

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Wichita Wholesale Grocery Company

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 619 East William

N/A not for publication

city, town Wichita

N/A vicinity of

state Kansas

code 20

county Sedgwick

code 173

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input 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 Norran Management Company

street & number 624 East Douglas

city, town Wichita

N/A vicinity of

state Kansas

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Sedgwick County Courthouse

street & number 525 North Main

city, town Wichita

state Kansas

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

173-5880-0180

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Wichita Wholesale Grocery Company building is located at what used to be the corner of William street and Fifth avenue, in the heart of the old warehouse district. The area immediately surrounding the warehouse is now empty lots, parking lots, and low-lying office and industrial structures. To the east of the building are the railroad tracks that used to provide direct service to the warehouse. To the north and northwest is the Carey House District, a local and state designated turn-of-the-century commercial district. The Wholesale Grocery building is in excellent condition and has been altered very little since it was constructed in 1894.

The 75 feet by 120 feet Wichita Wholesale Grocery Company building originally was oriented toward the railroad tracks to the east. The street that ran on that side was Fifth avenue, now vacated. The other major facade was the north one, facing Williams street (now William). The entire structure is solid brick with heavy timber interior framing and sits on a raised basement. The north and east facades have a corbelled brick cornice beneath the parapet wall. The west facade also has corbelling near the cornice, but no parapet.

The 75 foot east facade has five bays of paired windows on all floors above the first floor. Those on the second and third floors have segmental arches, those on the fourth floor have rounded arches. On the lower level are loading doors and a large round arched window at the northeast corner. This window and four others like it on the north facade indicate where a sales room and office of the warehouse were located. The rest of the fenestration on the north side consists of regularly spaced segmental arched windows. At the west end is a large arched entranceway with a "K" carved in stone at the peak of the arch. This was probably done in the 1920's when Knorr Mercantile took over the building and did some remodeling.

The warehouse has undergone some minor alterations since it was constructed. The parapet wall was originally capped with what appear to have been decorative pots. Those are now gone. The platform on the east wall formerly had steps at the north end and probably at the south end as well. Two of the four large arched windows on the north wall were remodeled into loading doors at some point. Another building now abuts the south wall where all windows have been bricked in.

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

Specific dates 1894 (built) Builder/Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The 1894 Wichita Wholesale Grocery Company building is the last remaining multi-storied warehouse in what was historically a major warehouse district in Wichita. The building typifies warehouse construction and is a significant reminder of a once-important industry in Wichita.

The warehouse at the corner of William street and Fifth avenue is the third structure that the Wichita Wholesale Grocery company occupied between 1884 and 1894. After a fire destroyed its original facilities on Water street, the company moved to temporary quarters on South Market street, a few blocks west of where their new building was constructed.

Ground for the company's new warehouse was broken on April 7, 1894. The next day the Wichita Eagle reported that "outside of the packing houses the building will be one of the strongest, if not the strongest, house in the city." It measured 75 feet on Fifth avenue and 120 feet on Williams street. The foundations were six feet wide. In typical warehouse fashion pillars were situated one above the other through all four floors. The sale room at the north-east corner of the building was called "spacious and well-fitted" by the Eagle. The location of the sale room is easily determined today by the decorative pressed metal ceiling, cast-iron columns, and elaborate door and window surrounds.

The wholesale grocers were an extremely important industry in Wichita and according to early newspaper accounts, the Wichita Wholesale Grocery Company pioneered in the field. In May, 1912, the Wichita Eagle reported that "despite the financial depression that has pervaded the entire country, the Wichita wholesale grocers have experienced an increase and expansion of business. . ." At that time there were five wholesale grocery houses in Wichita whose sales amounted to more than \$5,000,000 annually.

The Wichita Wholesale Grocery Company apparently went out of business in 1925, when it ceased to appear in the city directories. In 1927 the Industrial Survey of Wichita, Kansas reported two other wholesale grocery outfits in that building -- Jett and Wood Mercantile and Knorr Mercantile. Knorr remained in the building until 1945. Merchants Van and Storage was a long-term occupant, and their signage is still painted at the top of the building. The structure is still being used as a warehouse but plans are underway to renovate it for office use.

This statement reflects current knowledge and is subject to change.

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Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

Historical and Descriptive Review of Kansas. Volume III. Topeka: John Lethem, 1891.

Industrial Survey of Wichita, Kansas. Lockwood, Greene & Co., Inc. 1927.

Wichita City Directories. 1904-1905, 1913, 1915, 1916, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1927.

"Will be Massive." Wichita Sunday Eagle, April 8, 1894, pg. 5, col. 1.

"Wholesale Business is Heaviest in its History." Wichita Eagle, Commercial Edition, April 29, 1908, pg. 8, col. 1.

"Wholesale Grocery Houses Over Entire Southwest." Wichita Sunday Eagle Booster Edition, May 12, 1912, pg. 5, col. 1.

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Wichita East

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	4	6	4	7	2	4	0	4	1	7	1	9	4	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

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D

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Verbal boundary description and justification East 140 feet of lots 14, 16, and 18, N.A. English's Addition, City of Wichita. The Wichita Wholesale Grocery Company has occupied these lots since its construction in 1894.

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nora Pat Small, Architectural Historian

organization Kansas State Historical Society

date June 9, 1983

street & number 120 W. Tenth

telephone 913 296-5294

city or town Topeka

state Kansas

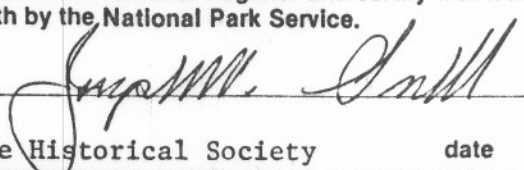
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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



title Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society

date June 9, 1983

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

WICHITA WHOLESALE GROCERY COMPANY

WICHITA, KANSAS

14/647240/4171940