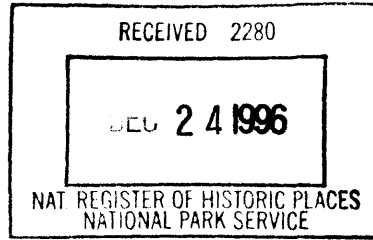


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Montgomery Ward Building

other names/site number QualMed Building; 5PE557

2. Location

street & number 225 North Main Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town Pueblo [N/A] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Pueblo code 101 zip code 81003

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 [].)

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official/Title

State Historic Preservation Officer December 23, 1996
Date

State Historic Preservation Office, Colorado Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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.
- removed from the
National Register
- other, explain
See continuation sheet [].

f Signature of the Keeper _____ Date 12/24/96
[Signature]

Montgomery Ward Building
Name of Property

Pueblo County, Colorado
County/State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: department store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: business

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY
REVIVALS: Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
walls BRICK

roof SLATE
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Continuation Sheet**

Montgomery Ward Building
Pueblo County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 1

DESCRIPTION

Setting

The Montgomery Ward retail store is located at the heart of downtown Pueblo. The surrounding area is commercial. Structures in the area immediately surrounding the building are of comparable scale, generally 3-5 stories with ground floor storefronts and offices above.

The building itself is located at the southwest corner of Third and Main Streets, fronting onto Main. It sits on a parcel of approximately 9,150 square feet. It runs 72 feet north and south and 127 feet east and west. The lot is flat and the structure is built to the lot lines. There are no landscape features extant.

Exterior

The building fronts onto Main Street with a secondary facade on Third Street. On the west and south, the building shares a party wall with adjacent structures. It is a two-story unreinforced masonry structure with full basement and mezzanine. The exterior is red brick laid in common bond with trim of buff-colored limestone or mahogany-colored granite quarried near Melbank, South Dakota.

The primary facade is on main Street and is symmetrical in design with classical details. It is two full stories with a brick and stone parapet and a mansard roof. The ground floor is treated as a base with a plate glass storefront system sitting on polished mahogany colored granite bulkheads with awnings above. The main entry doors are slightly inset.

A molded brick and contrasting buff limestone string course separates the first and second floors running at the base of the second-story windows. The second floor is dominated by a grouping of five oversized windows. These windows are double-hung wood frame 12-over-12, painted white, with proportional surrounds, Georgian stone entablatures with simple frieze, stone sill and window balustrades. At the corners are rusticated limestone quoins.

A second brick and stone string course then defines the cornice with a parapet above. The parapet is brick with stone coping and stone balustrade insets above the first, third and fifth windows. Behind the balustrade is a gray slate-covered mansard roof with three dormers, also above the first, third and fifth windows. The dormers are pedimented, segmented and gabled. The windows, though smaller than the second floor, match the form with double-hung wood sash 12-over-12 painted white with proportional surrounds. The mansard roof serves as a screen for the roof-top mechanical equipment.

The Third Street facade reflects the form and design of the Main Street facade but is clearly secondary. The storefront base is halted after wrapping around the corner, approximately 25 feet west. The remainder of the Third Street first-story is brick accented by evenly spaced string courses. At the west

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Continuation Sheet**

Montgomery Ward Building
Pueblo County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 2

end are a second pedestrian and service entrance surrounded by polished granite. At the second floor level, the Third Avenue facade has a 12-over-12 window centered above the storefront at the east and the entrances on the west. These windows match those of the Main Street facade and are framed with a rusticated limestone pilaster to match the corner quoin. The remaining portion of the second floor wall is unadorned brick. At the roof, the slate mansard roof continues with six dormers and parapet matching those on the Main Street facade.

Interior

The interior of the building is two stories with full basement and mezzanine with the primary entry off Main Street and a secondary entrance off Third. The floors are generally open. The building retains many of its original fixture and finishes. Finishes include precast terrazzo finished floors in the entrance vestibule, on landings and stairs, and at the Third Street entrance. Georgian or Alabama white marble is used for thresholds throughout. Fixtures include original lights, doors, windows and railings.

Montgomery Ward Building
Name of Property

Pueblo County, Colorado
County/State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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
- # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

Periods of Significance

1936 - 1946

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Rowe, Robert R.

