

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Lost River General Store

other name/site number: Lost River Store House

2. Location

street & number: 6993 State Route 259

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Lost River

vicinity: _____

state: West Virginia code: WV county: Hardy

code: 031 zip code: 26810

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.

Susan M. Pierce, Deputy SHPO

Date

West Virginia Division of Culture and History

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

Lost River General Store
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County and State

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4. National Park Service Certification

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I hereby certify that this property is: Signature of 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)

☒ 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

_____ 2 _____ buildings
_____ sites
_____ structures
_____ objects
_____ 2 _____ TOTAL

Noncontributing

Name of related multiple property listing N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions

COMMERCE/department store

Current Functions

COMMERCE/department store

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification

Late 19th and Early 20th Century
American Movements: Commercial
Style

Materials

Foundation: WOOD
Walls: WOOD/Weatherboard
Roof: METAL
Other: WOOD

Narrative Description

See continuation sheets

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8. Statement of Significance

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Applicable National Register Criteria

- X 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

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.

Areas of Significance

COMMERCE
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1898–1955

Significant Dates

1898

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Holmes, Lynn S. (builder)

Narrative Statement of Significance

See continuation sheets

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Bibliography

See 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:

 X State Historic Preservation Office
_____ Other State agency
_____ Federal agency
_____ Local government
_____ University
_____ Other

Name of Repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: 0.146

UTM References

Quad Map Name: Lost City Quadrangle

<u>17</u>	<u>690261</u>	<u>4313848</u>
Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

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11. Form Prepared By

=====

Name/Title: Gail H. Baker

Organization: _____ Date: June 3, 2005

Street & Number: 4031 N. Glebe Road Telephone: 703 534-8948

City or Town: Arlington State: VA ZIP: 22207-4548

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Property Owner

=====

Name: Ann Morgan and Margo Pflieger

Street & Number: HC 83, Box 8A2 Telephone: 304 897-6788

City or Town: Lost River State: WV Zip: 26810

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Introduction

The Lost River General Store, constructed in 1898, is a Commercial-style, two-story, front-gable, wood frame building with a one-story front porch. The walls are sheathed in German siding, and the roof is covered in standing-seam metal. Behind the store is an outhouse, now used for storage. The store is located on the east side of WV Route 259 near its intersection with County Route 14 (Dove Hollow Road) to the west and County Route 16 (Mill Gap Road) to the east, in the hamlet of Lost River. It retains most of its original appearance, is in excellent condition, and continues its historical associations with the community's commercial and social life.

Description

The original two-story portion of the store has a rectangular plan, approximately 20 feet wide by 40 feet long. The façade contains two large bay-front shop windows that flank a recessed double door. A historic one-story, frame, shed-roofed addition on the north elevation has been rebuilt recently. It originally measured 12 feet wide by 40 feet long but has been extended at the rear. The façade of both sections features a shed-roofed porch that is supported by four slender wood posts.

The structural system for the building is wood frame supported by wood timbers set directly on grade (no piers). The construction is balloon frame, with the studs going from foundation to roof support. There is a wood structured second-floor system with chamfered wood summer beams or wood girders supporting a joist structural system for the second floor. The building is sheathed in horizontal German siding. Window and door surrounds and corner boards are plain milled boards with no molding. The roofs are covered in standing-seam galvanized metal.

The main store entrance is made up of a pair of recessed wooden two-panel, half-glass doors, each with four lights. The doors are flanked by fixed-light storefront windows that angle back to the recessed door and are topped by a fixed five-light transom. The shed roof of the entry porch is supported by four wood posts with chamfered edges. The posts are set on low brick piers. The porch ceiling is tongue-and-groove beaded board, and the floor is concrete. The two second-story windows are original 2/2 double-hung wood sash.

The south elevation, originally an uninterrupted expanse of clapboard siding on the first floor, now contains two angled bay windows with metal shed roofs. An original 2/2 double-hung sash window is centered between the bays at the second-floor level.

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The east (rear) elevation contains two 2/2 double-hung sash windows at the second-floor level, and another 2/2 double-hung sash window and a single-leaf wood entry door (matching the double front doors) at the first-floor level. Windows are original.

On the north elevation is a two-story, gable-roofed projecting bay with an original trapezoidal window. This bay contains a staircase that connects the first and second floors of the store. The one-story wing extends along the length of this elevation.

