

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

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

2. Location

Street & number: 1108 B Street

City or town: Ceredo State: WV County: Wayne

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A X B X C ___ D

 Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer 10-1-24	
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Arts, Culture and History</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title : _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Mid-19th Century: Greek Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation: sandstone; Walls: brick, wood;
Roof: metal

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Section 7 of this Additional Documentation submission expands and updates information about the physical character of the Z. D. Ramsdell House. The property is an 1850s, brick, two-story Greek Revival style residence. It sits on the north side of B Street, a primarily residential neighborhood in the small town of Ceredo, Wayne County, West Virginia. Despite some alterations, such as the replacement of materials in various features, and the installation of a standing seam metal roof, the house still conveys its historic appearance.

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Narrative Description

Setting

The Ramsdell House is located on the north side of B Street in the small town of Ceredo. It is a tree-lined, mixed residential and commercial street, but the majority of properties are single family homes. Most date from the early-to-mid twentieth century. Such homes surround the Ramsdell House to the east and south. Immediately to the west, between the house and East 4th Street, is a brick apartment building with a parking lot. To the north, past the house's backyard, is a large asphalt parking lot. Beyond that is A Street, a railroad facility, and the Ohio River. The Ramsdell House's setting has remained largely unchanged since its National Register nomination in 1983.

Original Description

The appearance of the Ramsdell House is largely similar to what it was at the time of the original 1983 National Register nomination. Excerpts from Section 7 describe the building as follows:

The house is of generally rectangular configuration and approximately 30 feet wide by 48 feet long. It is two story red brick and frame construction. The brick was made in a brickyard about one mile away and laid by Mr. Denney Shine who came to Ceredo about 1857 as a mason with Chase Brothers Contractors (He also plastered the interior of the house.) Native stone forms the foundation, entrance stoop, and low retaining wall at the front of the house. The frame portion of the building is narrow weatherboarding. The architecture is Greek Revival with gabled roof. Roof eaves are stately ornate.

The front door is accessed by way of a native stone stoop. The back door exits to a concrete cloosed [sic] back porch (probably added in the early 1900's). An over-porch is accessed from an upstairs bedroom. An attached kitchen addition, storage room or porch has been removed from the rear of the building exposing a fairly small excavated basement, root or wine cellar. The house had 16 double-hung four pane windows with wavy glass. Exterior doors are solid paneled. The original house had two chimneys, but the exterior chimneys have since been removed. The house has been recently re-roofed (1981) with asphalt shingles.

The house contains seven rooms downstairs and four bedrooms with stairway and hallway upstairs. The downstairs is comprised of an entrance way or foyer graced with a majestic stairway, a living room bricked-up fireplace and simple elegant mantle; dining room with very similar fireplace; a bed (or borning) room; a kitchen; and a storage room. Walls are plastered directly on brick on outside walls and wooden lath on interior walls. Most walls are wallpapered. (Remnants of what are believed to be original or near original wallpaper have been found in the attic.) All interior trim is full and original. All floors are broad plank (but have been covered with, in most rooms, wall to wall carpeting). Gas-light pipes protrude from some ceilings.¹

¹ "The Z. D. Ramsdell House," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1983).

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Additional Description

The windows, described originally as four-paned, are actually six-over-six, double-hung, wood sash windows. Early photographic evidence indicates that all or most of the windows were six-over-six at least as far back as the early 1900s (see Figures 1 and 2). Many of the windowpanes and some of the sashes appear to be replacements, but they mimic the originals in appearance and materials. Several window sashes suffer from wood rot. Two upper story windows on the west side are covered with plexiglass on the exterior.

The concrete porch and over-porch described in the nomination are located on the west side of the house. The porch is enclosed with a rusticated concrete block wall. A concrete wheelchair ramp and metal railing provides ADA access to the house through this porch.

The wood frame portion of the house is located on the north side. It is unclear whether this part was original to the 1858 construction, or if it was built as an addition in later years.

The foundation is made from cut sandstone blocks. It is in generally fair condition, except for the rear (north) side around the cellar door. Here, the mortar joints between the sandstone blocks and bricks have been infilled with some type of cement. This has caused some deterioration as a result.

During a July 2024 site visit, a substantial number of large vines were observed to be growing on the north, west, and east sides of the house, with some reaching up to the cornice. Vine growth on the building has been a perennial issue, dating back at least several decades.

The “native stone stoop” at the front entrance is made from cut sandstone blocks. A metal handrail is located on the left (west) side of the stoop. The front door is framed within a four-paned transom and sidelights, with a lintel above. Several bronze plaques and dedicatory signs are mounted on the exterior wall on either side of the door.