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Colorado Historical Society

**United States Department of the Interior
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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Montgomery Ward Building
Pueblo County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 3

SIGNIFICANCE

The 1936 Montgomery Ward Building is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C as an intact example of the Montgomery Ward Company's standard Georgian Revival corporate style used for its department stores from 1933 to 1948. The Pueblo store is the only example of the Montgomery Ward Georgian Revival style in Colorado. The building is also eligible for listing under Criterion A for its association with the firm of Montgomery Ward as the local manifestation of the firm's transition from a mail-order business to a retail store chain.

Setting - Pueblo

Pueblo is located in southeastern Colorado at the confluence of the Arkansas River and Fountain Creek. Flat lands and abundant water made the site a resting place for 18th century explorers and missionaries. It was here in 1806 that U.S. Army Lieutenant Zebulon Pike camped and erected the first American-built structure in Colorado. Over the next several decades, the settlement became increasingly permanent. In 1842, James Beckwourth, a mulatto trader and one time war chief of the Crow Indians, established a trading post and called the area El Pueblo. In 1858, a group of St. Louis prospectors decided that they could more easily and profitably mine for gold by starting a town; that community was called Fountain City. In April 1859, the citizens of Fountain City first formally proposed statehood for Colorado.

In 1860, promoters from Denver laid out the rival town of Pueblo and quickly absorbed Fountain City. A post office was created in 1863, and in the next decade came a gristmill, hotel and newspaper. By 1870, Pueblo's population was 700.

Pueblo would shortly rise from a simple trading post to become Colorado's second largest city. In 1872, the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad extended to Pueblo and allowed the city to become an industrial center. The city incorporated the following year. In 1876, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad arrived. Coal from Trinidad to the south fueled smelters melting the lead ore from Leadville to the northwest. In 1881, the Colorado Coal and Iron Company opened an open hearth steel plant and became the state's largest industrial establishment. The Mather and Geist smelters opened in 1882. The Eilers smelter opened the following year and the Guggenheim smelter in 1888. Pueblo's population rose from 3,217 in 1870 to nearly 25,000 in 1880. In that decade, Pueblo manufacturing concerns rose from 599 to 762, while the value of goods produced more than doubled from \$14 million to \$29 million.

With this industrial base, Pueblo continued to grow well into the 20th century. In 1926, Pueblo became the southern terminus of the first air mail service in Colorado, connecting the city to Denver and Cheyenne. By 1914 and again in 1929, the Minnequa Steel Plant of the Colorado Coal and Iron

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Continuation Sheet**

Montgomery Ward Building
Pueblo County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 4

Company hit a manufacturing peak of 600,000 tons of steel produced by 6,000 workers. Pueblo Junior College (now the University of Southern Colorado) was established in 1933.

History of the Building

The two-story unreinforced red brick building located on the southwest corner of Main and Third Streets was built in 1936 as a retail catalog store for the Montgomery Ward Company.

At the time, the area on the north end of downtown was considered "the newest and most impressive business blocks" in the city. A flood in 1921 wiped out much of the area located along the Arkansas River to the south. The remaining structures near the river were considered "low, grimy buildings...which housed a variety of loan shops, hotels, restaurants, saloons and stores." The Pueblo County Courthouse, built in 1912 and located at 10th and Main, helped define this new downtown. Neoclassical in design, the sandstone courthouse was adorned with Corinthian columns, terra cotta dome and pink Colorado onyx on the interior. To the north and west were fashionable and attractive residential neighborhoods, the areas to south was largely industrial.

The Georgian Revival department store was designed by Robert R. Rowe. Rowe was an architect in Montgomery Ward's Construction and Equipment Department, located in Chicago, Illinois. The contractor was Platt Rogers, Inc., with Howard E. Whitlock, builder.

Montgomery Ward & Company occupied the building from 1936 until the early 1970s when it relocated to the Pueblo Mall. Since that time, the building has been leased on an intermittent basis to several tenants. Following the opening of the mall, Pueblo has faced the challenges of retail relocation from the downtown area. The old Ward Building has suffered from a debilitating cycle of vacancies and deferred maintenance.

