

**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 determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions 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 Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building

other name/site number Dalton Store; F.W. Woolworth Store

2. Location

street & town 201-205 S. Main N/A not for publication

city or town Poplar Bluff N/A vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Butler code 023 zip code 63901

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 of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO Date _____

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
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:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- 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:) _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Historic Resources of Poplar Bluff, Missouri

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: department store

COMMERCE/TRADE: Organizational

SOCIAL: Civic

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Two-part commercial block

Other: Commercial Buildings property type

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

TERRA COTTA

roof METAL

other

Narrative Description

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

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Name of Property

Butler County, MO
County and State

8. Description

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.)

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1927-1955

Significant Dates

1947

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Campen, C.A.

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

9. Major Bibliographical 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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other Name of repository: _____

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Name of Property

Butler County, MO
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 1/5 7/3/2/6/9/0 4/0/7/0/7/0/0
Zone Easting Northing

2 / / / / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

3 / / / / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

4 / / / / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Property Tax No.

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christopher Griffin (also see continuation sheet)

organization Modern Day Veterans National Headquarters date 5/22/05

street & number 201-205 S. Main telephone 573-785-4482

city or town Poplar Bluff state MO zip code 63901

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

name/title Dianna Buhler

street & number 201-05 S. Main St. telephone 573-785-4482

city or town Poplar Bluff state MO zip code 63901

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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Butler County, Missouri

Summary:

The Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store building is located at 201-205 S. Main Street in Poplar Bluff, Butler County, Missouri. Constructed in 1927-28 after a tornado destroyed much of the town's central business district, this two-part commercial block reflects early 20th Century preferences for simplicity in commercial building design. The two-story building is constructed of buff, wire cut brick with classically derived terra cotta embellishments around the storefront and along the cornice line. The primary façade faces east onto South Main and is distinguished by shaped parapets with terra cotta coping and quatrefoil insets and a decorative terra cotta signboard and storefront surround. Though simpler in overall design, the decorative terra cotta cornice and water table continue from the façade onto the north (Poplar Street) elevation. In c. 1947, the F.W. Woolworth Department store moved into the building, and alterations to the interior and storefront were undertaken at this time. Much of this historic alteration remains intact, notably the storefront configuration and many of its historic materials. In more recent years, some of the original windows on the second story have been replaced with smaller units, though many original 1/1 wood sash windows remain. Overall, the building retains a high degree of integrity and conveys its significance as an important department store and commercial property.

Setting:

The Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store building sits in the heart of Poplar Bluff's historic commercial district. Buildings in the vicinity date from the late 19th and early 20th Century, many of which were reconstructed or updated after a deadly tornado hit the town in 1927. Many buildings, including the original Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store that was located on this site, were completely destroyed in the storm. The building sits at the southwest corner of South Main and Poplar streets, and is bordered by sidewalks on the north and east and by an alley in the back (west). A single story brick building is located immediately to the south.

East Elevation:

Like most two-part commercial blocks, the façade of the Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store has two clearly defined sections, a public first floor and a more private second story. The first floor is defined by two storefronts with three recessed entrances. Entrances have double doors topped by single pane transom windows. Large plate-glass display windows, some of which retain their c. 1947 copper framework, flank the entrances. The storefronts also retain the original granite kickplates.¹ Terra cotta pilasters with simple Doric capitals flank the opening for the storefronts. The display windows and entrances are shaded by a c. 1960 metal awning. Though not original, awnings were typical features of historic commercial buildings and this modern addition does not detract from the overall integrity of the building. To the south of the storefront opening is the entrance for the second floor. This entrance door is not original, but it is surrounded by molded terra cotta blocks and is topped by a simple entablature.

A long signboard area outlined by terra cotta blocks separates the first and second floors. The blocks have projecting molding on the top and bottom and evenly spaced knobs in the recessed center. The signboard consists of brick painted to match the terra cotta surround. In the late 1940s and later, the signboard held 20" letters spelling out "F. W. Woolworth Co.," but those letters have since been removed. On either side of the signboard is a decorative spiral swirl volute.

