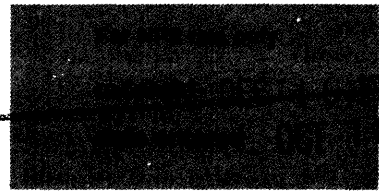


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



84
8 1985

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Izaak Walton Inn

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Off U.S. 2 adjacent to railroad in Essex n/a not for publication

city, town Essex n/a vicinity of congressional district

state Montana 59916 code 030 county Flathead code 029

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name (See Continuation Sheet)

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Flathead County Surveyor's Office

street & number Flathead County Courthouse

city, town Kelispell state Montana 19901

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title none has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input 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

The Izaak Walton Inn is situated adjacent to the railroad right-of-way in Essex, Montana. This two and one-half story wood frame hotel is significantly different from other railroad section houses or boarding houses built along the Montana High-Line. Designed by Thomas McMahon, an architect employed by the Great Northern Railroad, the Izaak Walton was used as a boarding house for railroad workers during the winter months while large crews were stationed in the area to keep the trackage over Marias Pass clear of snow and as a tourist hotel during the summer months when the trout fishing in the northwestern part of Montana is at its finest. The building has two main entrances; one oriented toward the town of Essex, the other toward the railroad tracks. Both entrances are marked by small shed roofed porches with gable pediments above the doorways.

The architectural design of the Izaak Walton Inn incorporates Craftsman stylistic features that were typical of Great Northern railroad depot buildings of the later 1920's and 1930's in Montana. The first floor of the exterior of the hotel is clad with wide bevel cut siding while the upper portion is finished with mock half timbering with rough stucco infill. A large overhanging clipped gable roof covers the building and is broken by large shed roof dormers. Decorative knee braces are used to support the roof overhang. The roof, originally shingled, is now covered with dark brown sheet metal.

The Inn is rectangular in shape and set on a poured concrete foundation. There are two chimneys: one massive exterior chimney that rises on the east facade and services the main boiler and another interior chimney that pierces the roof on the west side and services the stone fireplace located in the lobby.

The fenestration pattern of the Izaak Walton Inn is regular, reflective of the building's function as a hostelry. The windows are primarily 6/1 double hung sash. Raw aluminum storm windows were installed in 1980. Also, two of the windows in the dining room were replaced with large panes of fixed glass within the past few years.

The interior of the building has undergone minor alteration. The layout of the original twenty-eight guest rooms remains intact, with bathrooms located in the middle of each of the hallways and shared by the guests on the floor. Two guest rooms were added in the attic story during the past year. On the original plans for the building, the attic space was unfinished and labeled as "future additional bedrooms". Original knotty pine panelling and fiber board ceilings are still in place throughout the building. Exterior fire escapes are located on both the east and west ends of the hotel.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1939 **Builder/Architect** Addison Miller Co., Contractors

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Since its construction in 1939, the Izaak Walton Inn has been the key economic institution in the town of Essex in Flathead County, linked closely to the transportation history of the Marias Pass area of the Rocky Mountains of northwestern Montana. Although the building is less than fifty years of age, the Inn possesses exceptional local historical significance due to the service it has rendered to railroad workers who historically have been the mainstay of consumer traffic through the town and because it reflects the importance of the Great Northern Railroad's maintenance of service along the intercontinental Hi-Line route that served during the historic period as the primary commercial transportation network for the Northern Great Plains. At the time that the Izzak Walton Inn was constructed, there were three major rail networks that serviced Montana: the Northern Pacific Railroad traversed southern Montana along the Yellowstone River; the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul crossed Central Montana; and the Great Northern Railway provided the primary transportation for the high plains across northern Montana. Maintenance of the crossing of the Continental Divide at Marias Pass was essential to the year-round operation of the Great Northern's main line. The Izzak Walton Inn continues to be of considerable importance as a tourist center and, in fact, is the only hostelry located on the southern border of Glacier National Park that is open on a year-round basis.