Directly behind the store is a small outhouse, now used for storage. It is wood frame structure clad in German siding, set on a concrete base with a shed roof of corrugated metal. The batten door is made of vertical German siding. This outhouse may have been built by a Works Progress Administration (WPA) crew operating in the Lost River Valley in the 1930s.

Interior

The first floor of the store is located very close to grade, almost level with the exterior grade. The first-floor finish is original to the building. It consists of pine random-width flooring, with a subsequent layer of tongue-and-groove oak mainly in high-traffic areas of the store. The date the oak was installed is unknown, but it has been there for at least 50 years. The interior arrangement of the store is relatively original. There are wood shelves along the perimeter walls and wood plank counters. Although the original heating source is unknown, there is historical evidence that the store was heated with a wood stove at one time. An oil stove installed sometime in the mid 20th century was removed in the 1980s, and electric baseboard heating was installed. This now is supplemented with a new forced-air heating and air-conditioning system housed in a closet of the rear second-floor room. Ductwork for this system is concealed in the attic area of the reconstructed north wing.

The second floor has original plaster walls and bead-board ceilings and was originally divided into three rooms off a hallway—one large room across the front, a similar room at the rear, and a smaller room between. The middle and front rooms have been combined in recent years for additional retail space. An 8-foot-square section of the floor was removed and a railing added to increase visibility between floors. The original floor joists remain visible through this opening.

The original stair has stained pine treads and risers that include several winder stairs at the top. The staircase is housed in the gabled bay on the north side of the building and is accessed from the front door of the one-story wing or from inside the store.

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Rehabilitation, Additions, and Alterations

In the 1990s, the current owners undertook a rehabilitation of the store. This work was planned and supervised by preservation architect William J. DeMaio, AIA. The sills on the north and south sides of the store were severely deteriorated due to moisture and vegetation. The front and rear were remarkably intact. The deteriorated sills were replaced with pressure-treated sills, with a new concrete foundation below.

The one-story, shed-roofed wing on the north side of the store, which was severely rotted, was rebuilt in 1998. The structure of the original wing was similar to the main building, being of wood frame construction with a wood foundation. There had been substantial deterioration from moisture, and a large tree growing into the north side had caused severe uplifting of the frame and had compromised the integrity of the walls and siding. The tree was removed, and the wing was rebuilt with concrete foundations. The grade at the north side was raised, concealing the new concrete and protecting the building from flooding. The façade of this wing has a false front, concealing the profile of the sloping shed roof. The façade contains a single-leaf, half-glass door with three vertical lights and a 2/2 double-hung sash window.

During the rehabilitation, the wing was extended to accommodate a new gable-roofed, angled entrance at the building's northeast corner, and a one-story, shed-roofed screened porch was added to the rear (east) elevation. In 1997, the two first-floor bay windows on the south elevation were added. These bay windows echo the original shop windows on the building's façade.

Setting

The setting of the store remains quite rural. The store is situated very close to WV 259, between two mid to late 19th-century houses with a number of outbuildings. At this location, the Lost River runs parallel to and just west of the highway. The George Washington National Forest is approximately 1 mile to the southeast. The store faces Little Ridge to the west, and Hommon Mountain rises behind it. An open graveled area to the north of the store is used for parking. Originally there was space in front of the store for wagons and later automobiles to pull over until the road was raised and paved in the 1930s. Directly behind the store is a small outhouse, now used for storage. This outhouse may have been built by a Works Progress Administration (WPA) crew operating in the Lost River Valley in the 1930s. It is wood frame structure clad in German siding, set on a concrete base with a shed roof of corrugated metal. The batten door is made of vertical German siding.

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Summary Statement of Significance

The Lost River General Store, located in Hardy County, is eligible for listing in the National Register under *Criterion A: Commerce and Social History* for its local significance in the commercial and social life history of the Lost River Valley. Since its construction in 1898, the store has served the commercial needs of residents while providing a place for neighbors to meet and exchange news. From the early 1900s until 1979, the General Store also housed the Lost River Post Office, and successive owners of the store served as its postmaster. The period of significance begins in 1898, the year of construction, and ends in 1955, corresponding to the National Register's fifty-year cut-off date.

