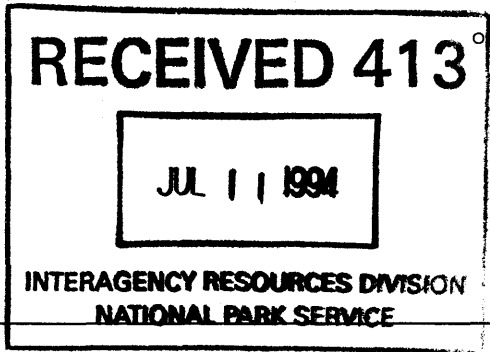


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Flathead Wholesale Grocery

other name/site number: Kalispell Wholesale Grocery 24FH

2. Location

street & number: 5 First Avenue East

not for publication: n/a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 X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

maude shep 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:

- entered in the National Register see continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register see continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register see continuation sheet
- removed from the National Register see continuation sheet
- other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u> </u>	<u> </u>

5. Classification

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

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 1 </u> building(s)
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> sites
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> structures
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 1 </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:
COMMERCE/warehouse

Current Functions:
COMMERCE/business
AGRICULTURE/processing

7. Description

Architectural Classification:
other: commercial

Materials:
foundation: CONCRETE
roof: ASPHALT; METAL
walls: BRICK
other: N/A

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Flathead Wholesale Grocery building is an excellent example of a brick commercial building constructed near the railroad tracks to serve as a warehouse/distribution center for goods brought in by the Great Northern Railway. The two-story brick commercial building is laid up in American bond, with every 7th row a header row. The parapet has some minor corbel detail, and the coping is metal. The basement is constructed of pebbly concrete and is 18" thick. The windows are one-over-one-light wooden double-hung units with brick sills and corbeled belts above each lintel row. There are three small sliding sash replacement windows in the center of the south elevation, on the second floor. In January of 1915 the building was described as a two-story structure, 50' X 150'. The current owner has been told that the person who designed the building also constructed it, although this person has not yet been identified. A portable ice warehouse (not original) on the south loading dock has been removed; it was located on the east side.

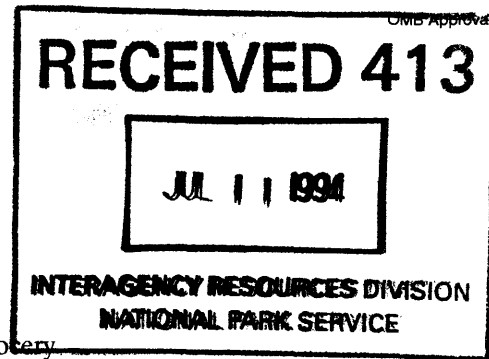
A rear addition is constructed of plywood and has a metal roof. It has three large bays. Originally, the rear loading platform was angled to match the angle of the railroad spur line (see attached copy of 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map). Another railroad spur line passed just to the east of the building, and the 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows a coal storage structure lined up along that track.

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Remodeling work done on the building has included putting a metal roof on the platform on the south (facing East Center Street). The south platform has three double doors with nine lights that open out. On the 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, the platform extended the entire width of the building. In a 1939 photograph, it only extended along the east half. Today, it extends to the door on the west end; 15' of the platform have been removed.

The interior of the building was originally all open except for the west end that contained the office. Wooden beams and posts were (and the posts still are) exposed in the interior. The building contained only dry storage, so when it closed as a wholesale grocery the interior contained much shelving and pallets. The interior floor is the original wood floor, although some has been covered in the entry area (in the center with flagstone, in the west end with asphalt).

A description of the building just after it opened in January of 1915 is as follows:

The basement has been arranged for the storage of goods of a perishable nature. Great piles of canned fruit and barrels of vinegar, molasses and such commodities occupy the greater part of the room. In the east end of the basement are two rooms for the storage of fruit and potatoes. The fruit room is on the north side and the vegetable room on the south. Potatoes will be screened as they are put into the vegetable room, where they are then sacked for shipment.

From the basement to the top of the building runs a freight elevator of 3000 pounds capacity, lifted by a seven and a half horse power motor. The motor is capable of lifting 7000 pounds, so an extra case of pork and beans would hardly stall it. This elevator runs from the basement to the door of the shipping room, which is on the upper story or balcony.

The main floor, where the goods are received or sent out by either rail or delivery wagons, has a floor space of about 7,500 square feet, the office of the manager occupying the corner on First avenue east. Here are stored the non-perishable goods of different kinds, which do not require the warmer temperature of the basement. A large platform scales, at one side of the elevator, is a great convenience on this floor in the billing out of goods by rail. A Great Northern spur track runs the entire length of the building on the north side, where a wide platform gives easy access in loading or unloading cars.

