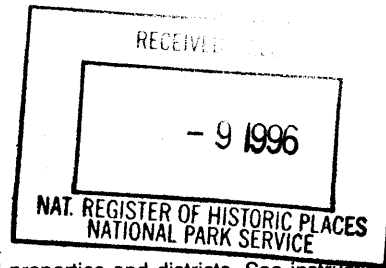


1-12

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 Rienzi Commercial Historic District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number at the intersection of Front and Main Streets  not for publication

city or town Rienzi  vicinity

state Mississippi code MS county Alcorn code 003 zip code 38865

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.)

Edson B. Beall 24 Sept 96  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
State of 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 commenting official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson B. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

11-7-96

Entered in the  
National Register

5. Classification

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  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
6	3	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
6	3	Total

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

n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE:

department store

specialty store

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE:

department store

specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Early 20th Century

Commercial Vernacular

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick; concrete

walls brick; concrete

roof

other

Narrative Description

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

**8. Statement of Significance**

**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.)

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commer ce

**Period of Significance**

ca 1900 to ca 1930

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	116	360150	384176910
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2			

3			
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jack D. Elliot, Jr./Historical Archaeologist

organization Miss. Dept. of Archives and History date September 6, 1996

street & number P. O. Box 571 telephone 601-359-6940

city or town Jackson state MS zip code 39205-0571

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

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

name \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

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.

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Rienzi Commercial Historic District  
Rienzi, Alcorn County, Mississippi

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### 7. Description

The Rienzi Commercial Historic District is a group of nine small commercial buildings that constitutes the remaining part of the historic business area of the town of Rienzi. This small group of buildings is clustered around the intersection of Front and Main Streets about one block to the west of the former Mobile and Ohio Railroad (now the Illinois Central).

The buildings are built to the edges of their small commercial lots, and several share party walls. The facades of all of the buildings are flush with the sidewalks. Eight of the nine buildings are single-storied. The exception is the building at 86 Main Street (Inventory No. 7), which is a two-story commercial building constructed of rough-faced concrete blocks. All nine are characteristic of the modest early-twentieth-century vernacular commercial buildings erected in small communities throughout the state between about 1900 and about 1930. The most intact and representative of these is the C. B. Curlee Store at 87 Main Street (Inventory No. 5), which features an intact, original storefront and a very intact interior. The other buildings have had varying degrees of alteration. Three of them (Inventory Nos. 2, 3, and 4) have been identified as being non-contributing due to extensive alterations, but they nevertheless date from the period of significance and could conceivably acquire contributing status if unsympathetic accretions were removed.

#### Front Street

1. C commercial building, 83 Front Street, ca. 1920

One-story, brick, commercial building. The main facade is finished with scored stucco and is divided into two storefronts. The north storefront has a large metal garage door flanked by display windows set above brick skirts and topped by two-light transoms. The south storefront has central, double-leaf, glazed doors topped by a two-light transom and flanked by display windows with four-light transoms.

2. NC commercial building, 84 Front Street, ca. 1920

One-story, brick, commercial building with two rectangular ventilators in the upper wall. The storefront has been altered and features a central, single-leaf, glazed metal door with sidelights set between stuccoed piers. The display windows have brick skirts, and a shed roof awning clad in asphalt spans the facade.

3. NC First American National Bank, 85 Front Street, ca. 1920

One-story, brick, commercial building that has had its upper wall and area under the display windows clad in vinyl. The central recessed entry is a single-leaf, glazed metal door framed by cast iron pilasters. A cast iron threshold and a pent awning clad in asphalt span the facade.

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Rienzi Commercial Historic District  
Rienzi, Alcorn County, Mississippi

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4. NC commercial building, 86 Front Street, ca. 1920

One-story, brick, commercial building with the main facade clad in vinyl. The central recessed entrance contains a metal door, and the display windows are set above vinyl skirts. Cast iron pilasters frame the entrance, and a cast iron threshold and pent awning span the facade. The south elevation is stuccoed.