Historical Background

The Lost River General Store was built in 1898 on a parcel of land owned by William (Billy) Harper. Harper leased the store to Heltzel & Co., a mercantile business located in Wardensville. James W. Miller, a local undertaker, was hired as chief clerk, and he may have continued to run his undertaking business from the store for a while.¹ The current store was not the first store in Lost River, but it continued in business the longest. Both William Harper and Harrison C. Haas operated stores there in the last half of the 19th century, but neither building remains.

Some time in the early 1900s, Miller bought out Heltzel & Co. and hired Frank D. Haas (1880–1949) to manage the store. Frank was the youngest child of Harrison C. and Annie (Kneisley) Haas, whose house and store were about a half mile north of the current store, so he grew up learning about storekeeping. In 1906, Frank married Essie Miller (1883–1982), who was James Miller's niece. The Haases bought the store business c. 1918, and members of the Haas family continued to own and manage it until 1979. Frank and Essie had three children: Thelma (b. 1907), Chester (b. 1908), and Ralph (b. 1911). From about 1911 until 1918, the young Haas family lived on the second floor, above the store.²

According to ledgers owned by the Haas family, the items in greatest demand when the store opened were leather, whiskey, kerosene, and coffee. The business grew, and a larger variety of merchandise became available. Hardware items were added as well as cloth, thread, buttons, scissors, dishes, stone jars, and lamps. Later, canned food, dried fruit, jerky, and cereal were offered. Then, as automobiles appeared around 1910–1915, a gasoline pump was installed in front of the store.

After Frank's death in 1949, Chester (Chet) Haas and his wife, Hilda Wilson Haas, operated the store. When Chester died in 1958, Hilda continued running the store until 1979.³

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For many years, the Lost River Post Office was located in the store, and the Haases served as postmasters: Frank Haas, 1922–1949; Chester Haas, 1949–1959; and Hilda Haas, 1959–1978. The store continued to house the post office until 1988, when service was suspended. Service was discontinued in 1994.⁴

In 1979, Hilda Haas sold the general store to Tuscarora Land Company. Tuscarora had a land development office there until 1982. In 1985, the Lost River Crafts Cooperative leased the building and reopened it as the Lost River General Store. The present owners, who purchased the property in 1989, continued renting the building to the crafts cooperative on a seasonal basis through 1996 and then took over operation of the store themselves in 1997.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Hardy County was decidedly rural, population was sparse, and travel was difficult. In 1880, the county had 6,792 inhabitants. Of those inhabitants, 1,765 lived in the Lost River Magisterial District (one of four districts in the county).⁵ The store's crossroads location, with a grain mill and blacksmith nearby, made it convenient for people to perform several chores in one trip. While waiting for their grain to be ground or their horse to be shod, they could buy provisions, pick up mail, and visit with neighbors at the store.

During the first four decades of the 20th century, the county's population grew, but slowly, reaching a high of 10,813 in 1940 before starting a decline that lasted until 1980.⁶ In the last 20 years, newcomers seeking weekend or retirement homes have brought renewed growth. Today, the Lost River General Store remains a landmark and continues its historic role in meeting the social and commercial needs of the surrounding community.

Notes

1. *Moorefield Examiner*, "Lost River Items," April 15, 1898, and July 8, 1898; Deed Book 44, p. 117.
2. *Hardy County Family History to 1990* (Hardy County Commission and Don Mills, Inc., 1991), 127–128.
3. Ibid.
4. Postmaster Finder, Postmasters by City, Lost River Post Office, Hardy County, West Virginia, <http://www.webpmt.usps.gov/>.
5. Richard K. MacMaster, *The History of Hardy County, 1786–1986* (Moorefield, W.Va.: Hardy County Public Library, 1986), 235–236.
6. Richard L. Forstall, ed., *West Virginia, Population of Counties by Decennial Census: 1900 to 1990*, <http://www.census.gov/population/cencounts/wv190090.txt>.

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Bibliography

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Davis, Bob. "Lost River General Store Ledger of 1850 to 1890." *Potomac Pennysaver*, Sept. 10, 1988: 6.

Detamore, Crystal D. "Products of Hardy County Craftspersons and Farmers Featured at Lost River General Store." *Wonderful West Virginia Magazine*, June 1995: 30–32.

Dilger, Robert Jay. "The Early History of West Virginia's Potomac Highlands." *The West Virginia Public Affairs Reporter* 20, no. 3 (Fall 2003).

Funkhouser, Wendell E., and Nancy H. Powell. *Lost City: Its People and Their Heritage*. Lost City, W.Va.: Ivanhoe Presbyterian Church, 1999.

