



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

**1. Name of Property** RUDELL GENERAL STORE

historic name Ruddell General Store

other names/site number Country Store Museum

**2. Location**

street & number 6 Court Street not for publication N/A  
city or town Glenville vicinity N/A  
state West Virginia code WV county Gilmer code 021 zip code 26351

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_ statewide x locally. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Susan M. Pierce  
Signature of certifying official

10/8/98  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Ruddell General Store  
Name of Property

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

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

Beth A. Savage 12/15/98  
Signature of Keeper Date  
of Action

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#### 5. Classification

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Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private  
 public-local  
 public-State  
 public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)  
 district  
 site  
 structure  
 object

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 related multiple property listing   N/A

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## 6. Function or Use

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### Historic Functions

COMMERCE/TRADE: general store

### Current Functions

RECREATION & CULTURE: Museum  
SOCIAL: Meeting Hall

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## 7. Description

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### Architectural Classification

LATE 19th AND EARLY 20th CENTURY  
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Commercial Style

### Materials

foundation: sandstone  
roof: asphalt  
walls: frame with insulated brick covering  
Other:

Narrative Description (See continuation sheets.)

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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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.

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Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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.

**Areas of Significance**

Commerce

**Period of Significance**

1890 to 1948

**Significant Dates**

1890

**Significant Person**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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(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: Gilmer County Historic Landmark Commission files

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

Glenville Quad Map \_\_\_\_\_ 17 514060 4309240  
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (see continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (see continuation sheet)

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title Kim A. Valente date June 1, 1998  
With revisions by Katherine Jourdan

street & number 226A Bradford Street telephone 304-344-5149

city or town Charleston state WV zip code 25301

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**Property Owner**

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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name West Virginia State Folk Festival, Inc.  
street & number P.O. Box 362 telephone 304-462-7641  
city or town Glennville state WV zip code 26351

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The core commercial section of Glenville is built along two main perpendicular thoroughfares: Main Street and Court Street. Near the intersection of these two streets is the old Ruddell General Store, now the Country Store Museum.

The store sits on a lot 40 feet by 66 feet deep on a slight incline of the street. The building is approximately 30 feet by 65 feet being only slightly smaller than the lot it sits on. It is a two story, two bay, two-part commercial block plan of balloon frame construction. The two-part division reflects the differences in the use of the interior spaces. This wood framed constructed building has been covered for the past fifty years with brick patterned asphalt, or insul-brick siding, over original clapboard.

The first story storefront facade is original in material and design. The center glass entry is recessed and flanked by clear glass sidelights and transom. On either side of the entry are glass windows, full height with glass transoms running along the full width of the storefront and framed by a cornice overhang. Horizontal wooden paneling is located at the sill level. The windows on the second story were originally double-hung sash with 1/1 glazing. They were replaced in the 1970's by smaller aluminum framed, fixed sash glass windows. The cornice at the roof line is embellished with four evenly spaced Console or single vertical scrolled brackets. The windows on the side facade are 1/1 double- hung sash glazed windows and are original.

The lower street level interior space was originally used to house the store merchandise. Household goods, farm equipment and hardware supplies were also sold in the store. At the rear of the interior of the building on the first floor are a set of steps that lead to a mezzanine level. This area was used to display merchandise and for the store proprietor to have full view of the floor below. The rooms off the mezzanine, toward the rear of the building, were used as living quarters for the shop keeper. The upper, or attic floor, was used as storage for the overstock of goods.

While the exterior has been altered on the second floor, it is the interior space of the shop that stands out in this building. The decorative tin ceiling is still in place with side mouldings. The mezzanine has a decorative metal rail across the store; the rear doorway has a decorative turn of the century moulding with corner roundel blocks, and a low segmental arch with center block. One side of the store has built-in shelves for merchandise, and there are glass display cases and a wooden floor. The transom area over the display windows allows light into the rear of the shop as it was originally designed to do. In 1995, a bathroom was remodeled on the first floor in the rear of the store.

The Ruddell General Store has retained its integrity as a small general store in Gilmer County. Located in the commercial center of town, near the courthouse, the building was one of two general stores for the town of Glenville at the turn of the century. Its interior has survived intact despite many different commercial owners over the years.

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The Ruddell General Store is being nominated under Criterion A for Commerce. The general store played a role as a community retail outlet during the early commercial development of Glenville at the turn of the century. As a retail outlet it continued to serve the area from 1890 into the 1970s. Its period of significance is recognized as 1890 to 1948.

Glenville is the county seat of Gilmer County, and as a regional business and commercial center has historically supplied a varied population with goods and services. In 1889, the town had a population of 400 and was increasing in size. The commercial center of Glenville continued to expand its services. Buildings for doctors and lawyers offices, barbershops and banks were being built and opened for business.

