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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Itmann Company Store and Office

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number State Route 10 & 16

not for publication N/A

city, town Itmann

vicinity N/A

state West Virginia code 54 county Wyoming

code 109 zip code 24847

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

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

Category of Property

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

Number of Resources within Property

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

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 [Signature]

Date 10/11/90

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 \_\_\_\_\_

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- 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:) \_\_\_\_\_

Entered in the  
National Register

[Signature]

11/28/90

[Signature]  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/business

Commerce/department store

Government/post office

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in use

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Sandstone

walls Sandstone

roof Ceramic tile

other Concrete

Metal

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Itmann Company Store and Office is a rough-faced native sandstone building constructed between 1923 and 1925. Situated on approximately 1.75 acres of land, this detached, commercial building reflects elements of the Classical Revival style. Particularly striking is the basic symmetry of the building components and the occasional use of classical detailing. The building retains a high degree of integrity, having undergone no exterior alterations and few known interior changes.

The nominated property is laid out in an open courtyard plan and is comprised of four sections (See accompanying drawing.) The two largest sections (A and C) are 2½-story parapeted gable front sections located on the northern and southern sides of the courtyard. Section B is a 1-story rectangular flat roofed section extending from the back part of the northern side of Section C to the southeastern corner of Section A. Linking sections A and C at the front, main floor level is a 1-story parapeted half gable roofed loggia (Section D.) Under this loggia is a flat arch opening over a concrete driveway accessing the open courtyard, a loading dock area.

Section A is a rectangular block with 3-bay front and 5-bay side elevations. Lunette windows are in the third floor gable ends; steel industrial projecting windows are at the basement level. While many of the other windows have been boarded over, the visible ones are steel double-hung windows. In the middle bay area on both the first and second floors of the northern side and the first floor of the courtyard side are recessed stoned-in areas the size of the flanking windows. The latter area provides a place to secure one of the overhead braces for the basement loading dock roof; the reason for the former is unknown.

There are seven doors in Section A. Three metal doors, two accessed via exterior concrete stairs descending from the ground level at both the front and rear northern side, are located at the basement level. A metal and boarded-over glass door with transom is in the rear center. Three metal-covered, multi-light double doors, are at the front. The center doors are topped by a fanlight and surrounded by smooth stone pilasters and a triangular pediment. The flanking doors have engraved, smooth stone lintels identifying the interior spaces as company and post offices.

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Section C is essentially a rectangular block about twenty feet longer than Section A and having 3-bay gable end and 7-bay side elevations. It has a 1-story wing at the southwestern corner which extends the main roof line. Most of the windows in Section C and all in Section B are industrial projecting windows. In the corner wing of Section C are three rounded arch, multi-light windows, one in the front and two on the side, set in stone blind arches extending to the ground level. To balance these windows, the blind arch is duplicated at the rear of the wing although there is no window.

The multiple openings in sections B and C include two roll-up metal garage and four metal doors in the courtyard, and three doors, two metal and one wood, at the rear of Section B. Across the front of Section C is a 3-sectioned, transomed, glass and metal commercial storefront. It has been partially covered with aluminum sheeting.

There are several additional features. A chimney and a parapeted gable wall dormer are on the courtyard side of Section C. On the northern and southern sides of the courtyard are long, stone and concrete slab loading docks. Overhanging these loading docks are flat, concrete and metal roofs. A similar loading dock and roof are on the rear of Section B. At the front of the building is a concrete slab extending across Section A, through the loggia, and across Section C. Metal railings and seats traverse the arches in the loggia. Rectangular slate slabs, used to display information, are recessed in the walls on either side of the storefront and between the three doors in Section A.

The interior of Section C reflects its use as the company store. The main level is a large open area. Its floor is tile laid in concrete. The only separate areas are in the back half of the northern side. In this area, there are bathroom facilities and an elevator. At the rear, southeastern corner of the building, steps ascend to a mezzanine level which was used for the store offices. The second floor, where large merchandise like furniture was kept, is another open area.