¹ According to C.A. Campen's plans for the F.W. Woolworth remodeling of the building, the granite was reused from the original 1928 construction.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Butler County, Missouri

The second floor is divided into twelve bays by evenly spaced windows. All window openings have stone lug sills and a continuous lintel created by a simple terra cotta molded detail. Some of the windows have been replaced by smaller windows and infill, though original 1/1 wood sash windows are intact in five of the bays. A terra cotta cornice with floral modillion separates the second floor from the shaped parapet wall. The three end bays on the north and south corners of the façade are distinguished by low-pitched pediments with quatrefoil insets. Between the two pediments the brick parapet is evenly divided by three tall, narrow terra cotta elements with recessed center panels and slightly rounded top. The entire pediment is capped by terra cotta coping.

North Elevation:

Decorative elements seen on the east elevation are carried onto the north (Poplar Street) elevation of the building. The parapet wall resembles the center section of the front façade, with a flat parapet divided by narrow terra cotta panels. The parapet is separated from the second floor fenestration by a small cornice line. Like the east elevation, second story windows have lug sills and a continuous band of terra cotta molding for a lintel. The building is deeper than it is wide, and 17 windows are spaced along second floor. The windows are evenly spaced except for the two end bays that have wider spandrels. There are fewer, and shorter, windows on the first floor, but they are roughly aligned with those on the second. Instead of a signboard, two simple terra cotta bands divide the first and second stories. The upper band is directly below the second story windowsills, and the lower band acts as the lintel for the first floor windows.

Because the building is constructed at the crest of a hill, the basement level is partially exposed on the north side. The basement is separated from the first floor by a wide stone water table that acts as the lintels for the basement windows. These windows increase in height as the ground slopes to the west. The slope of the ground is sufficient to allow for a secondary storefront at the west corner of the building. The storefront has a recessed entrance and large plate glass display windows. Over the opening is a simple entablature with a cornice topped by stylized acanthus leaves.

West Elevation

The west elevation is the back of the building and its utilitarian design marks it as a secondary façade. Because of the slope of the ground, the rear wall is three stories, and unlike the primary elevations, is constructed of plain red brick. The windows have brick sills and are arranged in with a rough symmetry. The southern most bays of the west elevation are only two stories in height, allowing for a light well to increase light and ventilation on the uppermost floor.

South Elevation

The first floor of the south elevation shares a wall with the neighboring one-story building. The eastern section of the wall shares the architectural details of the east and north elevation. This section of the building encloses the stairwell and entrance to the second floor. After the stairwell, the wall recesses to allow for a light well. The rest of the elevation is red brick with evenly spaced 2/2 wood sash windows lighting the upper story office spaces.

Interior

The basement and first floor of the building were designed to house a large department store, as indicated by the open nature of the space. Both floors have high ceilings and a grid of posts supporting the upper floors. Posts on the first floor have wood wainscoting with mirrored panels, which are original or date from

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Butler County, Missouri

the c. 1947 alterations for the Woolworth Company. Floors are wood, though decorative tile is used at the entrances. The second floor is divided into the offices. Offices are aligned along central corridors and are marked by transomed entrances, many of which are flanked by obscure glass panels. The transoms and obscure glass would increase natural light and ventilation while assuring privacy.

Integrity:

The building meets the registration requirements for the Commercial Buildings property type as outlined in "Historic Resources of Poplar Bluff, Missouri." These requirements include possession of "unusual design elements and detailing" including "all original upper façade decoration and the majority of storefront elements or first floor detailing." Though some windows have been replaced and minor alterations have been made to the storefront, the building retains a high degree of historic integrity. The original floorplan on the interior, and the retention of historic exterior architectural elements give the building a strong sense of time and place.

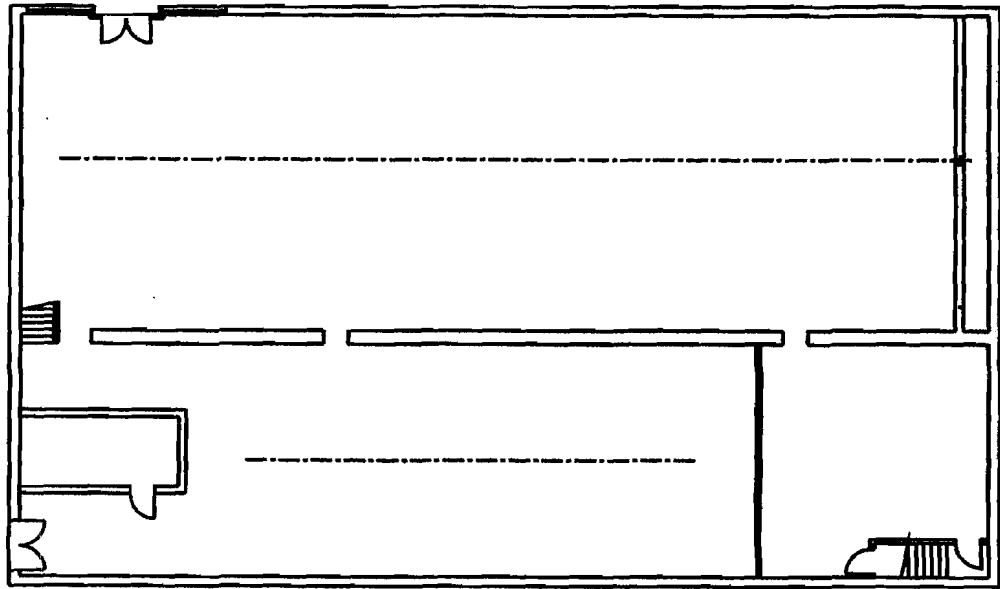
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

