN

Springdale

--- VICINITY OF

STATE

Washington

99173

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Spokane County Courthouse - Assessor's Office

STREET & NUMBER

W. 1116 Broadway

CITY, TOWN

Spokane

STATE

Washington

99260

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Spokane Historic Landmarks Survey

DATE

1977

--- FEDERAL --- STATE --- COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

City Plan Commission

CITY, TOWN

Spokane

STATE

Washington

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Completed in 1908, the Frequency Changing Station housed the electrical equipment associated with the operation of an electric railway centered in Spokane. Originally on the outskirts of the city, it is now located in a built-up area; however its hillside siting above a part has maintained the building in a setting similar to that of 70 years ago.

The Station is built on an L-shaped plan formed by the massing of two attached rectangular units, the main building and a storage battery wing located off the east wall of the main building. The main building is 102 x 76 feet and the storage battery wing is 92 x 42 feet. The main building is over fifty feet high with a medium gable roof and the smaller east wing is less than twenty feet high with a low gable roof, open truss beams, and a brick floor. The main building is essentially a single space with 35 foot walls to the open truss beams. Along the east side of this space is a 14 foot wide mezzanine 16 feet above the main floor; this level is reached either by a cast iron stairway at the north end, or by a foot platform freight elevator at the south end. Beneath the mezzanine is a maintenance shop area of the same width which also extends the full 102 foot length of the building. There is no basement per se, but there are a number of passageways from the maintenance shop area which extend under the main floor.

The exterior wall material is brick laid in a common bond, a course of headers every sixth stretcher course. The walls are 10 inches thick with 24 inch square pilasters on 16 foot centers. The brick is painted on the interior.

A single stack chimney is located at both the north and south ends of the main building; these are concealed within pilasters and the decorative parapet and are not visible. Roof trim consists of a three foot eave projection with exposed rafters. The north and south walls extend to a parapet with a cornice peak and steps capped with cut stone. The wall design is a combination of pilasters, raised panels and entablatures extending from a plain stone plinth.

The extensive fenestration is of four types. The lower level windows are double hung wooden sash, six feet wide and 10 feet high with 40 lights; the upper level windows are stationary single sash, six feet wide and five and one half feet high with 20 lights; the north and south ends each have an eight foot diameter bulls eye window centered above the entrances; and the double leaf entry doors are balanced by a pair of windows of the same general proportions as the doorway itself. The two door and window groups are topped by a fanlight. All the windows have a plain lintel and sill of raised masonry; the fanlights are set with key-stones. The east wing repeats the design of the main building except that the window area constitutes much less of the wall area.

The main building was designed to house four motor generator sets, four 1250 kw transformers, three 375 kw transformers, and three 75 kw transformers. The east wing was added not long after the completion of the larger structure and contained a 550 volt (275 cell) chloride accumulator, or storage battery, with switchboard and exciter attachments. All of the equipment was removed apparently in 1939, when the property was sold by the owning railroad. Despite the absence of the electrical apparatus, the Frequency Changing Station remains a little altered representative of Spokane's railroading prominence.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      1908                                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT      Albert Held

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Frequency Changing Station was an important part of an early electrical power and transportation conglomerate. The name most often associated with this development is Jay P. Graves, the man who organized several small inter-urban lines into an extended system which connected Coeur d'Alene, Moscow and Colfax with Spokane; a system known (under Graves) as the Spokane and Inland Empire Railroad Company and finally (when held by the Great Northern Railroad) as the Spokane, Coeur d'Alene and Palouse Railway. Graves was also in the directorship of the Spokane Power Development Company which supplied power for this rail system and sold power and light commercially as well.

The Frequency Changing Station distributed power generated by the Inland Power Plant at Nine Mile, northwest of Spokane, to a rail system that not only transported people and commodities, but also provided communication by the Postal Telegraph and Cable System and sold the first electricity to communities along the route.

The Spokane and Inland Empire Railroad Company was a prime factor in the rapid development of the area through which its tracks passed. The communities south to Colfax and Moscow, the routes served by the Frequency Changing Station, were linked to Spokane which by 1908 had become the major rail center of the Northwest.

Spokane and Inland advertising brochures of the day stated that "896,885 acres, or over 80 per cent of the tillable soil in Whitman County, is now under cultivation. The Spokane and Inland intersects this mammoth garden spot, not with one railway line, but with two, and reaches, with few exceptions, all the principal towns of the county". Similar claims were made regarding other nearby areas and went on to mention that the average haul from the farms to a rail station or warehouse was four miles.

The Frequency Changing Station had a critical role in the railroad network. Receiving power from the hydroelectric plant at Nine Mile, the station delivered direct current to the streetcar system within the city of Spokane. At the same time, it also converted a portion of the power to alternating current for transmission to a series of substations placed about fifteen miles apart on the operating line. The substations converted power back to direct current to operate the facility outside Spokane and also sold 110 AC to the neighboring communities. The cost of electricity used by the railroad was computed at peak usage. To reduce the peaks, the storage battery was installed shortly after the construction of the original plant. The storage battery was charged when demands on the system were low, and was discharged when demands were high, thus reducing the amount of peak power drawn from the Nine Mile generators. The batteries were attributed with a saving of 50 per cent in power costs.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Phase Changing and Battery Plant," Electric Railway Review, October 26, 1907.

Flagg, Charles E. "Spokane and Inland Empire Railroad," n.d. Eastern Washington Historical Society Library.

"Spokane's Electric Railroads," n.d., Eastern Washington Historical Society Library.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME Spokane NW

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1: 24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 17 47,092,0 5,27,74,4,0  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B           
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C         

D         

E         

F         

G         

H         

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 5 and 6, and parts of lots 7,8,9 and 10 of Block 6 in the Celesta Park Addition...Spokane.

## LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Based on information supplied by Alan B. Kimball

ORGANIZATION

DATE

October, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Box 38

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Springdale

Washington

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Jeanne M. Welch* 5/2/79

TITLE

DATE

## FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*W. Ray Jace*  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 6-19-79

ATTEST: *W. Ray Jace*  
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 6/19/79