The Izaak Walton Inn was built by the Great Northern Railroad in response to numerous petitions submitted by railroad workers stationed at Essex requesting permanent housing facilities. Prior to the construction of the Inn, seasonal and full-time workers were housed in abandoned railroad cars, wall tents, and other temporary forms of shelter. Approximately 60 workers were assigned to the segment of the line between Essex and East Glacier during the winter months to clear the rail line of snow and the frequent avalanches. Essex is located 18 miles west of the Divide and along the steepest grade of the entire transcontinental route. It was a small community of only about 150 residents at the time the Izaak Walton Inn was built. The Izaak Walton is the only large boarding facility for railroad workers constructed by the Great Northern along its route through northern Montana that is not located at a division point. Railroad section houses normally featured 1 or 2 bunkrooms and/or 2 to 6 bedrooms, while the Izaak Walton was designed as a division point hotel with twenty-nine separate rooms. The choice of the name of Izaak Walton Inn for this hostelry, in honor of the English author of the quintessential book on fly fishing, The Compleat Angler and Outdoor Man and the Craftsman architectural styling appear to indicate that the Great Northern strove to encourage visitor use of the Inn during the summer tourist months when fewer railroad workers would be stationed at Essex.

In 1890, the Great Northern made plans to continue their main line west through the Continental Divide and eventually to the Pacific Coast. A southern route which would have extended near Helena and paralleled an existing track owned by the rival Northern Pacific Railroad was rejected in favor of the "Assiniboine" route that went directly across Marias Pass. Twenty years after it had built the Assiniboine, the Great Northern relocated and double-tracked much of the line between Marias Pass and Essex in order to reduce treacherous curves. Because of extremely heavy snowfalls and the steep grade of the line beginning in Essex, the railroad was forced to keep seven helper engine crews, a minimum of two

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 0.89

Quadrangle name Essex, Montana

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

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3	0	6	2	5	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property consists of a parcel of land that measures approximately 225'x180' located directly east of the Burlington Northern Railroad right-of-way in Essex, Montana T29N, R16W, Section 14 (See attached Survey Map for specific reference)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jim C. and Gail A. Atkinson, independent researchers

organization N/A date April 11, 1984

street & number 503 Fifth Avenue East telephone (406)257-2087

city or town Kalispell state Montana 59901

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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 *Maella Sheffy*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date November 30, 1984

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Jim C. Atkinson

date 10/18/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Chief of Registration date

**United States Department of the Interior
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work gangs for clearing the tracks of snow, and three water tanks (one tank was normally sufficient) in town during the winter. Despite having a permanent population of less than 30 people until 1918, Essex served essentially as the equivalent of a major railroad division point with the sole purpose of keeping open one of the few major transportation routes linking the Midwest with the Pacific Northwest.

Two previous buildings constructed by the Great Northern on the site of the Izaak Walton served as restaurants for railroad workers, but did not provide adequate lodging facilities. The first Beanery was built in 1910 and burned in 1918; the second was constructed during the 1920s and burned in August, 1935. Four years later, the Izaak Walton was built as a result of the increased pressure from several Great Northern employees including I.E. Manion, Superintendent at Whitefish, Montana. A 1937 letter from Manion to R.A. McCandless, General Manager of the Great Northern in Seattle, offered justification for a new facility in Essex (known at the time as Walton): "With as many as eight or nine crews working out of Walton in snow service, with three helper engine crews and various officers, including roadmasters, trainmasters, traveling engineer, and master mechanic, also master carpenter frequently tying up at that point, the hotel should be of sufficient size to accommodate six crews of five men each tying up at one time, and three or four Division officers and accommodations for the necessary hotel help."1 Constructed at a cost of \$40,000 and formally opened on November 15, 1939, the Izaak Walton Inn had 29 guest rooms, 10 bathrooms, a spacious lobby, dining room, kitchen, general store, and a recreation room and bar in the basement. It took twelve carpenters three months to complete the building.

Built primarily to house Great Northern railroad workers, the Izaak Walton also served as the only year-round hotel for the increasing number of automobile tourists traveling to Glacier National Park via the recently-opened U.S. Highway 2. The Great Northern contracted the operation of the hotel to a private concessionaire. Although many railroad employees still stay at the hotel, the use of the building by tourists has increased significantly since the purchase of the property by private individuals in the 1950s.

1. Izaak Walton Inn, Gail Shay Atkinson and Jim C. Atkinson; Columbia Falls, MT.: Hungry Horse News, 1985.

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Daily Interlake, Kalispell, Montana, March 4, 1929.

Great Falls Tribune, Great Falls, Montana, October 15, 1939, November 15, 1947

Great Northern Railway files, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota

Historical Information Concerning the Upper Flathead Country, Trippet's
Printing, Kalispell, Montana, 1971

Kalispell City Directories, Kalispell, Montana, 1909-Present

Personal interviews: by Gail Atkinson : Francis June, 6/11/83,
10/1/83, 2/1/84; Frank Foust, 7/8/83; Henry Elwood, 7/11/83; Charlie Shaw,
9/1/83; Wilber Gulbranson, 2/5/84; Mel Ruder, 2/5/84; Clarence Eudy, 3/14/84,
Dewit O'Neil, 8/15/83; John Sagan, 3/20/84 Bill Rossiter, 3/16/84; Joe
Pettinato, 7/18/83; Sid and Millie Goodrich, 4/1/83.