Section A utilizes a central hall plan. In the first two rooms on the southern side of the hall was the post office. The first room, like the hall, has a floor of tile laid in concrete while the next room has a concrete floor. On the northern side are several rooms in which the company offices were housed. In these areas, as well as the hall, are the remnants of the original woodwork which carried the classical detail of the central entrance into the interior. Still highlighting some of the business and postal windows and doors are dark wood

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surrounds utilizing pilasters and triangular pediments with classical ornamentation. The central hall extends from the front to a door near the rear of the building. This door opens into a side hall leading to stairs at the back of the southern side. The stairs lead to the second floor, where several apartments for company employees were located.

Although no exterior alterations have been made to the building, a few interior changes have taken place. None of the store furnishings, such as the shelves, counter tops, and display cases, remain. The original drop lights have been replaced by commercial fluorescent lights. In 1976, the company remodeled Section A. Sheet paneling was installed over the plaster walls, part of the original woodwork was removed, and drop ceilings were added. When the post office was moved to another building in the mid-1980s, the mail boxes were removed from the wall.

The main threats to the Itmann Store and Office are neglect and vandalism. The building has been virtually unused since the mid-1980s when Consolidated Coal, the owner since 1958, closed the mine and abandoned the building. Most of the windows have been broken, graffiti has been painted on the walls, and the building has been broken into on several occasions. Deterioration is also evident. The concrete loading dock roofs are crumbling, and rust is evident in most of the metal doors. Deterioration in a small part of the flat tile roof in Section C has been repaired with asphalt shingles. However, the stonework, the most impressive feature of the building, is still sound, and the integrity of the building has not been undermined.

Although there are no outbuildings, there are several other elements to the store property. Steps descend in front of sections A and C to a concrete ramp which ends at the center driveway. A gravel driveway, which circles behind the building, enters from Route 10 on both the northwestern and southwestern corners of the property. Stone walls run along the interior line of this driveway from the outer, rear corners of section B and C to the front of the property. A stone retaining wall follows the semi-circular property line, and another stone wall crosses the front of the property to the center concrete driveway.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
Social History  
Industry  
Ethnic Heritage/European

Period of Significance

1923-1925  
1925-1940

Significant Dates

1923-1925  
1925-1928

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Mahood, Alex B.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Itmann Company Store and Office building is significant under two National Register criteria. It meets Criterion A within the areas of social history and industry because of its prominence to the coal mining town of Itmann and role in labor management. The building also represents the movement of European immigrants to southern West Virginia in the early 1900s. The property meets Criterion C because of its architectural significance. The building was designed in 1923 by Alex B. Mahood, one of the most important architects in West Virginia during the early part of the twentieth century. Furthermore, the nominated property is the most impressive building in Itmann and one of the finest extant company stores in southern West Virginia.

West Virginia, in particular its southernmost part, contains vast quantities of high quality coal whose attraction to entrepreneurs profoundly changed the history of the state after serious exploitation of the mineral began in the late nineteenth century. At that time, a few small towns dotted the landscape, but most of the sparse population lived an agricultural and relatively isolated existence in the steep hills and narrow hollows characteristic of West Virginia. As a result, the creation of towns was necessary to support the mining families. Houses, schools, churches, and other buildings were erected by the coal companies who had acquired title or lease to the land in and around the new towns. At the center was the company store, which housed many of the important functions of the town and represented the omnipresence of the company in the mining town.

