

## 2063 Washington Street – George Owen Wholesale Liquors



George Owen Wholesale Liquors 2019

### Heritage Register - Building

- 1) **Historical Name:** George Owen Wholesale Liquors
- 2) **Common Name(s):** Rossland Meat Market, Washington Apartments, Gold Rush Bookstore
- 3) **Address:** 2063 Washington Street
- 4) **Date of Construction:** 1914
- 5) **Design, Style, Architecture, Architect:** Edwardian Commercial with Victorian elements

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

#### Description:

The George Owen Wholesale Liquors building is a two storey, wood-framed commercial building with a false-front appearance located on Washington Street in the historic downtown of Rossland, BC. It has two bay windows on the upper storey, two street entrances and a verandah with support columns at street level, which extends over the sidewalk.

#### Heritage Value:

The George Owen Wholesale Liquors building is valued as a surviving second-generation commercial building that reflects the early evolution of Rossland at the beginning of the twentieth century. Constructed in 1914 by George Owen on the former site of the Rossland-

Trail Livery Company's stables, this place demonstrates how Rossland was growing and changing from a mining camp to a modern city at that time.

The heritage value of this place lies in the varied commercial and residential uses it has hosted throughout its history. The building's first use as the location of George Owen's wholesale liquor store, which had previously been located in another building on Washington Street, speaks to the pre-World War I identity of Rossland, which was still connected to its boomtown mining roots, and the supply-and-demand nature of the burgeoning frontier city. Its later use and ownership by German immigrant Herman Knabe, proprietor of the Rossland Meat Market in the early 1930s, reflects Rossland's cultural diversity. Subsequently purchased by James Alexander Wright, a butcher by trade, and James Stuart Daly, a medical doctor, and used for a number of purposes (such as professional offices at street level and an apartment upstairs) between 1936 and 1969, this building is reflective of the kind of real estate speculation and long-term ownership that was common amongst many of Rossland's deeply-rooted and well-established citizens during the middle of the twentieth century. Its full use as residential units while under the ownership of Albert and Gladys M. Heier well into the 1980s, speaks to the evolving economic realities of the city, specifically eras when commercial ventures in a downtown building would have been less viable than residential uses. Its return to its original mixed-used commercial and residential function in the late twentieth-century is reflective of the ever-changing and cyclical nature of Rossland's economy, which gives the community its strong boomtown identity.

This building is also significant as a 1914 wood-frame commercial building that in recent decades has re-embraced heritage-inspired Victorian elements of the boom town aesthetic, as a response to a downtown restoration wave initiated in the 1980s, which has helped to rebrand Rossland as a historic town and a cultural tourism destination.

#### **Character-Defining Elements:**

- Original location on Washington Street in Rossland historic downtown core
- Continuous commercial use since 1914 and residential use since the 1930s
- Commercial siting of the building right at the property line, with no setback from the sidewalk.
- The "false-front" appearance of the building, with an extended, decorative parapet
- Its two-storey form, with a tall cornice space above the second storey windows.
- Commercial storefront at street level, with a door to the upstairs apartment at the northern end of the front façade.
- Its wood-frame construction.
- Elements of its original 1914 design, including two windows on the upper storey, commercial storefront at street level, and entrances and windows in its rear façade facing the alley behind.

## Historical Information – Chronology

Year	Event
1897	Insurance map shows a “Livery” building at this location.
1898	This property was owned by M. Wharton, E.L. Tate & M.A. Harvey
1899	Property owned by E.L. Tate and M.A. Harvey
1900	Property owned by E.L. Tate & McIntosh and Hugh Henderson Henderson was a brewer, who was issued a government-sanction brewery license in Rossland in 1896.
1901-1905	Property owned by Redden Jackson Co., Hugh Henderson
1906-1907	Property owned by Hugh Henderson of the Rossland-Trail Livery Co.
1908	George Owen is listed as the owner of the property. Assessment rolls don’t show any buildings on the site. Owen had been the proprietor of the Dominion Hotel from 1897-1899. And was proprietor of the Alhambra Hotel and Saloon from 1900-1914.
1912	Insurance maps show an empty lot at this location.
1914	Tax rolls show a building valued at \$1000 on the lot.
1914 – 1917	Owen was proprietor of George Owen Wholesale Liquors. Owen left Rossland in 1917 and moved to Trail, where he became proprietor of the Palace Hotel. 1917 phone book lists it as “Owen’s Liquor Store”.
1918	Rossland Meat Market appears in the City Directories for the first time. Address and proprietor are unknown.
1927	Insurance maps indicate the building as being vacant.
1930 – 1936	Herman Knabe purchased the building from George Owen. Knabe was proprietor of the Rossland Meat Market. Knabe was born in Germany. In the 1921 census Canada, he is listed as the owner of a butcher shop in the Slocan area. It is believed that Herman and his brother, Paul, came to the area in approximately 1903.
1933	George Owen passed away in Vancouver. He was a resident of Trail, and is buried there. He was considered a pioneer resident of Rossland.
1936	James Alexander Wright and James Stuart Daly listed as owners of the building. Wright was a butcher by trade, and Daly was a medical doctor.
1938	Insurance maps shows northern half of the stores as “meats” and the southern half as “Elect goods”.
1944	Wright’s son, Alexander James Nichol Wright, is killed in action in WWII.

Year	Event
1946	Harry A. Campbell accountants listed at this address in phone book. Rossland Meat Market is listed at 2069 Washington Street.
1952	Trevor Jones is listed as having an office at this location in the phone book.
1953	Trevor Jones Insurance and public accounting located at this address. Mrs. E. Smith listed at this address.
1956	Trevor Jones is listed as having an office at this location in the phone book. Mrs. Ellen Smith is listed as a resident.
1969	Albert and Gladys M. Heier purchase the building from Wright & Daly.
1983	Building received a facelift, with a new paint job and a new sign (special attention was paid to incorporating the "heritage theme".)
1984	Photos indicate that the building was occupied by apartments on both floors. It was known as the "Washington Apartments" at that time.
Late 1980's to present	The lower street commercial space operated as a cafe & retail bookstore with various proprietors. A residential apartment is upstairs.