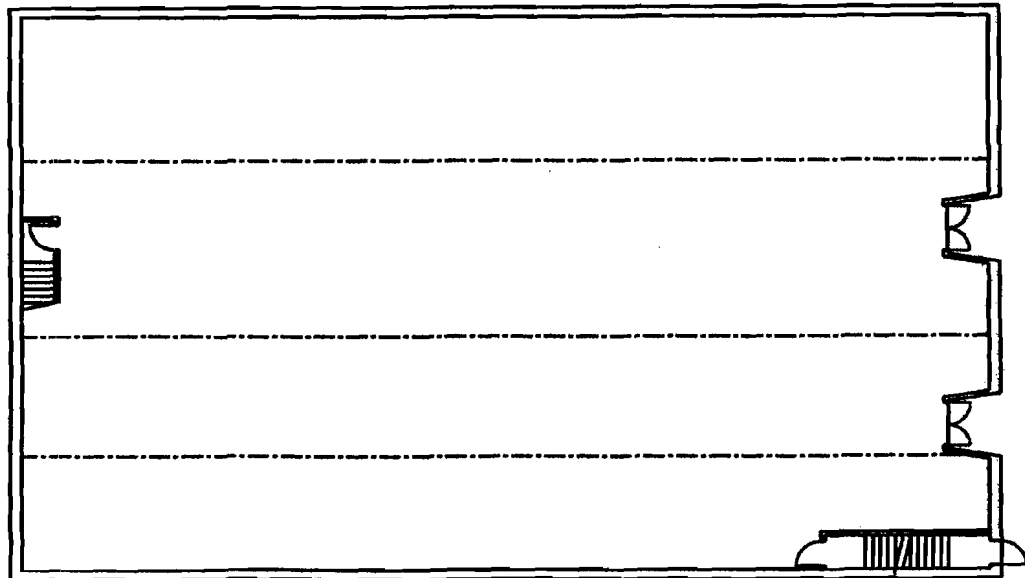
Section number 7 Page 4

Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Butler County, Missouri

Basement and First Floor Plan Not to scale.



BASEMENT



FIRST FLOOR

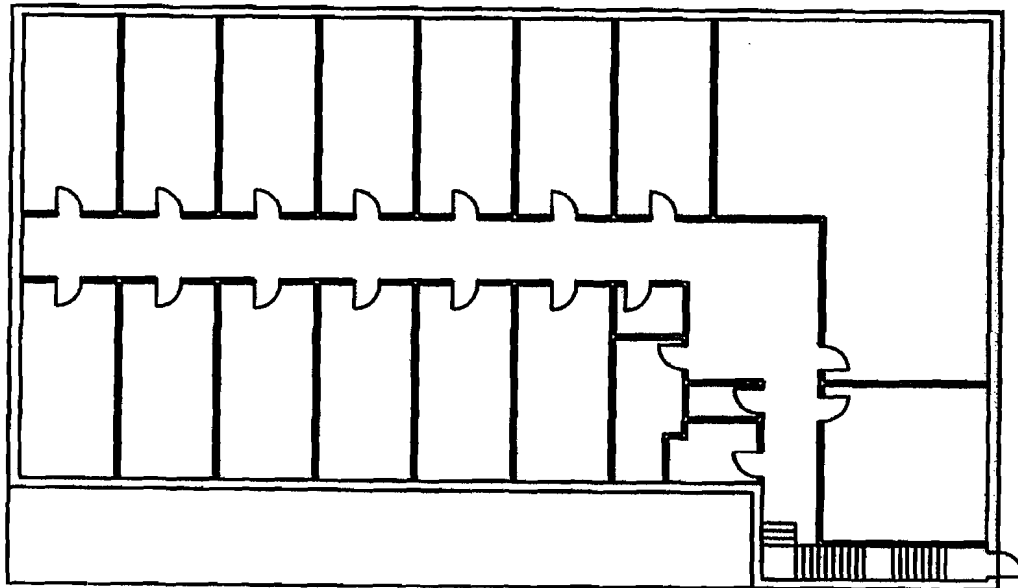
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Butler County, Missouri

