

MONTANA HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY

BRIDGER SURVEY

Legal Description: East 194' of Tract Y - Routh Addition  
Address: East Bridger  
Ownership: Name: Laurel Coop Association  
Address: Box 367  
Bridger, MT 59014



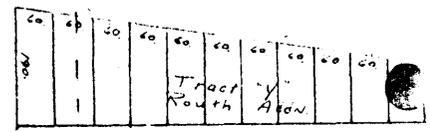
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Roll# 8/Frame# 9

Historic Name: Wool Warehouse  
Common Name: Glidden Mercantile Warehouse  
Date of Construction: 1900  
Architect: Unknown  
Builder: Northern Pacific Railway Company  
Original Owner: Northern Pacific Railway Company  
Original Use: Warehouse - Commercial  
Present Use: Warehouse - Elevator

Research Sources:

Abstract of Title: Carbon County Courthouse:  
1957, E.H. Walrath & Sons  
Plat Records: Carbon County Courthouse  
Tax Records: Carbon County Courthouse  
Building Permits: N/A  
Sewer/Water Permits: N/A  
City Directories: N/A  
Sanborn Maps: 1907, 1916  
Newspapers: Red Lodge Picket; 5-4-00;  
Free Press; 2-27-03; 5-13-04;  
Clarke Fork Herald; 8-15-07

Other: N/A



Location Map

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Warehouse - 2400 sq. ft. Concrete foundation, wood joist & sheeting floor structure, no floor cover, wood exterior, wood joist wood deck roof structure, rolled roof cover.

Located adjacent to the abandoned Northern Pacific Railroad bed, this large wood frame warehouse is composed of two sections: the two-story elevated portion and the large, gable roofed storage portion. A wood plank loading dock surrounds three sides of the structure.

JUL 21 1907

The main portion of the structure is finished with board and batten siding, while the elevated portion is simply plank walled. Two cargo doors with five-light transoms above are found on both the west elevation facing the rail line as well as the east elevation facing the street. All windows on the structure have been covered with plank siding since abandonment in the 1920's. No access is permitted to the interior of the structure.

#### HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

The Red Lodge Picket May 4, 1900 noted that two new warehouses were being built by the station in Bridger. One (this one) built by the Northern Pacific Railway Company as a wool warehouse, and the other by Hiram Haskins. Glidden Mercantile bought the Haskins one and moved it to Main Street in 1903, then began using this one. Reference is made to Glidden in this one in the Free Press May 13, 1904, when sparks from the train set fire to hay on the platform, but no damage occurred to the building. In August of 1907 the Northern Pacific Railway Company notified Glidden that he would have to vacate this warehouse. Since the Fair Association had been accustomed to holding their dances here, the vacation notice sparked the construction of the Opera House a few weeks later. (See also Glidden Mercantile, Block 7 O.P. and Opera House, Block 10, O.P.). According to the Sanborn Map in 1916, Glidden or his successors still used the building as a warehouse for the mercantile.

In 1899, the year prior to the construction of the wool warehouse, a million pounds of wool were shipped from Carbon County. Montana was the world's leading producer of wool during the first decade of the twentieth century, and Carbon ranked ninth in contribution. In 1904 fully one-half of the assessed value of Carbon County was in cattle and sheep, and the sheep continued to out number cattle at least through the 1920's.

Information on the amount of wool shipped out of Bridger is not available, but the Red Lodge Picket noted that the Northern Pacific expected "a great quantity" from the "Basin Country". It was probably around 1903 when Glidden began using the warehouse, and he apparently took over the arrangements for shipping wool, sheep and cattle, alfalfa, etc. for the local farmers. So the building continued to serve as a wool warehouse, but also stored other commodities.

In the 1920's this warehouse was converted into a bean cleaning plant, and the elevated portion was added on.

#### INTEGRITY:

Appears to be original condition, but the elevated portion was added on in the 1920's.

## HISTORICAL and/or ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Wool Warehouse is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places due to its association with a very important aspect of the agricultural economy in the Clarks Fork Valley, and the transportation system that linked the Valley producers to distant markets. The bench land and alpine slopes above the fertile Clarks Fork Valley provided excellent summer grazing for sheep and, during the first decade of the 20th Century, sheep raising surpassed cattle ranching in local economic importance. The Northern Pacific Railway Company claimed a virtual monopoly on the transport of raw wool from Montana during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and this warehouse in Bridger was one of a number of such structures built by the railroad in communities throughout eastern Montana. Attempts to process raw wool into manufactured products failed in Montana due, in part, to the collusion of the railroad with eastern woolen mill owners and the practice. Although the warehouse was enlarged by the addition of a two-story elevator during the 1920's when it was converted for use as a bean cleaning plant, the building retains sufficient historic architectural integrity to accurately recall its earlier use as a warehouse for wool receiving, storage, and shipping.

### FORM PREPARED BY:

Name: Carbon County Historic Preservation Office

Address: Box 1651

Red Lodge, MT 59068

Date: October, 1986

### GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

Acreage: less than one acre

USGS Quad: Bridger, Mont. 1956 7.5

UTM's: Zone 12, 663965 E., 5017710 N.