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Ice, John R. *Outline Map of Hardy County, West Virginia*. John R. Ice, Fairmont, W.Va., 1925.

MacMaster, Richard K. *The History of Hardy County, 1786–1986*. Moorefield, W.Va.: Hardy County Public Library, 1986.

Moore, Alvin Edward. *History of Hardy County of the Borderland*. Parsons, W.Va.: McClain Printing Company, 1963.

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Powell, Nancy H. *What to See and Do in the Lost River and South Branch Valleys*. Lost River, W.Va.: Lost River Educational Foundation, 1997.

Truman, Betty L. "The Lost River General Store," manuscript, n.d.

U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census Records.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The property is a square parcel measuring 79.86 feet by 79.86 feet. It is Parcel 22, Tax Map 408 (File LR02-408.DWG), Lost River, Hardy County, WV.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the general store.

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Name of Property: Lost River General Store
Address: 6993 State Route 259
Town: Lost River
County: Hardy
Photographer: Gail H. Baker
Date: May 27, 2005 (Photos 1–4, 6–7)
April 21, 2005 (Photo 5)
Negatives: WV SHPO, Charleston, WV

Photo 1 of 7: Front facade
Camera facing east

Photo 2 of 7: North elevation
Camera facing south

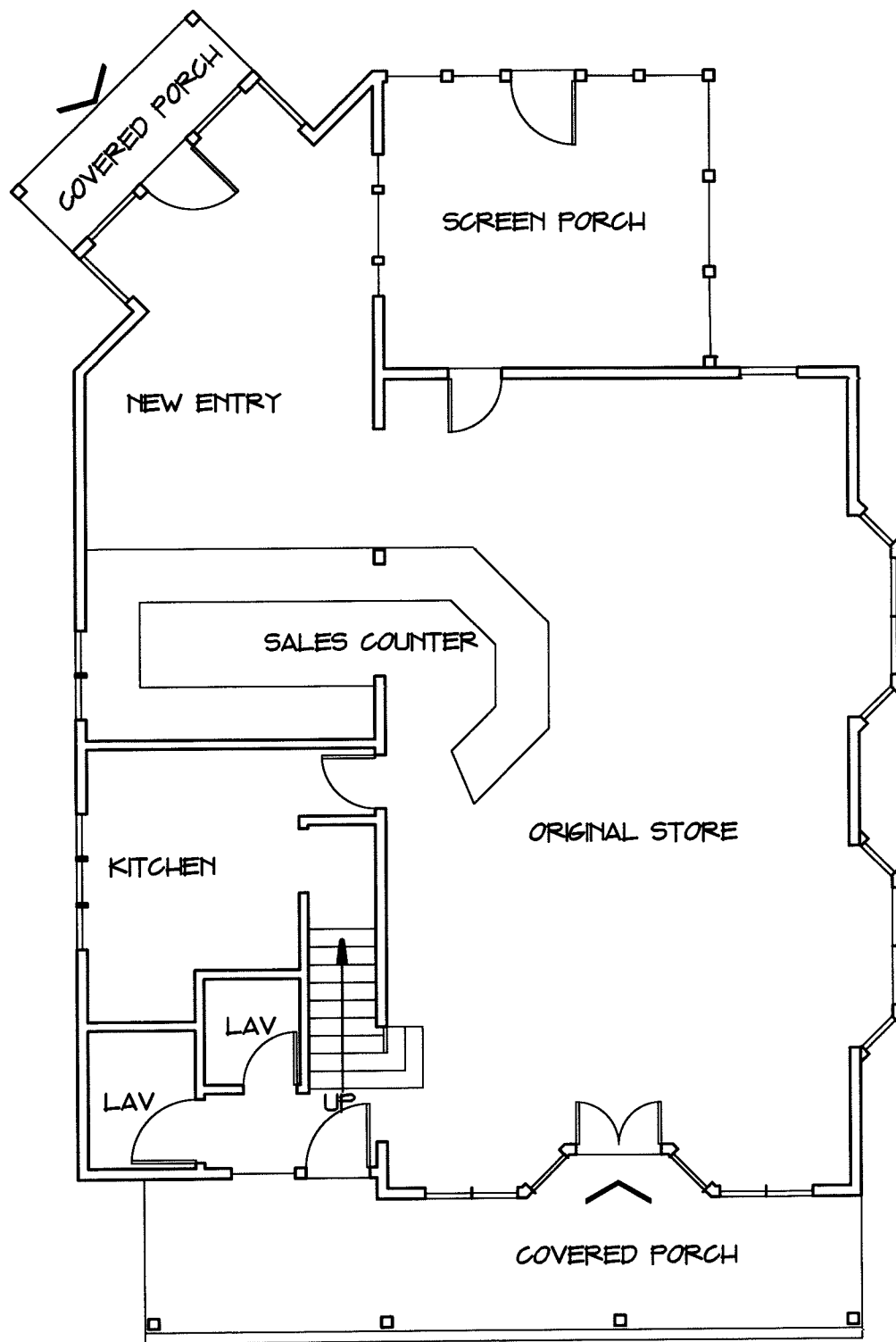
Photo 3 of 7: East elevation and outhouse
Camera facing west