Second Floor Plan
Not to scale



2ND FLOOR

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6 Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Butler County, Missouri

Summary:

The Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building, 201-205 S. Main Street in Poplar Bluff, Butler County, Missouri, is locally significant under National Register of Historic Places Criterion A and C in the areas of COMMERCE and ARCHITECTURE. The building is associated with the historic context "Late 19th and 20th Century Commercial Buildings of Poplar Bluff, Missouri, ca. 1880-1943," as established in the "Historic Resources of Poplar Bluff, Missouri" Multiple Property Cover Document. Additionally it meets the registration requirements under both Criterion A and C for the "Commercial Buildings" property type described in the MPCD. Constructed in 1927-28, the building replaced two Victorian-era buildings demolished by the devastating tornado that hit downtown Poplar Bluff on May 9, 1927. Like the original building on the site, the new brick two-part commercial block housed the Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store, one of the largest and most visited department stores in Southeast Missouri. Architecturally, the building is distinguished both by its size and its architectural detail. Located on a prominent corner lot, the wide building dominates the streetscape on both South Main and Poplar streets. Unlike many of the simple tapestry brick buildings constructed after the tornado, the Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store building has classically derived terra cotta elements around the storefronts as well as on the stepped parapet. The period of significance for the building is 1927-1955, the date of construction through the arbitrary 50 year cut-off date.

Historical Background

The region around Poplar Bluff was slow to populate and develop. Its heavily forested hills and swampy valleys retarded agricultural development, though its location on the Black River did draw settlers who constructed mills and dams along this early transportation route. Even after Butler County was organized in 1849 and Poplar Bluff selected as county seat, there were few settlers, and by the Civil War the town only sported about 14 buildings. The town's fortunes grew after the Civil War ended and the Cairo, Arkansas and Texas Railway reached Poplar Bluff in 1872. The railway connected St. Louis, Missouri and Little Rock, Arkansas, and Poplar Bluff became a popular stopping point along the line. The line increased economic opportunities in the town and hotels and other service businesses clustered around the new depot.²

Easy accessibility and reliable transportation routes increased business and industrial interest in Butler County and the surrounding region. The heavy forests that hindered early development attracted lumbering interests, increasing trade and population in the county. The mild climate allowed for year-around logging, and more than 50 lumber mills were in operation in the county by 1870. The land clearance by lumber interests and the draining of the area swamps at the end of the 19th Century also increased agricultural interest around Poplar Bluff. In addition to shipping lumber, the rail lines also shipped livestock (cattle, hogs, poultry), wheat, eggs and corn from Poplar Bluff to markets in St. Louis.³

Increased trade lead to a population and commercial boom. By 1900, Poplar Bluff's population was 4,321, increasing by over 2500 by 1910. A total of 8,042 people were living in the city by 1920. To support this increased population, a district of commercial buildings grew along the Black River and the rail lines, concentrating west of the courthouse square along Main and Vine Streets. By 1892, the commercial

² Philip Thomason, Thomason and Associates. "Historic Resources of Poplar Bluff, Missouri," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, 1994, Section E, pp. 4-5.

³ Ibid., pp. 6-7.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7 Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Butler County, Missouri

district supported general stores, banks, hardware stores, and even an opera house. Hotels clustered near the courthouse on Pine Street and small manufacturing firms were constructed nearby along the railroad tracks.⁴

Dalton and the Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store

The booming economy in Poplar Bluff drew investors from across the region, including James L. Dalton. Dalton came to the city in 1885 from neighboring Ripley County to work as a clerk in the hardware store of J.R. and E.W. Wright. Dalton gained experience working in the Wrights' Doniphan store, and likely moved to Poplar Bluff to help organize and manage the brothers new business that opened in 1886. Dalton became manager of the store and soon bought out the interest of J.R. Wright. Dalton kept close ties with J.R., and married Wright's sister, Clara, in 1887.⁵