Stephen Lewis Ruddell (1818-1886) and wife Sarah Jane McMutchen moved to Glenville with their eight children from Craigsville, Virginia, in the early 1870's. Stephen L. Ruddell operated the Ruddell Hotel located on Main Street, in downtown Glenville. He also owned oil and gas interests throughout Gilmer County. Son, William Kerr Ruddell (1857-1940), seventh born of the eight children, went into the mercantile business and was involved in civic projects throughout Glenville much like his parents.

William Kerr Ruddell married Anna Yancy Eagon (1862-1905), daughter of Dr. Charles Eagon (founder of the Medical Department of the University of Virginia) in 1885. Anna and William had three children: Mildred, Mary Virginia and Charles Stephen.

Two years after their marriage, in April 1887, William Kerr Ruddell purchased a parcel of land from Mr. Oliver Cromwell McQuain for \$375. County court records report that work began on a building on this lot some time in 1890. Local carpenter and workman, Theodore Hauman, was hired to work on the construction of the building. William Kerr Ruddell opened his mercantile store soon after construction was finished. The store carried items such as dry goods and household items. Besides being a business owner, William Kerr Ruddell was an active participant in local civic affairs. He helped organize the Gilmer County Bank and Glenville Water and Light Company.

According to West Virginia State Gazetteers from 1889 to 1900, the Ruddell General Store was one of two listed general stores in Glenville. It was also one of only two general stores within a five mile radius of Glenville when it opened in 1890. The Ruddell General Store supplied much of the dry goods and household items needed for the growing community.

The store not only provided the citizens of Glenville with a place to purchase general merchandise and dry goods, but also a place for the patrons to gather to exchange news and gossip. As needs grew, so did the stores' merchandise. Washing machines, commercially packaged household cleaners, automotive parts, farming equipment, furniture and ready made clothing could be purchased at the store over the course of the years.

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In 1916, William Kerr Ruddell moved to Parkersburg, West Virginia. The store was run by a Mr. William M. Moss and Mr. Van Arnold. The store was renamed the Arnold and Moss General Store and operated under this name from 1917 into the late 1920's. This store was still one of the only stores in Glenville to sell a variety of goods.

William Kerr Ruddell continued to own the building until his death in 1940, when it was then willed to his son Charles S., and daughter, Mildred R. Ruddell. The store continued to be listed among only a handful of other general merchandise stores in the State Gazetteers for the Glenville area.

During the 1930's through the 1950's, a Mr. Max Knackman ran a clothing store housed in the building. The building continued as a retail/commercial enterprise into the 1960's under various names selling a variety of items, but no longer as a dry goods and general merchandise store.

In 1973 Charles S. and Mildred R. Ruddell, children of the original owner, sold the building to the West Virginia Folk Festival, Inc. The Ruddell General Store was renamed the Country Store Museum. The West Virginia Folk Festival, Inc. organization opened a folk museum, library, and place in which to purchase local crafts and books on regional history.

Various general merchandise which was once sold at the store from 1890-1948 can be viewed from the museums' collection including weaving looms, musical instruments and household items. There are over two thousand artifacts, books and photographs depicting Appalachian culture on display at the store.

**Summary:**

For years, the Ruddell General Store was one of the few places in Glenville to supply the citizens with a place to purchase general merchandise and dry goods. The store also served as a place for the patrons to gather to exchange news and gossip. Although rented to various merchants, the store remained in the family hands for over 80 years. When the store finally closed, an organization, dedicated to preserving traditional regional ideals purchased the building and now provides a place to learn about the commercial history of the area. The interior of the store stands out as a timepiece of late 19<sup>th</sup> commercial design.

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**Bibliography**

Gilmer County Courthouse Records:

- Deed Book 50, page 291
- Deed Book 65, page 223
- Deed Book 71, page 457
- Deed Book 104, page 281
- Will Book 6, page 477
- Deed Book 261, page 408

History of Gilmer County West Virginia 1849-1989. Gilmer County Historical Society, Glenville, West Virginia, 1994.

Farber, Elizabeth A. West Virginia Folk Festival history abstract- 1977.

West Virginia State Gazetteers from 1882 to 1958

West Virginia State Census Reports from 1870, 1890 and 1920

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property occupies City Lot 18 and is roughly 40' x 66' in size. The Ruddell General Store is located 80 feet from the northeast corner of the intersection of Court and Main Streets, fronting 30 feet on Court Street and extending back 66 feet, containing 1980 square feet, as described in Deed Book 261, page 408.

**Boundary Justification**

This boundary is the current legal boundary for the property as stipulated by the Gilmer County Courthouse and as recorded for parcel 93, map 5.



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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

COUNTRY STORE MUSEUM  
GILMER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

Section number Sketch Map Page 1

not to scale  
sketch of first floor