Photo 4 of 7: South elevation
Camera facing northwest

Photo 5 of 7: Context
Camera facing southeast

Photo 6 of 7: Interior, sales counter, first floor
Camera facing west

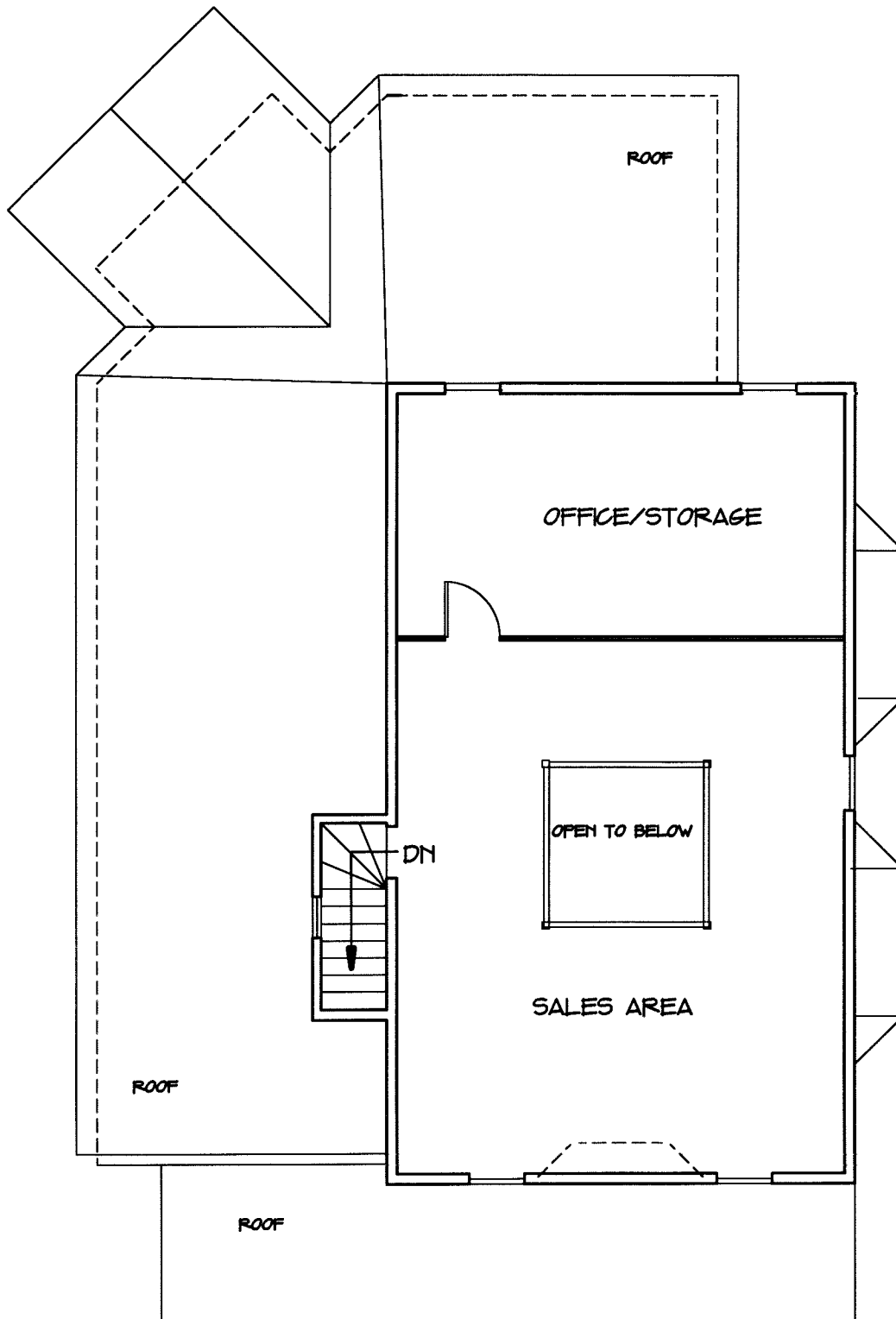
Photo 7 of 7: Interior, second floor
Camera facing west