A small flat-roofed shed sits behind the Flathead Wholesale Grocery. It is built of concrete blocks and of random native rock. The rear of the shed has a bay with a double wooden door. This shed was built between 1927 and 1959. Because of the uncertain date of construction, the shed is considered to be a non-contributing building.

The office of the wholesale grocery was located in the southwest corner of the building and was accessed by the door at that location. According to historic photographs, after 1933 the building had "KALISPELL GROCERY COMPANY" painted across its cornice on the south and the west (it is unknown if it was also painted on the other sides). A 1941 photograph shows fabric awnings over the first-floor office windows.

In 1932, soon after the Elliots sold the business to the Kalispell Grocery Company, an oil tank was installed in the ground on the north side of the building. This tank could hold 1½ carloads of oil, making it at the time one of the largest tanks used in Kalispell in connection with an oil-burning heating plant. The grocery company purchased it used from a Eureka firm. Its large capacity was intended to provide for any future additions to the existing building.

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The railroad spur line to the rear (north) of the building was removed in 1981 or 1982, primarily because it was a hazard in a parking area. The spur line to the east of the building, that was used by a warehouse there, was pulled up later.

In 1992 members of the Kalispell Mural Society painted a 12' X 16' mural on the west side of the building that is loosely based on a historic photograph of Second Street East around 1910. The mural features a 1910 Mitchell automobile in the foreground.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A

Areas of Significance: Commerce

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): n/a

Period(s) of Significance: 1914-1943

Significant Person(s): n/a

Significant Dates: 1914

Cultural Affiliation: n/a

Architect/Builder(s): unknown

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Flathead Wholesale Grocery, built in 1914, is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, Commerce. The building served for many decades as a wholesale grocery facility. Its location near the railroad tracks (although the spur line to it has since been removed) reflects the dependence of early Kalispell businesses on the Great Northern Railway. This is one of the few remaining buildings in Kalispell that reflects the relationship of Flathead Valley commerce to the railroad.

The history of the Flathead Wholesale Grocery is connected with the Elliot brothers, prominent Kalispell entrepreneurs, and with the Kalispell Mercantile. In 1911 James Conlon sold the Conlon Mercantile, which he had managed in Kalispell for 18 years, to William, Tom, and John Elliot, all of St. Paul, for approximately \$100,000. William Elliot had visited Kalispell many times and had married a Kalispell woman, Josephine Foshager. He became the active manager of the Elliot Brothers Company. When the Elliots purchased the business, it carried a large line of dry goods, ladies' ready-to-wear clothes, ladies' and men's furnishings, shoes, draperies, and "one of the best lines of groceries in the West." In 1914, the company abandoned the retail grocery business; the wholesale grocery was then conducted by the Flathead Wholesale Grocery (also owned by the Elliot brothers) on the railroad right-of-way.

The Elliots sold their business in 1920, but in 1922 they bought control of the Flathead Commercial Company and its 13 branch stores (nine of which were in the Flathead Valley). They also purchased the Buffalo Block on Main Street (no longer extant), where they ran their business for many years. In 1926 W. G. and T. W. Elliot made one of the largest business transactions in the Montana mercantile circle in many years, buying the Yegen Brothers real estate and mercantile establishment at Billings. W. G. Elliot then spent half his time in Billings, running that business separately from the Flathead Commercial Company. The Elliot Brothers sold their business interests in Kalispell to Buttreys in 1946, which continued the business in the Buffalo Block.

Tom W. Elliot managed the Flathead Wholesale Grocery until the business was sold in 1932, while his brother W. G. managed the brothers' retail business. T. W. Elliot was born in Bright, Ontario, in 1874, and he moved to South Dakota with his family in 1889. He later worked for a St. Paul firm, and in 1902 he married Evelyn Warner. The couple moved to Kalispell in 1912, where he joined his brothers' business. In 1923 he became a partner in the Flathead Commercial Company of Kalispell, and in 1926 he became a member of the Yegen Brothers Department Store of Billings. Tom Elliot managed the Flathead Commercial Company from 1936 until it was sold in 1946. For many years he served as the superintendent of the First Presbyterian Church Sunday School, and he was a leader in the Kalispell Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club, and the Boy Scouts. He also served on the State Highway Commission. His wife was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution and she worked with the Presbyterian Church women. The Elliots had three children. He died in Kalispell in 1963.