Though young when he came to Poplar Bluff, only 19, Dalton apparently had a good deal of business acumen. In 1888, Goodspeed's History noted that he and his partner had a "large and select stock" that filled "a two-story brick block, 36 X 110 feet."⁶ By the turn of the century, Wright and Dalton and taken on additional partners and moved into a four-story building on the corner of S. Main and Poplar streets. (See Figure 1) According to one history, the business now known as the Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store "grossed up to \$760,000 a year, with a sales force of 125 persons and 12 delivery wagons."⁷ In discussing his store, Dalton noted:

One of our greatest accomplishments was the bringing into this town a solid train load of 35 cars of merchandise. The general manager of the Missouri Pacific Railroad personally made the trip with this train for a considerable part of the journey and we entered the town with green and red fire and a great demonstration.⁸

Though a great deal of history has not been compiled on the store, the size and location of the building as well as the size of the merchandise shipment indicate that this was one of the largest and most prominent retail stores in Poplar Bluff in the early 20th Century.

Though the Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store (often referred to as Dalton Store or the WDBA Store), made Dalton a well-known regional figure, it was his other businesses that brought wide-spread recognition to the Dalton family and to Poplar Bluff. Around 1900, Dalton invested in an invention developed a man named Hopkins of St. Louis, the 10 key adding typewriter.⁹ The Dalton Adding Typewriter Company was incorporated in 1903. Its original location was in the Davidson Building on Main and Pine Streets, and employed 25 people. The company soon grew to 100 employees, and moved to a purpose-built factory building along the river front in 1909 (this building is still extant and was used for

⁴ Ibid., pp. 7-8.

⁵ *History of Southeast Missouri*. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1888, p. 1068.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Mary E. Collins. *The History of Butler County Industry, 1870-1930*. Butler County Historical Society, [1980?], n.p.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ This was likely William W. Hopkins or his brother Herbert, both of whom made significant improvements to adding machine design. William Hopkins started the Standard Adding Machine Company in St. Louis. Ironically, the Dalton Adding Typewriter Company eventually outperformed Standard Adding Machine which went out of business in 1922. Dalton Adding Machine continued to grow and merged with Remington Rand in 1927 after the death of James L. Dalton.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8 Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Butler County, Missouri

several years as the Hamilton-Brown shoe factory). The demands of the adding machine factory forced Dalton to give up the management of the department store, though he kept his interest in the business. In 1914, the adding machine company moved to Ohio. Dalton also made the move to manage the larger enterprise. He left his son, Grover, in Poplar Bluff to oversee his retail interests.¹⁰