**Main Street**

5. C C. B. Curlee Store, 87 Main Street, ca. 1913

This one-story, brick commercial building retains an outstanding degree of integrity. It was built soon after the 1913 tornado destroyed the frame commercial building that previously stood on the site. The main (north) facade has a corbelled cornice, three square ventilators in the upper wall, and its original storefront with a recessed central entrance containing double-leaf, paneled and glazed doors topped by a two-light transom. The entry is delineated by cast iron pilasters, and the display windows are set above paneled wooden skirts. A transom spans the facade. On the north end of the east elevation is a display window set above a paneled skirt and topped by a three-light transom. Three segmentally-arched openings are also on the north elevation, and the parapet is stepped. A corrugated metal awning wraps the north and east elevations. The interior of the building retains its pressed metal ceiling, shelving, and display cabinets.

6. C Warehouse, Main Street, ca. 1913

West of and adjoining the C. B. Curlee Store is a one-story, brick warehouse with a stepped parapet. The main facade features two small window openings and a garage door topped by a four-light transom.

7. C commercial building, 86 Main Street, 1903/1913

Two-story commercial building constructed of rough-faced concrete block. The building was constructed 1903, but the 1913 tornado destroyed the upper floor, which was rebuilt that same year. The first floor has three cast iron pilasters and thresholds from the Chattanooga Roofing and Foundry Company. The central, recessed entry contains a single-leaf, glazed, aluminum door with sidelight. The display windows are set above paneled wooden skirts, and a transom protected by a shed awning spans the storefront. The second level of the facade has three openings, which have been partially in-filled with brick and contain metal sash windows. The west elevation has a single window opening and a double-leaf, paneled door topped by a three-light transom on the first floor, and on the second floor is a single-leaf, paneled door and two metal windows.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Rienzi Commercial Historic District  
Rienzi, Alcorn County, Mississippi

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8. C Smith's Drugs, 89 Main Street, ca. 1900

One-story, brick building with corbelled parapet. The storefront has been reworked but retains its cast iron pilasters and threshold. The display windows and door are modern replacements, and the transom has been clad with wooden shingles. A pent roof awning clad in wood shingles and supported by plain posts protects the facade.

9. C J. B. Perry Building, 90 Main Street, ca. 1900

One-story, brick commercial building with corbelled cornice on facade and stepped parapet on cast elevation. The storefront is intact and features cast iron pilasters and threshold; a central, recessed, double-leaf, paneled and glazed door; and wood-framed display windows set above paneled skirts. The full-width transom has been boarded over, and a wood-shingled, pent-roof awning spans the elevation. The ceiling of the interior and recessed entry are clad in beaded board. The east elevation has three segmentally-arched openings: two small windows and a double-leaf, diagonal-board freight door.

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Rienzi Commercial Historic District  
Rienzi, Alcorn County, Mississippi

Section number 8 Page 4

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**8. Significance**

The Rienzi Commercial Historic District is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Commerce as being a relatively intact representative of the many small railroad-oriented trade centers that once flourished throughout the State of Mississippi. These communities were vital to the economic life of the state from the period when the first major rail lines were built through the state in the 1850s until the decline of rail passenger service in the 1940s. The period of significance of the Rienzi Commercial Historic District extends from about 1900, when the oldest surviving buildings in the district were constructed, to 1930, by which time the most recent of the contributing buildings had been built.

The present central business district of the town of Rienzi began to grow up ca. 1859 adjacent to the Mobile and Ohio Railroad which was constructed through the area about that time. This business district succeeded that of the original town of Rienzi, the center of which was located about one mile to the west. The original town, now extinct and referred to as "Old Rienzi" was incorporated in 1848. With the growth of the new town the incorporation limits of the older municipality were extended one mile to the east in 1859 so as to include the railhead.

The central business district evolved on a town plat that was oriented to the north-south trending railroad where the depot and its loading dock were once a center of activity. Although Rienzi was locally important as a trade and social center, it was never very large. Its population during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries oscillated between about 200 and 500. The decline of rail traffic, the proliferation of the automobile, and the construction of Highway 45 has served to draw much of the business away from Rienzi and divert it into the larger neighboring cities of Corinth and Tupelo. With the decline in business, the depot and many of the commercial buildings have been removed.



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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Rienzi Commercial Historic District  
Rienzi, Alcorn County, Mississippi

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Alcorn County Historical Association, The History of Alcorn County, Mississippi, 1983

Laws of Mississippi, 1848, 1859.

## 10. Geographical Data

### Verbal Boundary Description

See accompanying map.

### Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the district are drawn so as to include those buildings of significance and integrity that define the district's character, while excluding as many non-historic buildings as possible.