Itmann developed somewhat later than many company towns, but repeated this pattern. Although located only a few miles from Mullens and the Wyoming county seat at Pineville, the Itmann area was, until 1916, wilderness and vacant farmland, penetrated only by a narrow, rough, dirt road. That year, the Pocahontas Fuel Company acquired a lease to over 1,000 acres of land along the Guyandotte River, and the

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

- Blankenship, Billie Jean. Postmistress at Itmann, Interview, June 12, 1990.
- Bowers, C. H. Itmann, privately published, 1989. Interview, June 12, 1990.
- Carte, Margie. Longtime resident of Itmann, Interview, June 12, 1990.
- Feller, Jack. Unofficial Wyoming County historian, Interview, June 12, 1990.
- Hedrick, Charles B. Official blue Book of Mercer County, West Virginia. Mercer County Blue Book Association, 1931.
- Itmann, Miscellaneous materials on. Eastern Regional Coal Archives, Craft Memorial Library, Bluefield, West Virginia.
- Marshall University Center for Regional Progress. The Coal Road: A Survey of Southern West Virginia Mining Tourism Potential. March, 1989.
- Wyoming County Court Records.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- 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: N/A

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 1.75

UTM References

A 

1	7	4	6	3	1	1	0	4	1	5	8	4	1	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

C 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

A roughly semi-circular property described as follows: "Beginning at the southwest corner of Lot 22 as shown on the Poll Green Subdivision Map of the Community of Itmann, West Virginia and as on file in the Office of the Clerk of Wyoming County, West Virginia, in Map File No. 1265, said corner shown as station No. 36 and being located on the

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The Itmann Store boundary is the current legal boundary for the property as recorded in the Wyoming County Deed Book 356, page 329. In 1955, Pocahontas Fuel purchased a tract of land in Itmann from Pocahontas Land Company and had the Poll Green Subdivision created. The boundary established for the store reflects the property boundary

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Mary E. Johnson date July 9, 1990

organization State Historic Preservation Office telephone 348-0240

street & number Cultural Center, State Capitol state WV zip code 25305

city or town Charleston

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mining town of Itmann, named in honor of the company's president I. T. Mann, was built. Pre-cut frame houses were quickly erected. Soon, there were other frame buildings: two company stores, a theater, and two schools, one for whites and one for blacks. In the early 1920s, a brick school replaced the white school, and in 1925, the nominated property replaced the original stores.

Like company stores throughout the region, the Itmann Company Store functioned as the center of the community. On one side of the building, the company offices, representing Pocahontas Fuel as both employer and landlord, were located. This side also contained the post office, a poolroom, a barber shop, and the doctor's office. In these capacities, the building was not only the location of much needed services but also the center of casual social interaction between Itmann residents.

On the other side of the building was the store. Despite the fact that Route 10, the main road into Itmann, was improved during the good roads movement of the early 1920s, it remained poor, and contact with neighboring communities was limited. Railroad transportation had been available at Itmann since the town's founding; however, it was impractical for frequent trips. As a consequence, local residences were forced to depend on the Itmann Company Store. It was here that residents went for all their needs, ranging from food and clothing to furniture and burial caskets. By providing all the goods and services in Itmann, Pocahontas Fuel was able to recover much of the money it paid in salaries and determine the quality of life of its employees.

After flourishing for several years, the Itmann mine closed in 1928. The mining families departed, railroad workers became the primary residents of Itmann, and the town was partially closed until the mine reopened in 1948. At the same time, Route 10 was improved sufficiently to facilitate closer contact with other communities, and a newly formed bus company established a route through Itmann. The significance of the Itmann Company Store diminished; however, the building remained a central part of Itmann. During the 1930s, the building continued to symbolize the company's role of landlord, and residents still frequented the building for shopping, services, and social contact.

The nominated property is significant in other areas as well. While the building was not erected until the early 1920s, several years after the nearby houses were built, the store land was graded in 1917 in preparation for the construction of the most prominent building in Itmann. Then, many small, frame houses were placed in a semi-circular manner on the sloping hillside behind the store land. When it was finally built, the Itmann Store had a central location in the town.