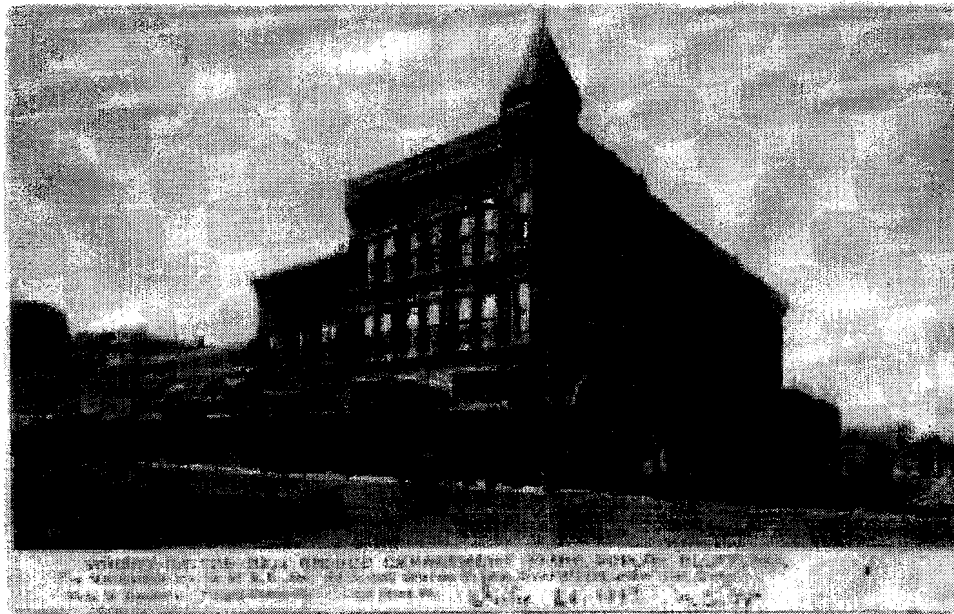


Figure 1: Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store, c. 1900.¹¹

Though Dalton's focus had shifted to his factory, the Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store continued to grow and prosper into the early 1920s. A postcard from c. 1910 shows that the store had expanded from its three-story building at S. Main and Poplar streets into three or four adjacent buildings. The postcard claims that the store was the "largest department store south of St. Louis," adding "We Sell Everything." (See Figure 2). However, tragedy struck the business and downtown Poplar Bluff on May 9, 1927 when a tornado struck downtown. The storm destroyed several blocks of the commercial district, killed more than 80 people and caused millions of dollars in damage. (See Figure 3) Among the buildings totally destroyed by the storm was the Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store. (See Figure 4) According to newspaper accounts:

The Dalton Furniture Store, the largest furniture store in Southeast Missouri, was piled in a heap on the ground with 14 people in the store and one one [sic] death. . . Woodward Baldwin and Miss Gertrude Stokely remained in the office of the store, on the second floor . . . the small space in which Miss Stokely and Mr. Baldwin stood was the only place on that floor left hanging.¹²

¹⁰ Philip Thomason, "Moore-Dalton House," National Register of Historic Places nomination, 1994.

¹¹ "Poplar Bluff History Photo Pages," Poplar Bluff Junior High School, <http://www.pbjhs.com/pbhistory/hist3.html>, Accessed 6/27/2005.

¹² "Tornado Sidelights." The Daily Republican, Poplar Bluff, MO. May 12, 1927, published on the web at

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9 Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Butler County, Missouri

