



United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL REGISTER

1. Name of Property

historic name: Page Coal and Coke Company Store

other name/site number: _____

2. Location

street & number: state route 161

not for publication: n/a

city/town: Pageton

vicinity: n/a

state: WV county: McDowell code: 047 zip code: 24871

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of relate property listing: Coal Company Stores in McDowell County

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4. State/Federal Agency Certification
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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. See continuation sheet.



Signature of Certifying Official

2/10/92

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property

meets

does not meet

the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

=====
5. National Park Service Certification
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I, hereby certify that this property is:

~~entered in the~~
National Register

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): _____



Date of Action 4/17/92

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

=====
6. Function or Use
=====

Historic: commerce/trade Sub: department store
commerce/trade business
government post office
Current : other Sub: maintenance garage

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7. Description
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Architectural Classification:
late 19th and early 20th century revivals/Classical revival

Other Description: n/a

Materials: foundation stone roof asphalt
walls brick other concrete

Describe present and historic physical appearance. x See continuation sheet.

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8. Statement of Significance
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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: statewide.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A,C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : n/a

Areas of Significance: architecture
commerce
industry

Period(s) of Significance: 1914-1941

Significant Dates : n/a _____

Significant Person(s): n/a

Cultural Affiliation: n/a

Architect/Builder: Mahood, A.B.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. x See continuation sheet.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 1 Page Coal & Coke Company store

The Page Coal and Coke Company store stands along state route 161 in Pageton. It was designed in 1914 by A.B. Mahood, one of southern West Virginia's most prominent architects. The two-story brick store is detailed more simply than Mahood's other company stores and it has undergone minor alterations. It is still a monument in the former company town, however, and it retains those qualities that indicates its importance to the coal mining industry.

Like so many of McDowell County's buildings, the Pageton store sits on a tall, skillfully-constructed stone foundation. Stone also provides a base for a broad concrete platform in front of the facade and the east side. Steps ascend to the platform on each end. The store's main entrance has been altered so that it is difficult to determine the exact original appearance. It is likely that it held a center door with flanking display windows. At least two of the three doors that open into the building now are probably original and served as secondary entrances. Five bays of double-hung windows sit in the facade's and west side's second story. The east side contains eight window bays.

The classical decoration at the roofline is distinguished even though there is little of it. A tall brick cornice with a concrete parapet extends around three sides of the store. On the facade, the parapet holds the company's name inscribed in concrete. Across the front and continuing only around the corner of the two sides is a bold concrete entablature. On the corner of the east side in the entablature, the architect inscribed his name and profession in the concrete.

Railroad tracks ran behind the building near the delivery entrance that opens into the west facade. A concrete surface over a stone base extends from the rear of the building to the delivery entrance. Also on the rear of the building is a two-story brick wing which is original. This section held the service entrance after the building became a maintenance garage.

The Pageton store sits at the beginning of a long row of company-built houses in a community that is still relatively intact. At the end of the residential row is the house built for the mine's manager, Mr. Page. The house was probably designed by A.B. Mahood.

Although minor alterations have slightly changed the Page Coal and Coke Company store, the building still retains significant characteristics of the company store property type. Its size, location, attention to detail, and the quality of construction indicate its former, very important role in Pageton.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 1 Page Coal & Coke Company store

The Page Coal and Coke Company store is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A for its association with southern West Virginia's coal mining industry, and under criterion C for its architectural merit. The successful coal company commissioned the Bluefield architect, A.B. Mahood to design its most important community building in 1914. During the years following, it provided a commercial, business, and social center for the company-owned town (for detailed historical information about the Pocahontas Coalfield and the significance of company stores, see sections E and F in "Coal Company Stores in McDowell County", multiple property listing). It has been altered little since its years as a company store and it illustrates the typical characteristics of company store construction with its size, large porch surface, location, and simple decoration. The building stands as an impressive and representative example of a coal company store and its importance in the isolated industrial community.

Before the coal industry boomed in southern West Virginia at the end of the nineteenth century, the area consisted of scattered, self-sufficient farms and communities. Because of the absence of railroads and good roads, the southern counties had little interaction with the rest of the nation. After the Civil War, however, the nation's industrial market expanded and outsiders began to turn their attention to West Virginia's vast coal reserve to meet growing demands.

The major railroads extended their lines into southern West Virginia allowing the area to be developed. Without a sufficient labor force, however, coal mining could not be productive. Companies recruited thousands of workers first from the older coalfields in Pennsylvania, and then from Eastern Europe and the American South. To accommodate these new arrivals, coal companies built self-sufficient communities to house and provide for their workers. The construction of company towns was absolutely necessary in southern West Virginia. Unlike the northern coalfields of Pennsylvania, where mining operations began in regions that were already settled, southern mines opened in sparsely settled areas with few organized communities. The company town was the most logical solution because it provided efficient and inexpensive housing for a large labor force.

Central to each of these communities was the company store. The store was usually the town's most prominent building and was typically placed in an easily accessible location. The building often housed not only a store but also the company's business office, a post office, and sometimes, a doctor's office. Because of its location and multiple functions, the store provided each community with a center for social gathering.

The store building served as the most important building in Pageton, a community built by the Page Coal and Coke Company. Northern businessmen established the company around the turn of the century. They would have

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 2 Page Coal & Coke Company store

immediately constructed houses for miners and probably a simple wooden company store. The company mined in the famed Pocahontas #3 seam that produced some of the world's highest quality coal. The operation soon proved successful and wealthy enough to construct its permanent buildings.

Once the company established itself as a leading coal producer, it hired A.B. Mahood to design its most important community building. Mahood (1888-1970), a native of Bluefield, West Virginia, studied architecture at the prestigious Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, France. When he returned home, Mahood was quick to seize upon the opportunity to design buildings in the wealthy coalfields. Although Mahood proved skillful in designing a variety of styles and property types, he is best known for his magnificent classical revival houses and commercial buildings. Welch, Bluefield, and a number of other southern West Virginia communities credit Mahood with their most impressive buildings.

The Page Coal and Coke Company store is one of Mahood's earliest commissions in southern West Virginia and his first company store on record. Mahood used a functional, two-story box plan and made it outstanding by applying simple classical decoration. Although this store is plainer, its monumental design, classical decoration, and high stone foundation are all characteristics that Mahood used in his later company stores. The building's size and position at the head of a residential row indicate its landmark status in the company town.

Company stores were typically the center of commercial and social activity in the busy mining community and the Pageton store was no exception. Miners and their families typically visited the store daily to shop and to handle other business. Because of its various functions and its location near the mine and residential areas, the company store was the center of commercial, business, and social activity in the industrial community.

The store's importance in the community decreased as automobiles and good roads allowed miners access to other commercial centers. The store closed after mining ceased in Pageton leaving the building vacant. Unlike so many stores that were simply abandoned, the Pageton store has since turned into private hands and has been maintained so that it retains its impressive coal company store appearance.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 1 Page Coal & Coke Company store

Company Stores, file, Eastern Regional Coal Archives, Bluefield, WV.

Eller, Ronald D. Miners, Millhands, and Mountaineers. Industrialization of the Appalachian South, 1880-1930. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1982.

A.B. Mahood, file, Eastern Regional Coal Archives, Bluefield, WV.