Montgomery Ward & Company

Aaron Montgomery Ward founded Montgomery Ward & Company in 1872. His concept was to buy large quantities of merchandise wholesale and then sell directly to farmers in rural areas without the use of retail intermediaries. Ward felt such an operation would provide goods to farmers at low prices but still yield acceptable profits. To accomplish his goal, he distributed the world's first mail-order catalog, backing sales with a full money-back guarantee. His first catalog consisted of a single 8" x 12" piece of paper, produced and mailed at a total cost of \$2,400. Both the company's sales and the number of items in its catalog grew quickly. A major coup occurred when Ward convinced the national Grange organization to designate his catalog as its official supply house. The catalog's homey style also contributed to its success.

The lure of the mail-order business was substantial. A major outlay of cash was not necessary. The post offices, railroads and private freight haulers were eager for business. As a result, numerous mail-

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Montgomery Ward Building
Pueblo County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 5

order enterprises cropped up while major retailers also dabbled with the concept. These include Sears, Roebuck & Company and Speigel in the former case and R.H. Macy and John Wanamaker in the latter.

The real competitive challenge, however, was not from the other mail order companies but from local merchants. To beat the mail-order houses some local merchants appealed to racism, suggesting that the mail-order houses were operated by blacks. Others referred to the catalog companies by derisive names, such "Rears and Soreback" and "Monkey Wards." Many local merchants offered such prizes as free admission to nickelodeon theaters to children who turned in the family's mail-order catalog. With Rural Free Delivery, and later the Parcel Post system, the mail-order houses possessed a competitive edge. They also had an advantage with their larger selection and lower prices. By 1908, Sears alone was distributing 3.6 million catalogs annually.

Following the First World War, the mail-order houses substantially altered their strategy and began opening retail stores to supplement their catalog business. The first stores were opened under the direction of Robert E. Wood, then working as a vice president for Montgomery Ward, as a means to reduce swollen inventories of catalog merchandise. The economy stalled in the years after the First World War and Wards found itself with substantial excess inventory and Wood opened stores to sell it rapidly. Within a year the backlog was gone and Wood recognized the sales potential in the synergism of a mail-order business coupled with retail outlets. At the time, however, Montgomery Ward's senior management "regarded the retail outlets as funnels through which to drop the lemons from the mail-order inventory." Once the backlog was gone the company closed all its retail stores.

Wood left Montgomery Ward for Sears, Roebuck and Company where he pushed the retail concept. Fortunately for Wood, Sears paid its president, Charles M. Kittle, according to gross sales and consequently Kittle was responsive to ideas which boosted total company sales. Within weeks of his arrival at Sears, Wood opened the company's first retail store. Sears opened eight stores in 1925. These first stores were located near mail-order plants. Within a year, these retail stores represented 8.5% of Sears total sales and the future of the mail-order houses was redefined.

Ward, while more cautious than Sears, saw its rivals sales and profit increases and initiated its own drive to open stores. Ward opened its first permanent store in 1926 and by 1930 there were 556 of them across the country. The two mail-order giants battled to be the first into choice markets.

Not everyone welcomed the arrival of the catalog giants' department stores. Just as with the mail-order catalog, the chief competitors to the catalog company retail stores were local retailers. This time the local merchants were better organized and financed in their collective battle against the new chain department stores. The local retailers incited popular suspicions about chain stores, the nature of their ownership and the poor quality of their merchandise. Attacks also came in the form of proposals for discriminatory taxes, for fair trade laws, and whisper campaigns against outsiders.

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Continuation Sheet**

Montgomery Ward Building
Pueblo County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 6

Chain stores of all kinds responded by offering improved service and selection. The chain department stores paid particularly attention to male shoppers. The goal was to make men more comfortable. The stores offered a wide selection of tools, tires, sporting goods and similar special interest items. Company researchers found that families like to look and touch big ticket items such as refrigerators and washing machines prior to purchase, something not possible through catalog sales. Accordingly, the stores stocked and prominently displayed major home appliances.