LOST RIVER GENERAL STORE, HARDY COUNTY, WV

N  FIRST FLOOR PLAN

1/8" = 1'-0"



LOST RIVER GENERAL STORE, HARDY COUNTY, WV



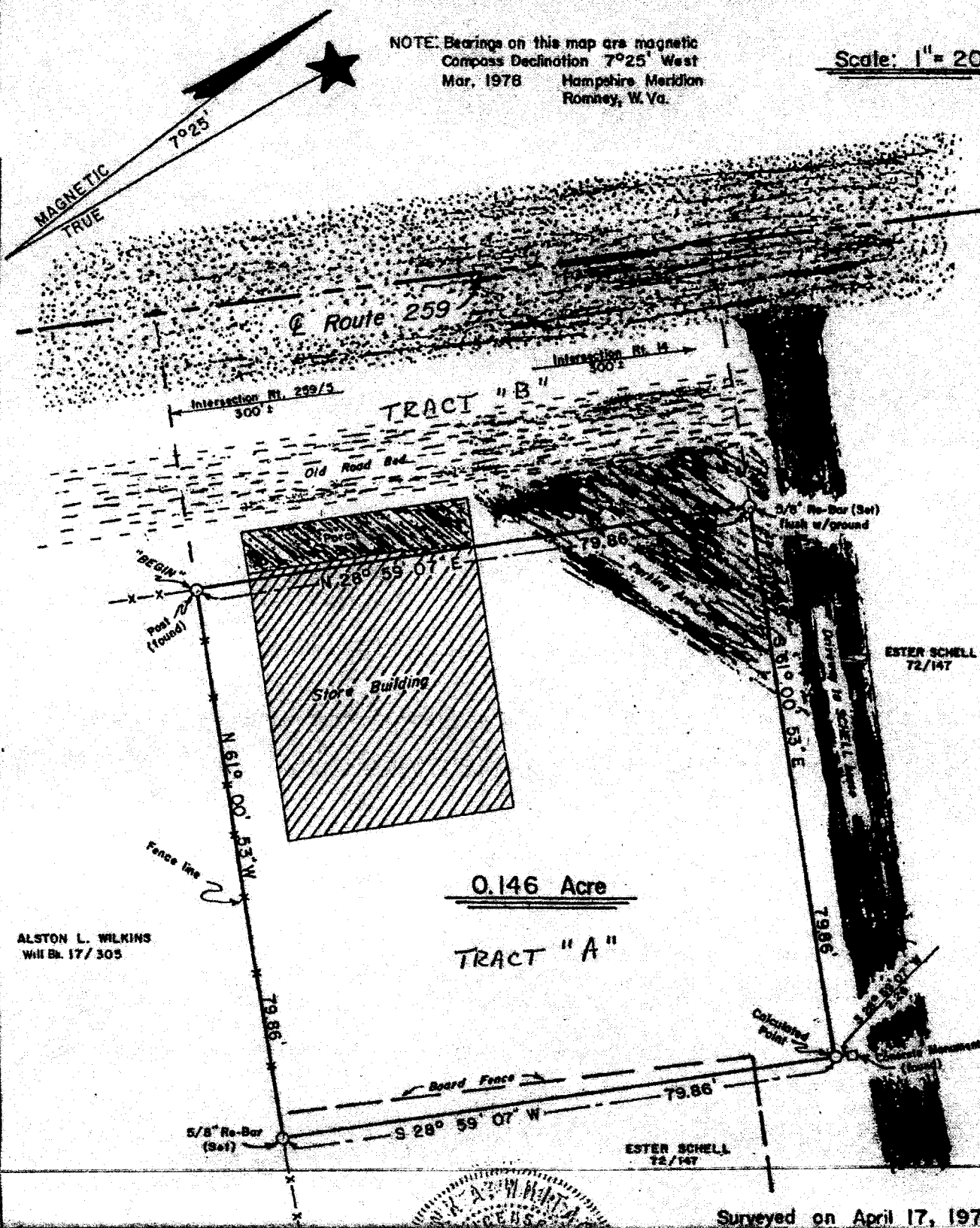
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

1/8" = 1'-0"

West Virginia

NOTE: Bearings on this map are magnetic
Compass Declination 7°25' West
Mar. 1978 Hampshire Meridian
Romney, W. Va.