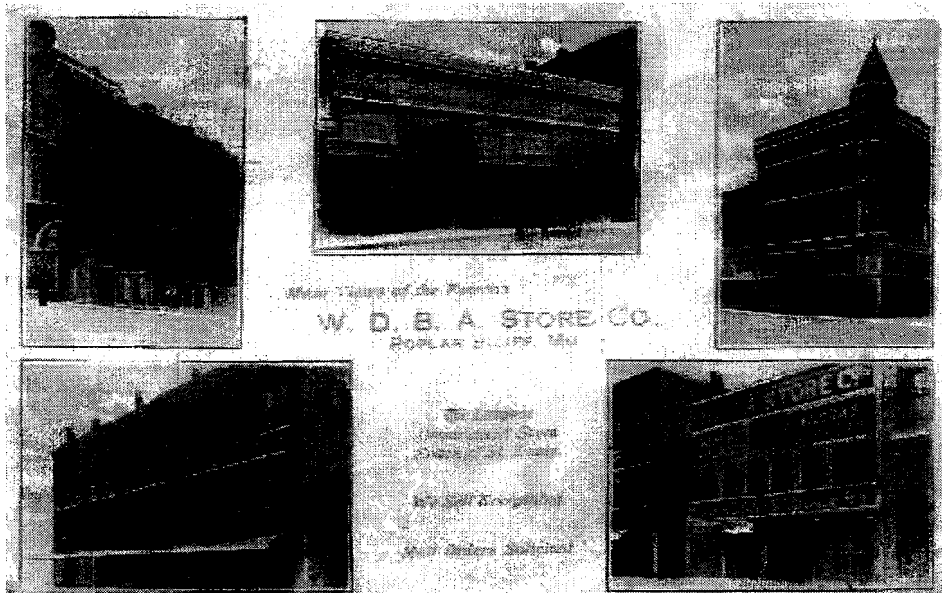


Figure 2: "Main Views of the Famous W.D.B.A. Store Co." c. 1900.¹³

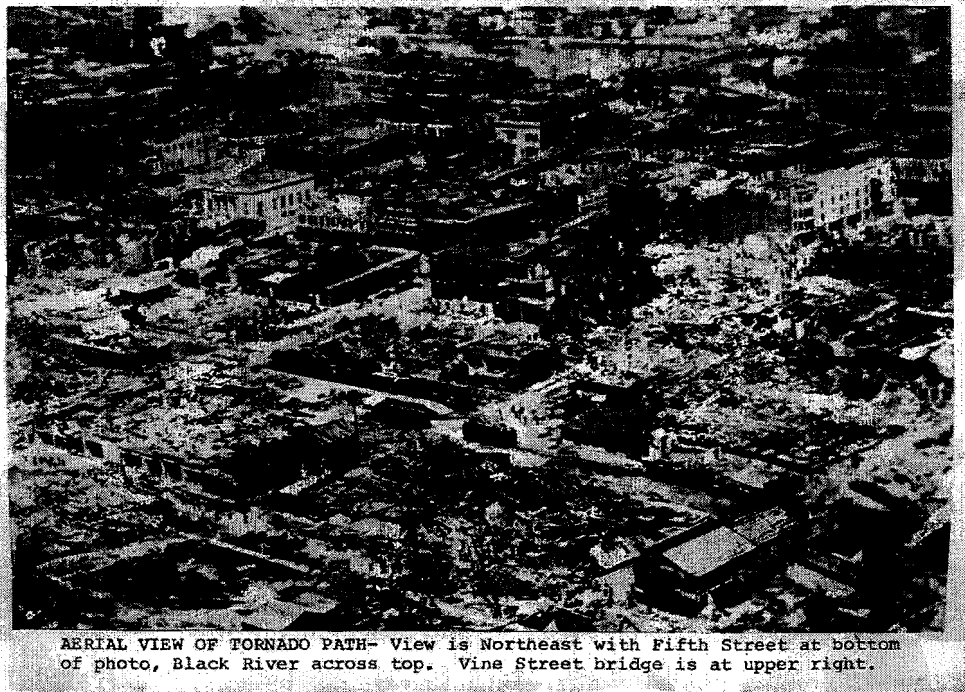


Figure 3: Downtown Poplar Bluff after the tornado.¹⁴

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10 Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Butler County, Missouri



CORNER OF MAIN AND POPLAR- The old Dalton Store, same location as current F. W. Woolworth Store.

Figure 4: Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store after the tornado.¹⁵

Though devastated by the storm, Poplar Bluff quickly began to clean up and rebuild. In his account of the tornado, David Deem noted that:

Within two days after the storm, Poplar Bluffians announced their buildings would be rebuilt or repaired without delay. Among the property owners in the business district of Poplar Bluff whose buildings were damaged were . . . Grover Dalton [son of James L. Dalton and part owner of the department store] . . .¹⁶

After the storm, Dalton and partners did rebuild on their original lot. The new building had a larger footprint than their previous three-story building, but was only two stories in height. The new brick building was in stark contrast to the previous large Victorian Commercial block with pressed metal façade and corner tower. Though more simply designed, the new Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store building, completed in 1927, was more decorative than many of the utilitarian buildings constructed after the storm. The new buff brick building had decorative terra cotta blocks with classically influenced details.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ David Bruce Deem, *History of Butler County, Missouri*, www.rootsweb.com/~mobutle2/news/DeemsTornado.html. Accessed 6/27/2005.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11 Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Butler County, Missouri

Despite efforts to rebuild, downtown never fully recovered from the storm. The economic depression of the 1930s and material shortages of World War II delayed rebuilding in the area. After the war, an industrial park built south of town (1945) and new auto-oriented development pulled many businesses away from the central core of the city. Even those who rebuilt, such as the Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store, struggled over the next few years. The department store eventually closed its doors and the building was bought or leased by the F.W. Woolworth Company in c. 1947.

By the mid-1940s, F.W. Woolworth was the oldest dime store chain and the largest food-service retailer in the country.¹⁷ The company had over 1000 retail outlets across the country, and often located in existing rather than purpose-built buildings. Though the company usually did not have a standard store design, its trademark narrow red sign with gold lettering was stretched across the façade of all its stores.¹⁸ When Woolworth took over the Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store in Poplar Bluff, its company architect in St. Louis, C.A. Campen, designed a new storefront and signage system for the building.¹⁹ The plans did not change the exterior of the second story, but altered the arrangement of the storefront and interior space. According to plans, much of the existing material on the storefront was reused, including the granite kickplates and some of the entrance doors. The interior was altered to include a small eatery/soda fountain and wide counters for product display. Woolworths continued to occupy the building for nearly forty years.

Commercial and Architectural Significance

According to the MPCD, "Historic Resources of Poplar Bluff," commercial properties are significant because of their architecture and/or their association with the commercial development of the community. The Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store has a long and significant association with the development of commerce in Poplar Bluff. As one of the largest department stores in the city at the turn of the 20th Century, the store that sold "everything" drew customers from throughout the city and region. Before the devastating tornado of 1927, the store occupied three or four downtown commercial buildings, and was located on a prominent corner lot on S. Main and Poplar streets. After the tornado, the partners in the store reinvested in the downtown by constructing a large two-story building (plus basement) on the original lot to house their retail business. Even after the depression and war years caused the business to close, the building continued to house a significant retail outlet, the F.W. Woolworth Company variety store and lunch counter.