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As important as location was construction. West Virginia never had a large immigrant population, but coal mining brought huge increases in that population. By 1920, nearly 50 percent of all male immigrants worked in the coal industry. Some immigrants were skilled masons recruited to do masonry work related to the coal industry. Much of the stonework to be found in West Virginia is the result of the work of these masons. Unlike neighboring counties, Wyoming County did not experience a large increase in its immigrant population. However, European immigrants, particularly Italian stone masons, were brought to Itmann to build the store. This building reflects the shift in the ethnic make-up of southern West Virginia brought by coal mining.

From 1923 to 1925, in what was a major construction job for the area, stone was hand cut from the cliff across the river, hauled down the hill and across the river, and put in place by dozens of workers. Once completed, the stone building, due to its material and impressive size, dwarfed the surrounding buildings, and it continues to do so today. It was, with the exception of the brick school building, the only non-frame building in Itmann prior to World War II. Today, there are still only a few non-frame buildings.

The Itmann Company Store also compares favorably to other company stores. While most company stores were prominent buildings within coal towns, the Itmann Company Store is one of the most impressive store buildings still remaining in southern West Virginia. Most company stores were smaller buildings built of wood or, less frequently, brick. Additionally, the utilization of a courtyard plan and the prominence of the loggia connecting the two main sections of the building create a visual impact absent from most company stores.

The nominated property is also significant for its association with Alex B. Mahood. Mahood (1888-1970), who studied at the Ecole Des Beaux Arts in Paris, France after completing his schooling in the United States, was one of the most important architects in southern West Virginia. Utilizing primarily twentieth century revival styles, Mahood designed upper and upper-middle class residences and prominent public and commercial buildings. While Mahood was particularly instrumental in changing the face of Bluefield, West Virginia, his home, examples of his work, including the nominated property, exist throughout southern West Virginia. Previously listed on the National Register have been several of his buildings, including the Mercer County Courthouse, the West Virginia Hotel, and the Law and Commerce Building, the latter two as part of the Bluefield Downtown Commercial Historic District.

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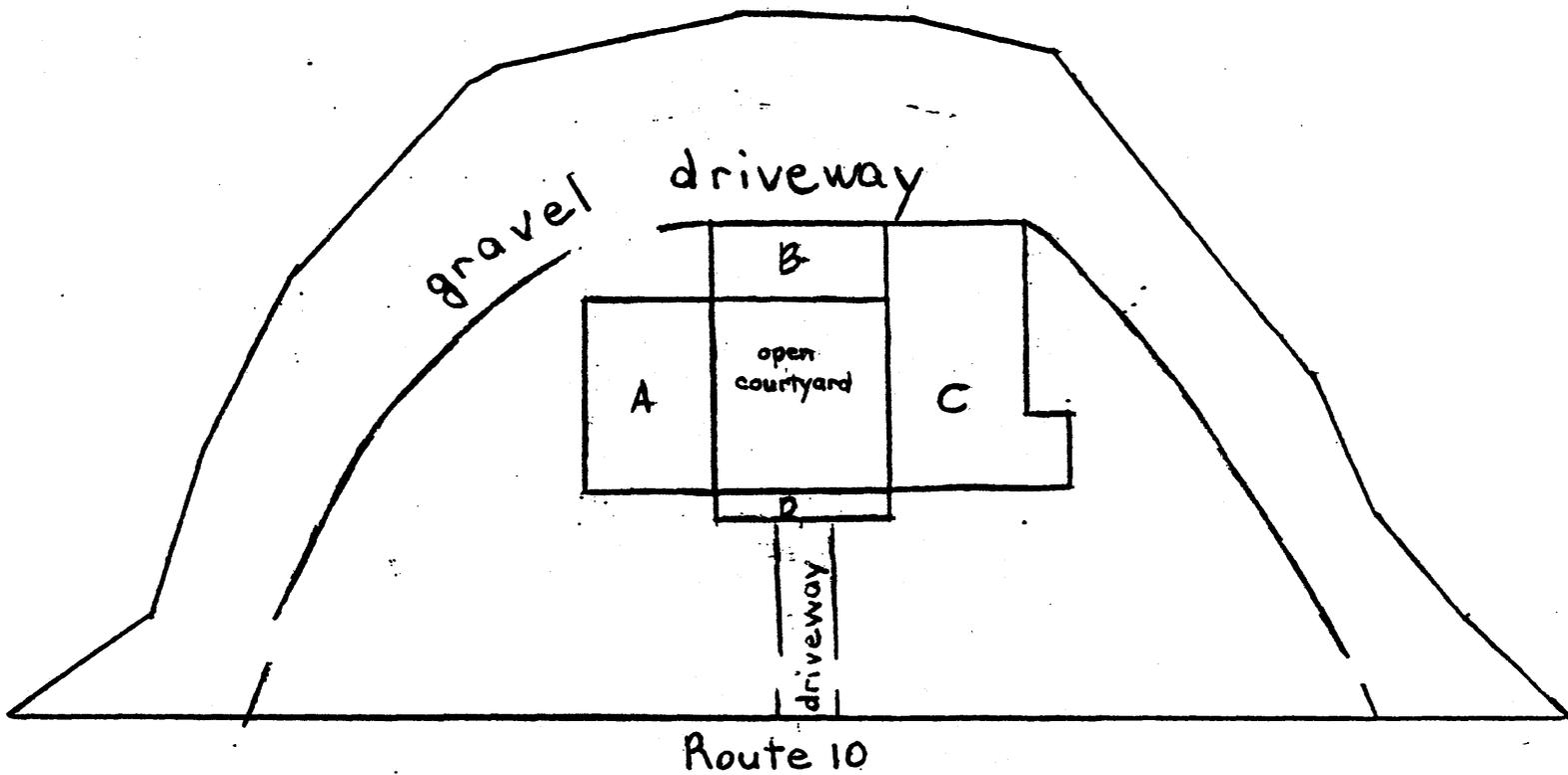
(cont. verbal boundary description)