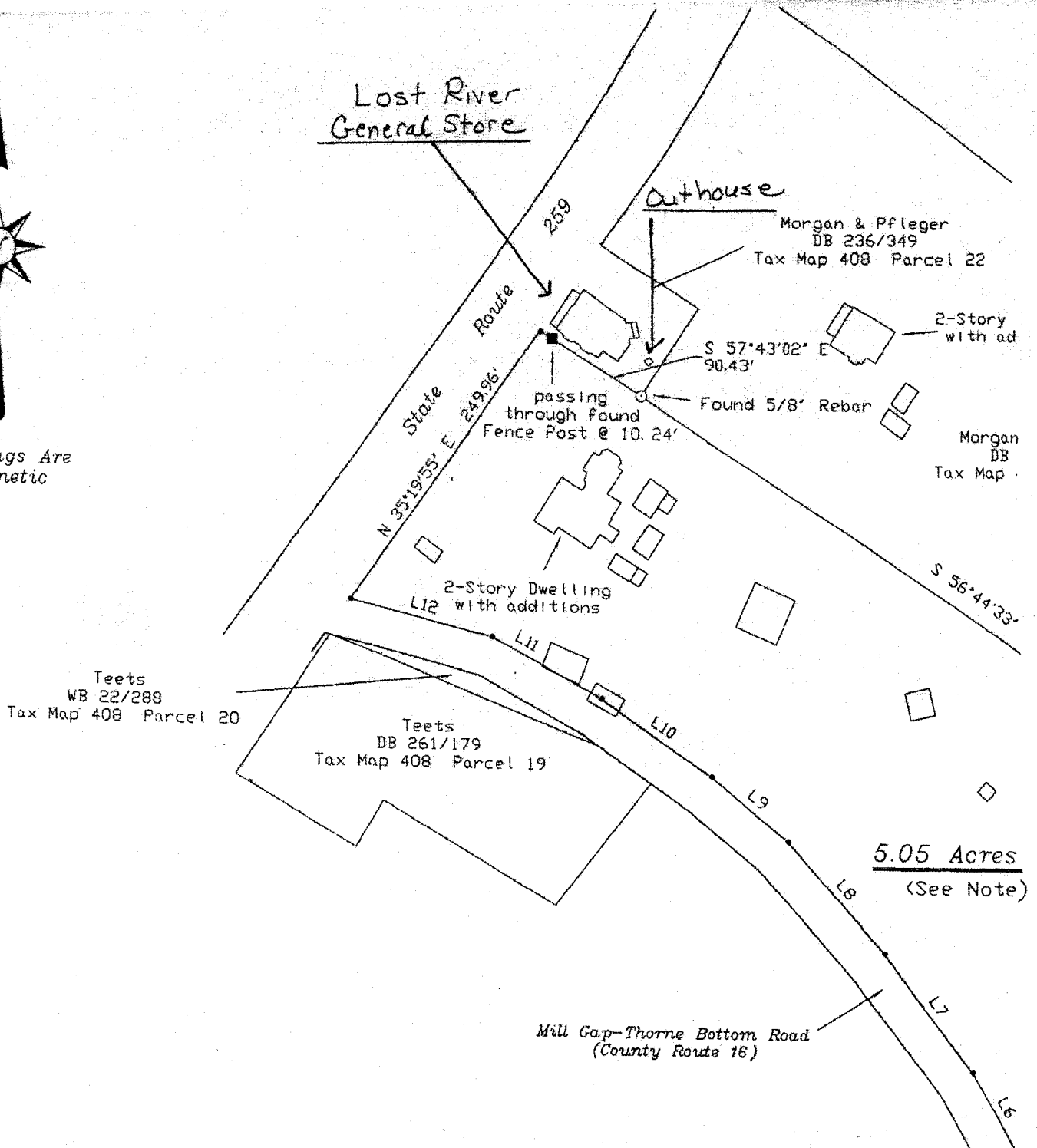
Scale: 1" = 20'