Before the 1927 tornado, the main section of the department store was housed in a large High-Victorian building with pressed metal façade and corner tower. The new store was much simpler in design, but included design elements that set it apart from its neighbors. Thomason notes in "Historic Resources of Poplar Bluff," that most downtown buildings altered or reconstructed after the storm were utilitarian with brick corbeling and minimum detail. The Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store, by contrast, used terra cotta blocks and details to highlight its two street facades. Its stepped parapet with quatrefoil insets and classically inspired terra cotta detail around the storefronts and second story windows, show the

¹⁷ Sally F. Schwenk, "F.W. Woolworth Building," National Register of Historic Places nomination, Missouri State Historic Preservation Office, 2005, p. 10-11.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* 14.

¹⁹ C.A. Campen. "Alterations & Additions for F.W. Woolworth Co., Poplar Bluff, MO." F.W. Woolworth Co., 6/6/1947, on file with current property owner.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12 Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Butler County, Missouri

influence of popular architectural styles and also indicate the importance of the business to be housed in the building.

In addition to its commercial prominence and architectural detailing, the building also retains a high degree of integrity. Though some upper story windows have been replaced, the building retains its integrity of setting, location, design, workmanship and materials. Also, as required by the registration requirements outlined in the MPCD, the building "includes all original upper façade decoration and the majority of storefront elements or first floor detailing."

Current Use/Function

The building has been in continuous use since its construction in 1927, though it has contained several different retail businesses and offices. The first floor is currently being used as retail space and the Poplar Street storefront is the home of the National Headquarters for Modern Day Veterans.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 13 Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Butler County, Missouri

Bibliography

Baxter, Karen Bode. "Standard Adding Machine Building," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Missouri State Historic Preservation Office, 2005.

Campen, C.A. "Alterations & Additions for F.W. Woolworth Co., Poplar Bluff, MO." F.W. Woolworth Co., 6/6/1947, drawings on file with current property owner.

Collins, Mary E. *The History of Butler County Industry, 1870-1930*. Butler County Historical Society, [1980?].

Deem, David Bruce. *History of Butler County, Missouri*,
www.rootsweb.com/~mobutle2/news/DeemsTornado.html. Accessed 6/27/2005.

History of Southeast Missouri. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1888.

"Poplar Bluff History Photo Pages," Poplar Bluff Junior High School,
<http://www.pbjhs.com/pbhistory/hist3.html>. Accessed 6/27/2005.

Schwenk, Sally F. "F.W. Woolworth Building," National Register of Historic Places nomination, Missouri State Historic Preservation Office, 2005.

Thomason, Philip. "Historic Resources of Poplar Bluff, Missouri," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, 1994.

Thomason, Philip. "Moore-Dalton House," National Register of Historic Places nomination, 1994.

"Tornado Sidelights." The Daily Republican, Poplar Bluff, MO. May 12, 1927, published on the web at
www.rootsweb.com/~mobutle2/news/tornado_rebuild.html. Accessed 6/22/05.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10/photo log Page 14 Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Butler County, Missouri

Verbal Boundary Description

All that part of Lot 51 of the Original Town, now City of Poplar Bluff, Butler County, Missouri, described as follows: Beginning at the NE corner of said Lot 51 in the Original Town, running thence west along and with the north line thereof to a point 75 feet east of the NW corner of said lot; thence south parallel with the east boundary line of said lot 70 feet; thence east parallel with north line of said Lot to east boundary line of said lot; thence north along and with said east line 70 feet to point of beginning.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the construction and use of the nominated building.

Photo Log:

The following is true for all photographs:

Wright-Dalton-Bell-Anchor Department Store Building
Butler County, Missouri

Photographer: Christopher Griffin

Location of Negatives: Modern Day Veterans National Headquarters, 201-205 S. Main, Poplar Bluff, MO
63901

Date of Photographs: July 2005

1. East and North elevations, looking southwest.
2. North elevation, looking southeast
3. West elevation, looking northeast.
4. East elevation parapet detail, looking west.
5. Storefront entrance detail, looking west.
6. Second story entrance on east elevation, looking west.
7. Second floor stairwell access, looking east.
8. Second floor hall, looking east.
9. Basement, looking east.