John C. Elliot was born in Dundas, Ontario, in 1876. He moved with his family to Mellette, South Dakota, living there until 1911, when he came to Kalispell. He married Elizabeth D. Hodgesin 1898, and they had two children. He died in 1919, but his two brothers carried on the family business for many years.

William. G. Elliot was born in 1878 in Listowel, Ontario. In 1889 he moved with his parents to South Dakota. He worked as a traveling salesman, and he married Josephine Foshager in 1908. She was born in Norway Lake, Minnesota, and came to Kalispell in 1906, where she worked for Drew & McDonald. The couple lived for a short time in Columbia Falls, then

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in St. Paul for a year, but they returned to Kalispell in 1911. They had two children. W. G. Elliot resigned from his various positions in 1936 for health reasons and moved to Missoula and then to Billings, where he owned a furniture store. W. G. Elliot was a member of the Masons, Scottish Rites, and the Shrine. Josephine Elliot died in 1937, her husband at age 82 in 1961.

In 1932 the Elliots sold the Flathead Wholesale Grocery to "Butte capitalists" and the new business was incorporated as the Kalispell Grocery Company. George Chaffee managed the business. Chaffee had been in the grocery business in Minnesota, North Dakota, and then in Butte, Montana. He moved to Kalispell in 1932 when he purchased the Flathead Wholesale Grocery Company.

The next year (1933), the wholesale grocery department of the Kalispell Mercantile, one of the largest businesses in northwest Montana, merged with the Kalispell Grocery Company (the Kalispell Mercantile then confined its grocery operations to the retail end). The consolidation was arranged in order to reduce overhead costs "in these days of highly competitive business." In fact, the Kalispell Mercantile had been planning to build a wholesale grocery warehouse near this location for a number of years. In 1933, the territory covered by the wholesale business extended from Polson on the south to Troy in the west and Shelby in the east, covering about 350 miles along the main line of the Great Northern Railway and about 50 miles to the south. The officers of the new company were C. H. McLeod, president, George Chaffee, vice president and general manager, J. H. Chester, secretary-treasurer, and L. E. Bunge, assistant secretary-treasurer. During the 1940s, the Kalispell Grocery Company's garage was located just to the south at 17 1st Avenue East.

From approximately 1955 until 1975 the Western Montana Grocery Company occupied the building. The building was vacant for approximately three years, from 1975 until 1978. It currently is leased to five different businesses that occupy the first and second floors of the building.

Flathead Wholesale Grocery
Name of Property

Flathead County, Montana
County and State

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 acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing
 A 11 699810 5341715

Verbal Boundary Description

Great Northern Improvement #112, Tract 2A, 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: May 1993
street & number: 491 Eckelberry Dr. telephone: (406) 892-1538
city or town: Columbia Falls state: Montana zip code: 59912

Property Owner

name/title: Darrell R. Martin and James E. Chase
street & number: 1429 Highway 2 West telephone:
city or town: Kalispell state: MT zip code: 59901

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Chase, James (current owner), interview with Kathy McKay, June 2, 1993.

Daily Inter Lake: "George Chaffee, 82, Dies," May 5, 1955; "William Elliot Dies In Forsyth," April 3, 1961, p. 2; "T. W. Elliot, Long-Time Resident, Passes at 89," October 9, 1963, p. 1.

Flathead Monitor: "Elliot Bros. In Large Billings Mercantile Deal," December 9, 1926, p. 1; "Spring Opening," March 14, 1929, p. 1; "Kalispell Grocery Co. Installing New Oil Heating Plant," September 29, 1932, p. 8; "Wholesale Grocers to Consolidate," December 15, 1932, p. 1; August 31, 1933; "Head of Flathead Commercial Co. Resigns Office," September 10, 1936, p. 1; "Mrs. W. G. Elliot Dies Unexpectedly," October 21, 1937, p. 1.

Kalispell Bee: July 12, 1912, p. 8; "John C. Elliot Dead After Long Illness," February 6, 1919.

Kalispell City Directories, 1910-76.

Kalispell Journal: "Mercantile Establishment Changes Ownership," June 22, 1911; "New Wholesale Company Have Convenient Building," January 28, 1915, p. 1.

Kalispell News: advertisement, March 22, 1939, p. 7; advertisement, 50 Anniversary Edition, buildings section (1941).

Kalispell Times: "Conlon Business Sold to Elliott Bros. Co.," June 22, 1911, p. 1; December 31, 1914; August 4, 1932; "Elliot Obtain Control of Flathead Commercial Co.," August 17, 1922; March 14, 1946.

Ramon, Helen Huck Voelker, profile of Tom Elliot submitted to Kalispell Historical Survey April 1992.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1927, 1963.