The mail-order companies also focused on creating efficient and attractive building designs and layouts. Sears created a Store Planning and Display department in 1932. Montgomery Ward followed suit shortly thereafter. The new departments standardized store designs and developed visual corporate identities through architectural styling. One of the interesting results was the elimination of windows, beginning in 1934. Another was the effort to adjust the size of the store to the marketplace. A third was the effort to design stores so that all operations worked in concert to maximize sales. Stores could not carry the enormous variety and selection of goods offered in the catalog, but they could continually adjust prices for sales, something more difficult to do with catalogs issued four times a year. Then too, many people saw items in the catalog and wanted to see the real merchandise prior to purchase. To encourage retail patronage, Wards offered free shipping and handling for in-store pickups of catalog orders while charging for home delivery. The company also placed the catalog order desk deep within its stores, reasoning that customers may stop to make additional purchases as they head to the catalog counter.

The 1936 Pueblo Montgomery Ward store represents the pre-World War II corporate expansion of the chain into retail department stores in Colorado. The building is the oldest former Ward building in the state. The building also reflects the first standard corporate architectural style employed by Ward's Construction and Engineering Department. The Georgian Revival style was used by the company from 1933 to 1943 in some 85 stores across the nation. While sharing a unified corporate style, the Ward stores varied greatly in size, ranging from the 91,000 square foot store in Kansas City to the 22,500 square foot store in Manhattan, Kansas. At 30,000 square feet, the Pueblo Ward's building is slightly smaller than the average Ward store built during the company's Georgian Revival design period. The Pueblo Ward store is the only example of the Georgian Revival corporate design in Colorado.

Montgomery Ward and Sears were mirror corporate images and for the most part equally strong. Following World War II, however, Montgomery Ward remembered the lessons of the postwar depression decades earlier and allowed its cash reserves to build up, deferring expansion until prices fell. Sears plowed its profits into expansion. In the six years following the war, Sears spent \$300 million opening 92 new stores and repositioned 212 more. Ward's anticipated depression never occurred and by 1951, Sears, with an inventory of \$2.8 billion, was twice as large as Wards. Wards never recovered the lost momentum and did not open a new store from 1948 to 1958.

After a decade of struggling to regain lost market share, Montgomery Ward merged with the Container Corporation of America in 1968, resulting in a holding company known as Marcor, Inc. In 1974,

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Montgomery Ward Building
Pueblo County, Colorado

Mobil Oil purchased 54% of the voting stock. In 1985, the company ended its mail-order business to concentrate on its retail operations. In 1988, Mobil sold Montgomery Ward and the latter once again became an independent corporation.

Although Montgomery Ward & Company occupied the Pueblo building from 1936 until the early 1970s when it relocated to the Pueblo Mall, the period of significance is considered to be the decade from 1936 to 1946. It was during this period that the company made its aggressive move into the development and operation of chain department stores and it is the association with this activity in Colorado from which the Pueblo building derives its significance.

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Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 8

Montgomery Ward Building
Pueblo County, Colorado

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Montgomery Ward Building
Name of Property

Pueblo County, Colorado
County/State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 13 534265 4235580
Zone Easting Northing

3. Zone Easting Northing

2. Zone Easting Northing

4. Zone Easting Northing

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John M. Tess, President

organization Heritage Investment Corporation date December 18, 1996

street & number 123 NW 2nd Ave., Suite 200 telephone 503-288-0272

city or town Portland state OR zip code 97209

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name QualMed, Inc.

street & number 225 Main Street telephone 719-585-8072

city or town Pueblo state CO zip code 81003

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 9

Montgomery Ward Building
Pueblo County, Colorado

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The Montgomery Ward Building is located on the north 72 feet of Lots 1-3, Block 32, City of Pueblo, Pueblo County, Colorado.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Montgomery Ward Building.

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Section number Additional Documentation Page 10

Montgomery Ward Building
Pueblo County, Colorado

PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to photographs numbers 1-4:

Name of Property: Montgomery Ward Building
Location: Pueblo County, Colo.
Photographer: Richard Cherry
Date of Photographs: April, 1996
Negatives: Richard Cherry, Architect, 110 East D Street, Pueblo, CO 81003

<u>Photo No.</u>	<u>Information</u>
1	Exterior view of the east and north elevations, view to the southwest.
2	Interior, just inside the main entry off Main Street.
3	Interior showing the south stair to the mezzanine level.
4	Interior from the south mezzanine stair showing the main floor and front entrance. View shows the refurbished original light fixtures.

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Montgomery Ward Building
Pueblo County, Colorado

Section number Additional Documentation Page 11

USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
Northeast Pueblo, Colo.
7.5 Minute Quad
Photorevised 1974