eastern right-of-way of West Virginia State Route 10; thence with line of Lot 22, three courses, N 45° 02' E 50.23 ft., N 61° 57'E 41.97 ft. and N 74° 44'E 55.46 ft to corner of Lot 21 and station No. 39; thence with line of Lot 21 N 68° 19'E 74.36 ft. to corner of Lot 20 and station No. 40; thence with line of Lot 20 N 58° 35'E 67.48 ft. to station No. 41 and the western right-of-way of Pine Street; thence with said right-of-way N 27° 10'E 46.87 ft. to station No. 51 and a corner of Lot 19; thence with line of Lot 19 N 15° 55'E 65.30 ft. to corner of Lot 18 and station No. 52; thence with line of Lot 18 N 2° 28'E 55.37 ft. to station No. 53 and N 2° 28'W 29.58 ft. to station No. 54 and an easement for a public walkway; thence crossing said walkway N 9° 55'W 7.68 ft. to a corner of Lot 17 and station No. 60; thence with line of Lot 17 N 40° 14'W 82.61 ft. to corner of Lot 16 and station No. 61; thence with line of Lot 16 N 54° 33'W 71.36 ft. to station No. 62 and an easement for a public walkway; thence crossing said walkway N 61° 11'W 8.27 ft. to a corner of Lot 15 and station No. 68; thence with two lines of Lot 15 N 61° 48'W 50.40 ft. and N 24° 45'W 49.39 ft. to Station No. 70, said station being located on the eastern right-of-way of West Virginia State Route 10; thence with said right-of-way three courses S 2° 15'W 77 ft., S 8° 37'W 55 ft. and S 14° 35'W 388 ft. to point and place of beginning, containing 1.75 ac., more or less."

(cont. boundary justification)

historically associated with the building due to the placement of the stone retaining walls against the surrounding hillside.

# Itmann Company Store and Office



Scale:  $3/4'' = 50'$  approximately

ITMANN, WYOMING COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA