

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

historic name: Western Maryland Railroad Depot

other name/site number: Parsons Depot

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2. Location

street & number: 166 1/2 Main Street

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Parsons

vicinity: N/A

State: WV code: WV county: Tucker code: 093 zip code: 26287

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3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

X William G. Varner 3/12/96
Signature of Certifying Official 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 Certifying Official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====
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):

=====
Signature of the Keeper Date

=====
5. Classification
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Ownership of Property: (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure
	<input type="checkbox"/> object

NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITH PROPERTY
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	TOTAL

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:
Railroad depot.

CURRENT FUNCTIONS:
Vacant.

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7. Description

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ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION:
Late Victorian: Stick Style.

MATERIALS:

Foundation: Stone piers.

Walls: German novelty siding.

Roof: Metal.

Other: N/A.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more 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
(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

N/A A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

N/A B removed from its original location.

N/A C a birthplace or grave.

N/A D a cemetery.

N/A E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

N/A F a commemorative property.

N/A G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:
Transportation.

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE:
1888 - 1920

SIGNIFICANT DATES:
1888.

SIGNIFICANT PERSON:
N/A

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

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

=====

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Jean Boger, Assistant

Organization: Michael Gioulis, Historic Preservation Consultant

Date: October 1, 1995

Street & Number: 612 Main Street Telephone: (304) 765-5716

City or Town: Sutton State: WV ZIP:26601

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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)

CULTURAL AFFILIATION: N/A

ARCHITECT/BUILDER:
Unknown.

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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BIBLIOGRAPHY
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- N/A preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- N/A previously listed in the National Register
- N/A previously determined eligible by the National Register
- N/A designated a National Historic Landmark
- N/A recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- N/A recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

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

Name of Repository:
Heritage House
PO Box 55
Parsons, WV 26287

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: 15,880 square feet.

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing
 17. 614100. 4328003.

=====
PROPERTY OWNER
=====

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

Name: Heritage House Crafts Co-Operative

Street & Number: P.O. Box 55 Telephone: (304) 478-2107

City or Town: Parsons State: WV ZIP: 26287
=====

(NPS Form 10-900)

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Parsons Depot
Tucker County, West Virginia

The Parsons Depot is located at the intersection of Main and Davis Streets in the town of Parsons, Tucker County, West Virginia. It is adjacent to the abandoned right-of-way of the Western Maryland Railroad. The old tracks were located to the east of the depot. They are no longer extant. Directly to the west of the depot is a gravel based road which ends at the depot. To the south is Davis Street and to the north is an open field.

In plan, the depot is a simple rectangle seventy feet long and twenty-four feet wide. There is a twelve foot wide, three-sided bay on the track side, east elevation. The bay projects out four feet from the face of the building.

The building is a one-story, German novelty sided, railroad depot structure with an intersecting gable roof. There is a central, end gable on the roof. Originally, there was a cupola on the roof but this is no longer extant.

The roof is presently a batten seam, metal roof which overhangs the walls, ca. 1925. Originally the roof was a standing seam, metal roof. The roof has exposed rafter tails and there are simple, rectangular, large brackets on the main roof eaves. The roof overhangs are typical of a depot and were to provide a sheltered platform for passengers and staff.

The windows are vertical two over two, wooden, double hung sash with simple wooden hoods. On the side, the windows are arranged in three bays. Historic photographs show three panel shutters on all windows and there is a remaining pair of shutters on one window of the freight room. The paired windows on the track side of the projecting bay are one over one.

There are two freight doors each for the east and west elevations. These are six feet wide and have four panels. Within each panel is diagonal wood siding.

There are two entrance doors on the east elevation and one on the west elevation. Doors are six panel, painted with the upper panels glazed. Again, according to historic photographs, these do

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Parsons Depot
Tucker County, West Virginia

not appear to be original, possibly ca. 1925. There is a vertical divided transom above each door which is capped with a simple wooden hood. The original doors were four panel with the same diagonal wood siding in the panels as the freight doors.

The projecting bay on the track side has paired, one over one, wooden, double hung windows on the front wall and a single, vertical, two over two, wooden, double hung window on each side wall.

All end gables have king post decorative trusses with a dropped finial.

Originally there was a raised wooden freight platform and another passenger platform on the track side but these are no longer extant.

On the interior, the plan is asymmetrical with the freight room being the largest portion. The freight room is forty-two feet long and is on the south side of the building. Naturally, it contains all of the freight doors and there are two windows on the south wall. It is strictly industrial in feeling as there are no finishes. The walls are exposed framing and the flooring is timber. The ceiling is unfinished with exposed trusses.

On the north end of the building are the waiting room, office in the bay, and the bathrooms. The north wall has three windows in it.

Finishes for the northern section of the building are narrow, hardwood, tongue and groove flooring; vertical beaded board on the walls and beaded board on the ceilings.

The moldings on the windows and doors on the interior are fluted and have rosette corner blocks.

In all, the interior of the building is in fair condition and relatively original to the building. The major space is the freight room and it is in original condition.

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Section 8 Page 1

Parsons Depot
Tucker County, West Virginia

The Parsons Depot is significant under Criterion A for its association with the development of Tucker County; for its association with the development of the town of Parsons; and for its association with the transportation and extraction industries of northeastern West Virginia.

The Parsons Depot is significant under Criterion A for its association with the development of Tucker County, West Virginia. Tucker County was established on March 7, 1856. It was named for Henry Saint George Tucker, Sr., a lawyer who became counsel for the estate of Lord Fairfax and who was active in Virginia and national politics. The county seat of St. George was named for his son, Henry Saint George Tucker, Jr. who wrote the bill separating Tucker County from Randolph County and the county seat, Westernford, was changed to St. George in his honor.

Captain James Parsons and his brother, Thomas, came to the region in the late 1700's and patented land. The Parson family lived in Hardy County, near present day Moorefield, prior to settling in Tucker County. Captain James Parsons was kidnapped by Native Americans ca. 1762 from Hardy County and taken beyond the Ohio River. He managed to escape and on his trek homeward he discovered the Horseshoe Trail which ran through Tucker County and vowed to return to settle.

The Parsons brothers, James and Thomas, returned to the Parsons area and claimed all of the flat land in the Horseshoe Bend area. John Minear, a German immigrant, after hearing tales of the rugged beauty of the land, came to colonize in March 1774 along with forty colonists. Minear and Parsons had a dispute concerning the land in the Horseshoe Bend. They settled their differences and James Parsons took the Horseshoe Bend; Thomas the Holly Meadows; and Minear settled two miles down river at the present site of St. George.

The primary settlement families in the county include the Parsons, Minears and Goffs. Thomas Parsons married three times and had twenty children, fourteen daughters and six sons. James Par-

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Parsons Depot
Tucker County, West Virginia

sons married twice and had nine children, five daughters and four sons. James died in 1813 in Hardy County and left his Horseshoe Bend land to his three sons.

The first census taken in Tucker County was in 1860 and it estimated the population of the county as 245 families or 1,407 persons. In 1880 the population was 3,151 and in 1890, after the railroad was completed, it was 6,459, reflecting this influence. The population of Tucker County then increased gradually for fifty years, reaching its peak in 1910 and then began a slow decline. In 1900 the population was 13,433; in 1910 18,675; in 1920 16,791; and in 1930 13,374.

In 1910, during the boom, there were two railroads, two paper mills, three tanneries, fifteen large saw mills and ten logging railways. There were also lime kilns, stone crushers, handle factories and almost 1000 coke ovens.

Under Criterion A the Parsons Depot is significant for its association with the extraction industry of timbering and the transportation industry, the railroads. These two industries are intertwined, as one cannot exist fully without the other. Farming remained the primary occupation up until about 1880 when the timber industry began to boom in the county.

The first saw mill in the county was begun by John Minear on Mill Run. This was used for the construction of pioneer homes and was the only mill in the area until 1825. In 1825 a second sawmill was built by Arnold Bonnifield on Horseshoe Run. In 1834, the timber industry in Tucker County began in earnest with the rafting of timber down the Cheat River. This small beginning continued until 1852 when the B&O Railway was completed to Grafton. The Cheat and Tygart Rivers were heavily used until 1889. In 1889 the West Virginia Central & Pittsburgh Railway reached Elkins and floating logs down the rivers became unnecessary.

The Western Maryland Railroad was the result of many small mergers of other small rail lines. The company was originally chartered as the Baltimore, Carroll and Frederick Railroad in 1852 in

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Parsons Depot
Tucker County, West Virginia

Maryland. It was renamed the Western Maryland in 1853. By 1860 it had nine miles of track.

During the Civil War, construction of additional track was halted but once the War ended, expansion began. The West Virginia Central and Pittsburgh RR constructed the track from Harrison to Gorman in 1883; the line into Davis in 1884; and the line from Thomas to Parsons in 1888. The latter section was expensive construction due to floods two years in a row which necessitated relocation of the tracks each time. Also hampering construction of the track into Parsons was the steep Blackwater Canyon. It has a three percent grade and was an exceptional engineering feat for its time. The first scheduled train from Parsons to Thomas was in 1889 and the line was completed to Elkins that same year.

The West Virginia Central and Pittsburgh Railroad, formed by Henry Gassaway Davis and his son-in-law, Stephen B. Elkins, was sold to the Western Maryland Railroad in 1905. In 1881 the West Virginia legislature granted a sweeping charter to this company to build rail lines, link with any other line, buy and sell real estate, to mine and to manufacture lumber and haul timber. Consequently, the owners of the railroad controlled all natural resources in a region.

The Western Maryland Railroad acquired four other rail lines in 1905, virtually guaranteeing its monopoly in the northeastern section of the state.

The Western Maryland Railway Shippers Guide of 1912 lists ten prominent shippers of freight from Parsons. Hardware, timber and timber by - products companies are listed. There was no coal shipping as the major coal extraction was occurring on the other side of the county.

Under Criterion A, the Parsons Depot is significant for its association with the development of the town of Parsons, Tucker County. Before the railroad arrived, the town of Parsons and surrounding area was primarily agricultural. The terrain of the region precluded heavy settlement or industry.

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Section 8 Page 4

Parsons Depot
Tucker County, West Virginia

Parsons was incorporated in 1893, as a town, when it became the county seat. The original county seat was located in St. George prior to this. Parsons was named for Ward Parsons, great-grandson of Thomas Parsons. It was named for Ward Parsons as he was responsible for the removal of the county seat from St. George to Parsons and also the main agitator for incorporation. The removal of the county seat from St. George to Parsons was accomplished without bloodshed but an armed guard did accompany the removal as the men of St. George had said they would defend the records with their lives. Parsons was incorporated as a City on February 18, 1907.

The first settler in Parsons was William Corrick in 1830. He built a log cabin on his property in south Parsons in 1831 on a spot to be known as Corricks Ford. In 1844 Abraham Parsons settled in east Parsons. Abraham built a water-powered mill shortly after settling which remained in operation until about 1920. Ward Parsons settled in Parsons in 1847 and these three individuals formed the nucleus of the new town of Parsons.

In 1866 Joshua Messenger immigrated to Parsons from Preston County to work in the Davis & Jones Shook mill. Abraham Currence arrived in 1872 and bought out Abraham Parsons, including the mill. Currence was involved in many businesses. He was a partner in a real estate business and a partner in the Cheat River Milling & Feed Company. In 1893 Thomas Gould and his sister, Abbie, built a tannery. It is the oldest tannery in Parsons and is still operational.

The Parsons Pulp and Lumber Company opened in 1902 in Parsons and operated its mill there up to 1927. The Parsons Pulp and Lumber Company was a band sawmill. It began as a single band sawmill and progressed to a double band sawmill capable of producing 125,000 board feet of lumber in a ten hour day.

W.G. Davisson built a planing mill in 1900 and operated it until 1922. In 1922 the site was acquired and a woolen mill was erected. This mill is now the Dorman Mills and employs 188 people.

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Parsons Depot
Tucker County, West Virginia

In 1912, the Parsons Pulp & Lumber Company employed 120 people; J.K. Mosser, tannery, employed 80; and the Parsons Lumber & Planing Mill employed 25.

When Parsons incorporated in 1893 it had a population of about 84 people; in 1900 there were 1,780; in 1920 2,001; and in 1930 2,012. As can be seen, it followed the rise and fall of county population figures.

Along with industry arose the need for banks, churches and schools. The first bank, The Tucker County Bank opened in Parsons on June 4, 1900 in a room in the courthouse. The First National Bank of Parsons followed in 1909. The first church in Parsons was the Methodist Episcopal Church, built in 1870. The Methodist Protestant Church followed in 1890; the Presbyterian Church in 1898; and the First Baptist Church in 1900. The first school was a room in a frame building, followed by the Alum Hill School built about 1870. The Alum Hill school became too small so by the fall of 1894 a new four room school house was built on two lots in town. Additions were added in 1900 and 1908.

Infrastructure followed the same trends. Telephone service was begun in 1889 and was supplied by the Saint George & Parsons Telephone Company. Gas lighting and heating arrived in 1904. The Parsons Electric Light Company began service in 1906. Previously, the streets were lit with kerosene lamps. Water for indoor plumbing was provided in 1908 by the town with a pumping station built at Corricks Ford. This supplied the town's water needs for 26 years.

By 1898 Parsons had four saloons. Two opera houses were built, the first in 1904 and the second in 1909. The latter became the Victoria Theater, a movie theater. By 1909, the town held five hotels with the Saint James being the largest and the oldest, built in 1895.

Parsons had three newspapers. The Tucker Democrat moved to Parsons from St. George in 1894 and operated until 1954. The Mountain State Patriot was established in Parsons in 1902 and oper-

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Parsons Depot
Tucker County, West Virginia

ated until its founders death. The final newspaper established, and the only one to last to date, is The Parsons Advocate. It was established in 1896 by William G. Conley who was Governor of West Virginia from 1929 to 1933.

Fires and floods are as prevalent in Parsons history as they are in any community in West Virginia. The worst floods occurred in 1888, 1897 and 1954 with the flood of 1888 being known as the worst on the Cheat River. This is the flood which held up construction of the railroad lines. The tracks had to be rerouted twice due to high water. Two historical fires are known for their destruction. They occurred in 1899 and in 1932 and destroyed large sections of the commercial district.

With the humble beginnings of the Western Maryland Railroad, the town of Parsons was built and prospered. The Parsons Depot is a surviving remnant of this "boom" period.

In summary, the Parsons Depot is significant under Criterion A for its association with the development of the county and the town of Parsons. It is also significant under Criterion A for its association with the railroad and the timber industry.

The period of significance, 1888 to 1920, relates to the construction of the depot in 1888 and the end of the timber boom period in 1920.

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Section 9 Page 1

Parsons Depot
Tucker County, West Virginia

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Callahan, James Morton. Semi-Centennial History of West Virginia. Semi-Centennial Commission of West Virginia. 1913.

Clarkson, Roy B. Tumult On The Mountains. McClain Printing Company, Parsons, WV. 1964.

Comstock, Jim. West Virginia Heritage Encyclopedia. Jim Comstock, Richwood, WV. 1976.

Fansler, Homer Floyd. History of Tucker County West Virginia. McClain Printing Company, Parsons, West Virginia. 1962.

Killough, Edward M. History of the Western Maryland Railway. Baltimore, Maryland. 1940.

Maxwell, Hu. History of Tucker County. Preston Publishing Company, Kingwood, West Virginia. 1884.

Maxwell, Hu and Miller, Thomas Condit. History of West Virginia and Its People. Lewis Historical Publishing Company, New York. 1913.

Rice, Otis K. West Virginia A History. The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky. 1985.

Williams, Harold A. The Western Maryland Railway Story. John Mifflin Hood Press of Western Maryland, Baltimore, Maryland. 1952.

The Western Maryland Railway Shippers Guide. 1912.

16th Annual Report of the West Virginia Central and Pittsburgh Railway Company. 1897.

Tucker County Postcards. Courtesy of the West Virginia Archives. West Virginia University.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 2

Parsons Depot
Tucker County, West Virginia

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 1921 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.
- 1887 Railroad and County Map of VA, In VA, MD and Del.
- 1890 Western Maryland Railroad and Proposed Connections Map.

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Section 10 Page 1

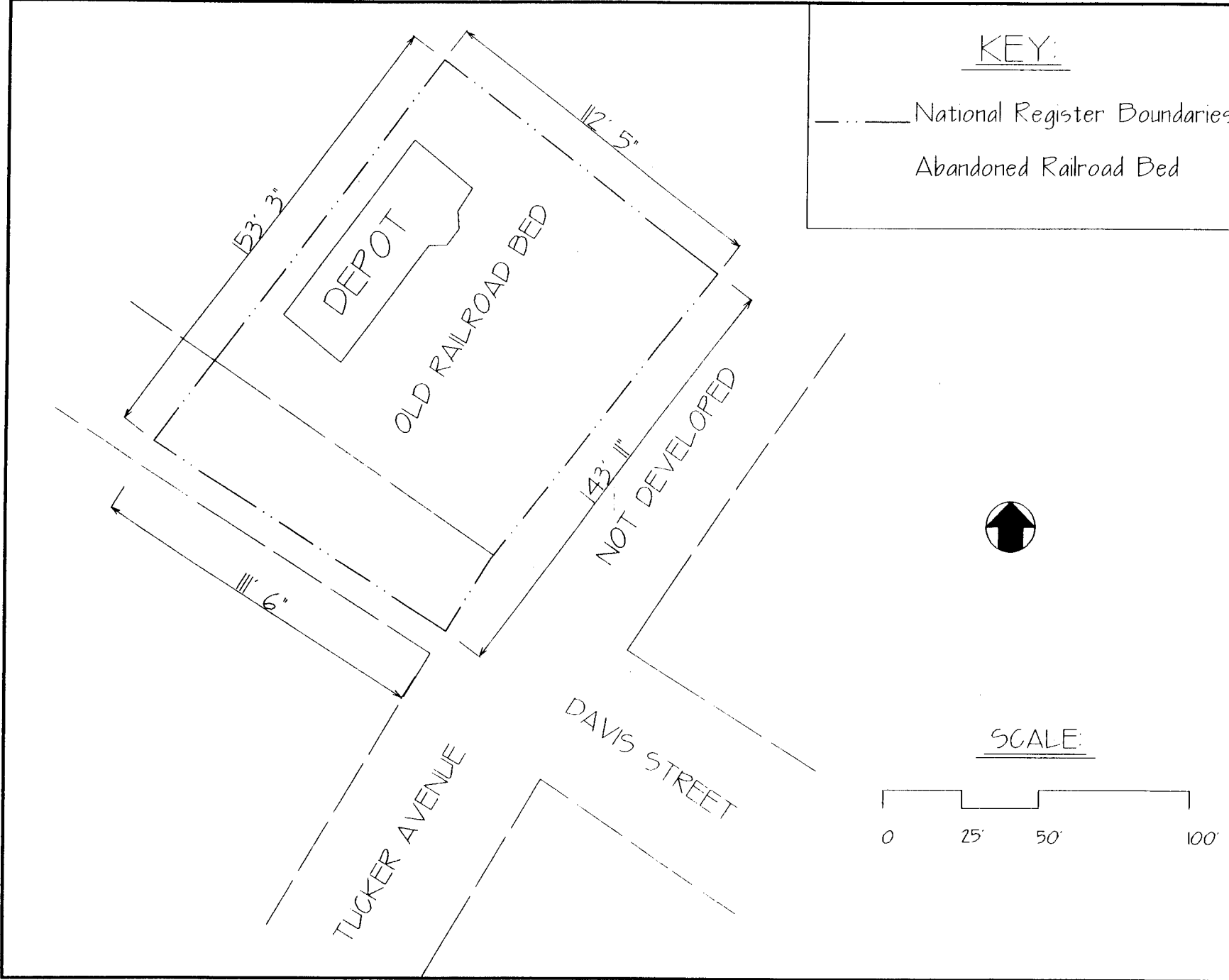
Parsons Depot
Tucker County, West Virginia

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundaries of the Parsons Depot are shown on the accompanying sketch map entitled "Parsons Depot, Parsons, West Virginia" dated October 1, 1995.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries include the depot building and the property owned by the Heritage House Crafts Co-Op. No other buildings or sites are included within the boundaries as they do not contribute to the significance of the property.

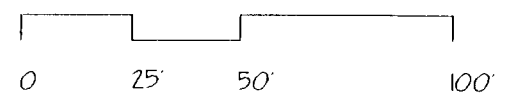


KEY:

- - - - - National Register Boundaries
- - - - - Abandoned Railroad Bed



SCALE:



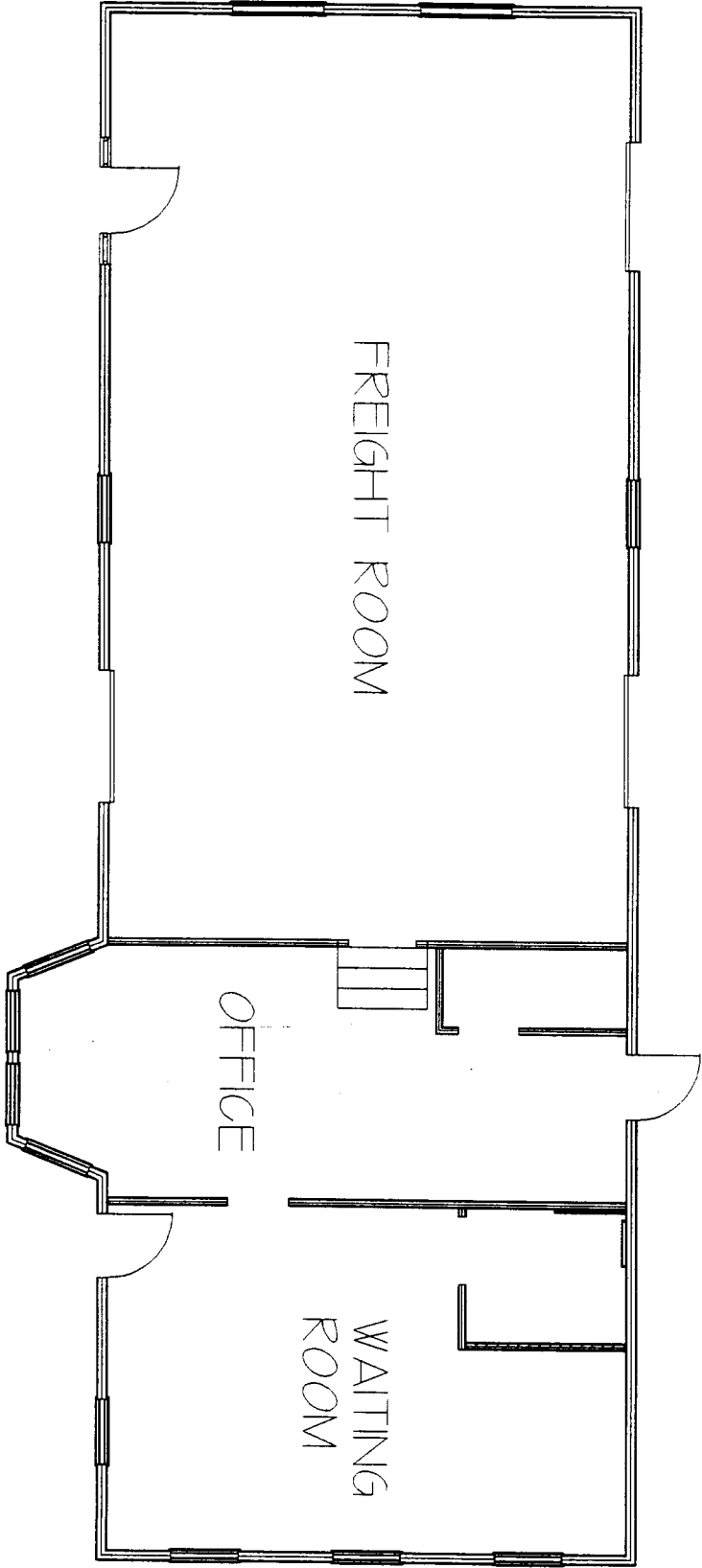
Date
OCT. 1, 1995

MICHAEL GIOULIS
HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONSULTANT
612 MAIN STREET
SUTTON, WV
(304) 765-5716

SITE PLAN
PARSONS DEPOT
PARSONS, WV

PARSONS

DWG.
1 OF 2



FLOOR PLAN

SCALE:



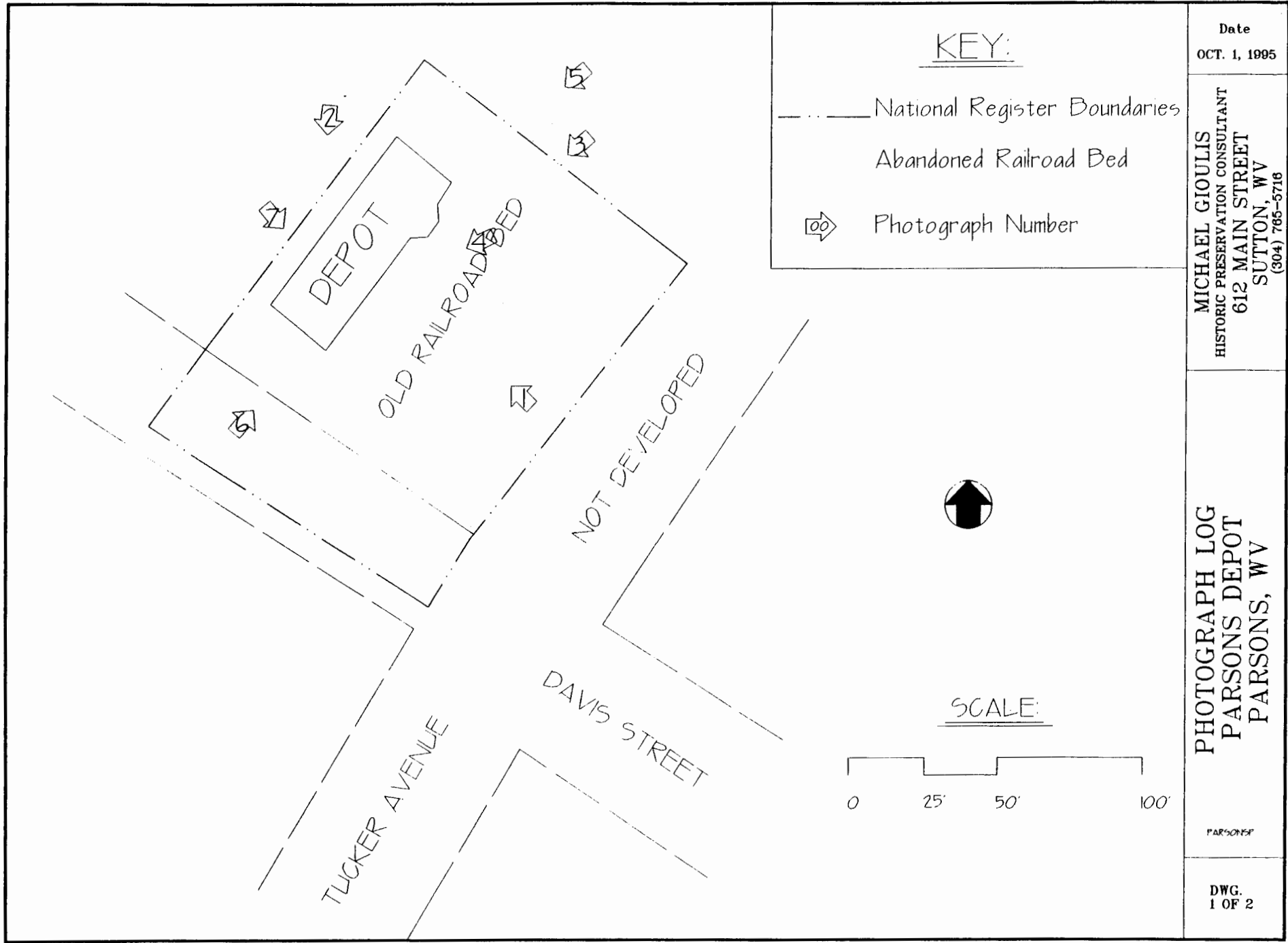
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OCT. 1, 1995

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONSULTANT
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SUTTON, WV
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FLOOR PLAN
PARSONS DEPOT
PARSONS, WV

PARSON

DWG.
2 OF 2

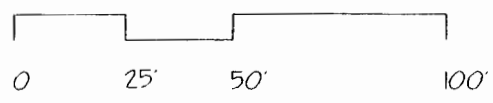


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- National Register Boundaries
- _____ Abandoned Railroad Bed
- ➡ Photograph Number



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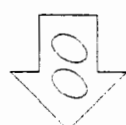
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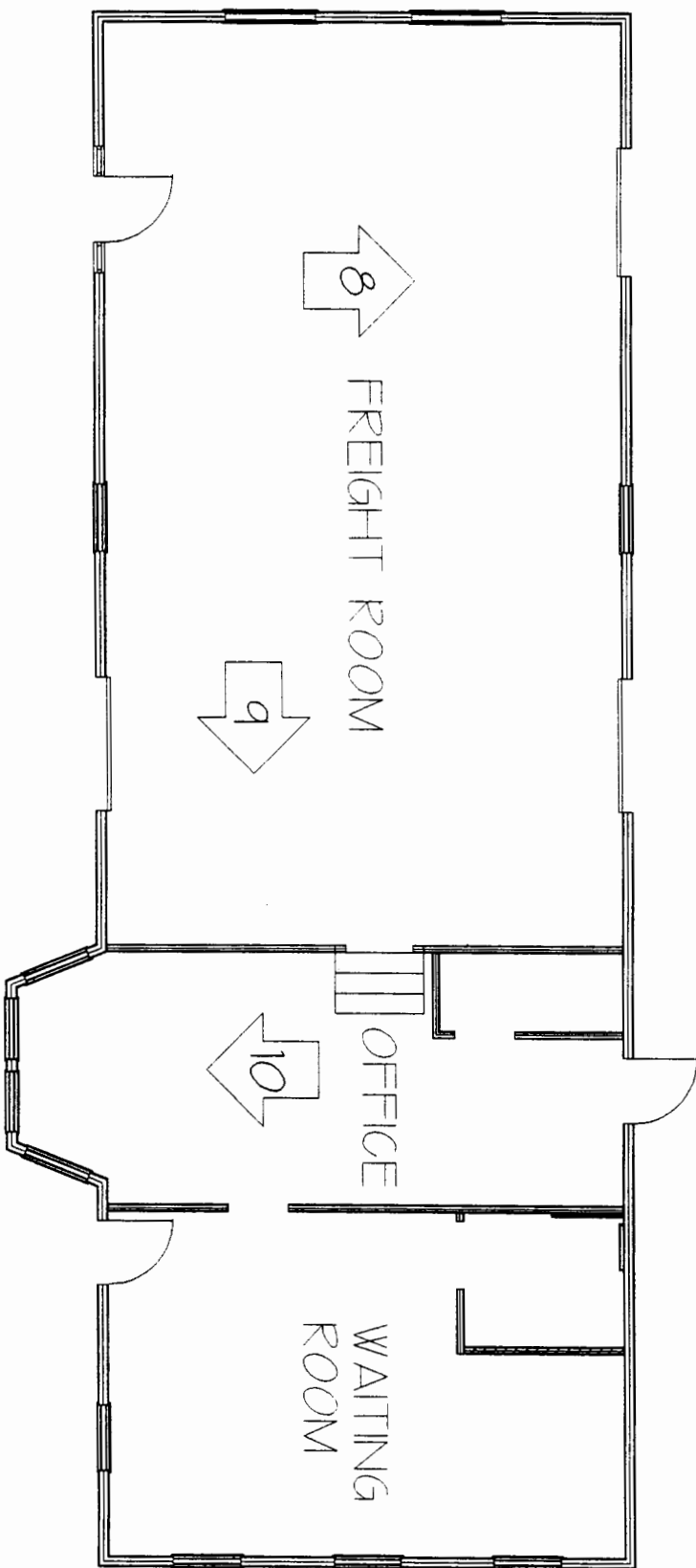
PHOTOGRAPH LOG
PARSONS DEPOT
PARSONS, WV

PARSONS

DWG.
1 OF 2



Photograph Number



FLOOR PLAN

SCALE:



Date
OCT. 1, 1985

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PHOTOGRAPH LOG
PARSONS DEPOT
PARSONS, WV

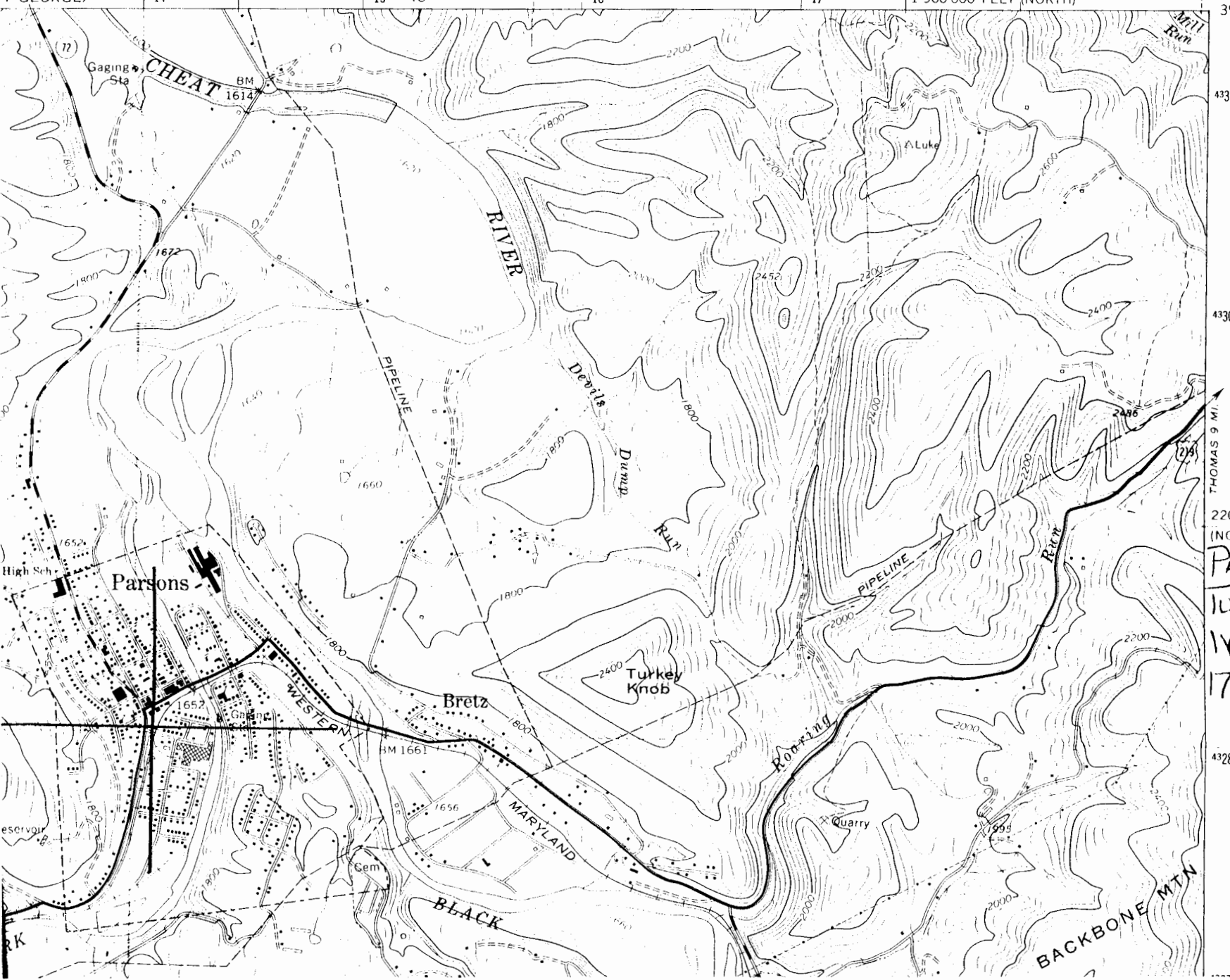
PARSONS

DWG.
2 OF 2

PARSONS QUADRANGLE
WEST VIRGINIA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
SW/4 PARSONS 15' QUADRANGLE

5062 II NE
(LEAD MINE)

SAINT GEORGE 4 MI
1962 II NW
ST GEORGE) 614 615 40' 616 617 1 960 000 FEET (NORTH) 79° 37' 30"
39° 07' 30"



220 000 FEET
(NORTH)
PARSONS DEPOT
TUCKER COUNTY,
W.V.
17.614100.43280002

4328