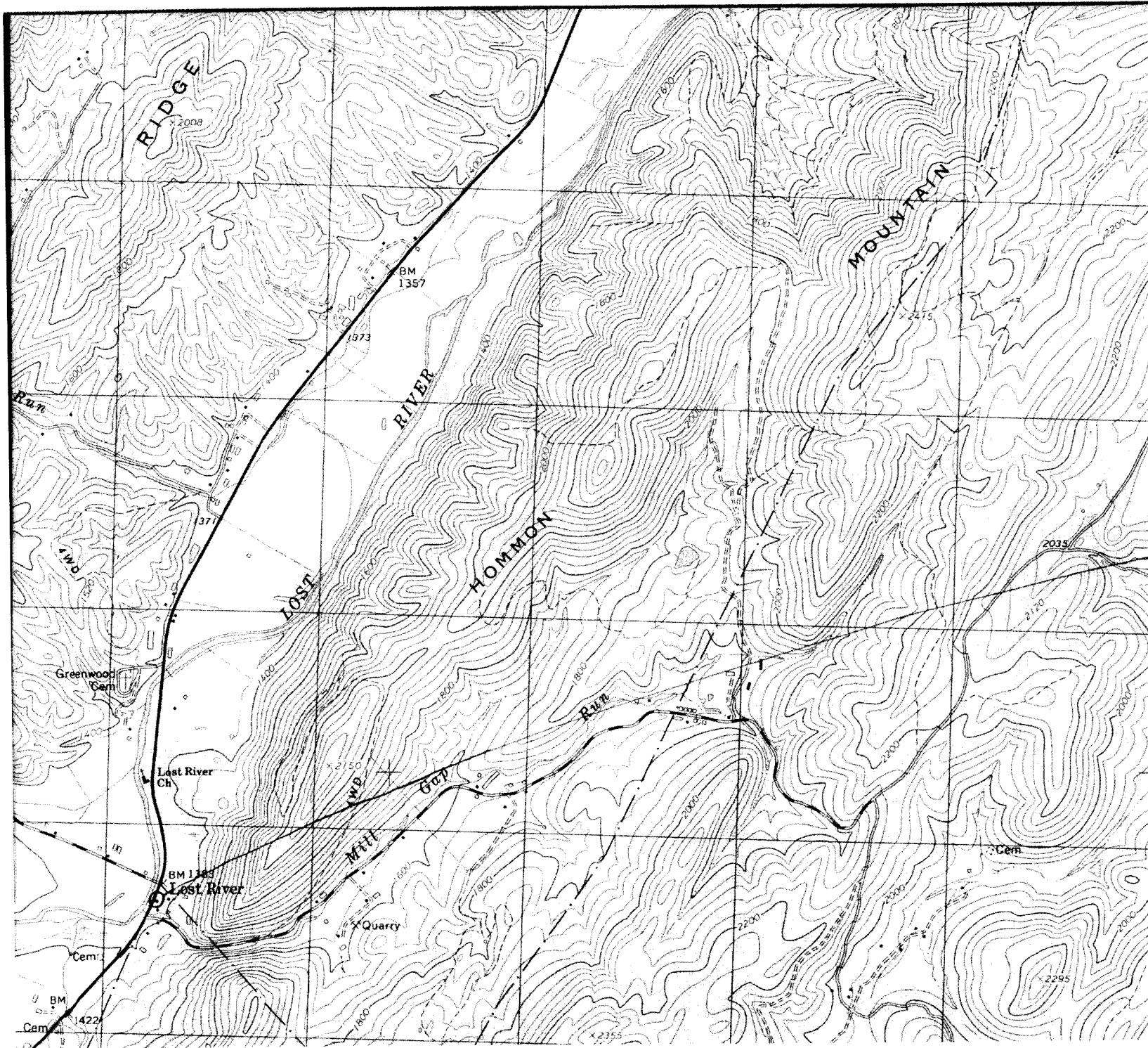
Surveyed on April 17, 1979



Bearings Are
Magnetic



Sketch Map Showing
Lost River General Store, Hardy County, WV



Lost River
General Store

Hardy County,
WV

UTM Reference:

17 690401 4313848

417

416

415

414

57'30"