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4

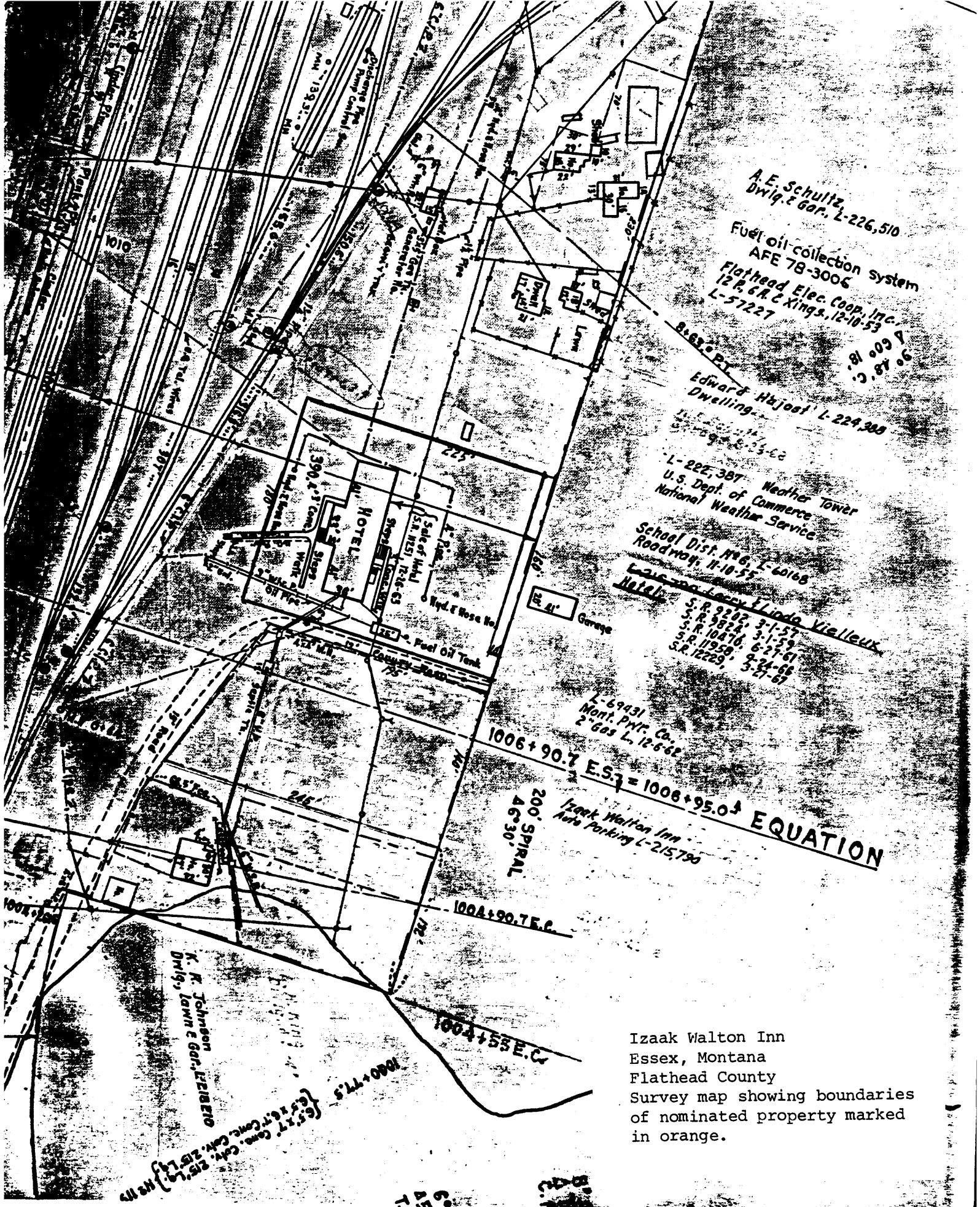
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Building:

Larry and Lynda Vielleux
Box 653
Essex, MT 59916

Land:

Burlington Northern Railroad Company
Sales and Property Management Dept.
3300 Continental Plaza
777 Main Street
Fort Worth, TX



Izaak Walton Inn
 Essex, Montana
 Flathead County
 Survey map showing boundaries
 of nominated property marked
 in orange.