The front entrance of the house opens to a narrow foyer, with a dog-leg wood staircase on the left (west) side. In the first floor interior there are three large rooms, a combination kitchenette and bathroom, and a small, narrow room of indeterminate purpose (called a “borning room” in the original nomination). Two of the rooms contain modest, wood mantles with sealed fireplaces. The second story contains four large rooms, a small bathroom, and another small room of indeterminate purpose. One of the rooms has another wood mantle with an enclosed fireplace. Behind a door in the second story hallway is a tall, narrow staircase leading to the attic. Display cases, historic artifacts, signage, and domestic furniture are located throughout every room.

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Alterations Since 1983

Attempts to “restore” the Ramsdell House immediately after its National Register designation in 1983 resulted in various changes made to the structure. The majority of changes were made between the nomination in 1983 and the property’s opening as a historic house museum in 1985. Unless otherwise mentioned, these alterations are still present in 2024.

Carpet and linoleum were removed to expose the original hardwood flooring. Deteriorating horsehair plaster walls were replaced with sheetrock. A small pantry on the east side (which may have been a porch at one point) was converted into a kitchenette and bathroom. A second story bathroom was replaced with a smaller half-bath. Deteriorating weatherboard siding, broken windowpanes, some rotting floorboards and interior wood trim were replaced in-kind. Aluminum gutters and downspouts were installed. A covered porch was constructed in the rear to replace the “attached kitchen addition, storage room, or porch” that was removed. The exterior brick walls, previously exposed, were coated with red paint.

Additionally, the asphalt shingled roof was replaced with a standing seam metal roof in the 2010s.

While some of these changes may not be sympathetic, the Ramsdell House still retains a significant degree of integrity and is easily able to convey its historic appearance as a mid-nineteenth century Greek Revival residence.

Ramsdell Ceredo Settlers Memorial (Non-Contributing)

In 2019, the Town of Ceredo installed a four-foot tall granite obelisk in front of the Ramsdell House. The inscriptions on the monument acknowledge the burials of Zophar, Almeda, and Carrie Ramsdell somewhere on the property. Due to its age, this object is a non-contributing resource.

James C. Summers Former Grave Marker (Non-Contributing)

In the backyard on the north side of the house, surrounded by a square of sandstone blocks, is a stone obelisk grave marker for Pvt. James Calvin Summers (1838-1927). Summers was a Civil War veteran, serving in the 4th West Virginia Infantry. In 1895, he was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions at the Siege of Vicksburg, during which he led a storming party on May 22, 1863. Summers was originally buried at Summers Cemetery in Elkview, but in 2019 Hershel “Woody” Williams arranged for his grave to be reinterred at the Donel C. Kinnard Memorial State Veterans Cemetery in Dunbar. The reinterment included a new grave marker. Williams then donated the original obelisk grave marker to the Ramsdell House. Williams also contributed a black granite interpretive marker explaining Summers’ Medal of Honor award. Because the obelisk has been relocated, no longer marks a grave, and has no historic association with the Ramsdell House, it is a non-contributing resource.

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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.)

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Exploration/Settlement

Commerce

Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1858-1886

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Zophar D. Ramsdell

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

This Additional Documentation submission seeks to update and clarify information about the historic significance of the Z. D. Ramsdell House, which was listed on the National Register in 1983. The original nomination for the Ramsdell House selected the following Areas of Significance: Commerce, Education, Exploration/Settlement, Industry, Invention, Military, Philosophy, Politics/Government, Social/Humanitarian, and Transportation. These areas reflect many of Zophar Ramsdell's activities in life, but the narrative does not elaborate on the significance of them. This Additional Documentation clarifies the significance of the Ramsdell House under Criteria A, B, and C for the areas of Architecture, Exploration/Settlement, Commerce, and Politics/Government. The Period of Significance is also clarified to be from 1858 to 1886, beginning with the construction of the house and ending with the death of Zophar Ramsdell. Changes to and uses of the house in the years since its 1983 nomination are also documented.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Development of Ceredo

In 1857, a Massachusetts Congressman and abolitionist named Eli Thayer announced the incorporation of the American Emigrant Aid and Homestead Company to facilitate migration by residents of northern states to southern states. He acquired a tract of land along the Ohio River in northern Wayne County, present-day West Virginia, and made plans to establish a city on the site. This new settlement, named Ceredo after the Roman goddess Ceres, was meant to be the first component of a project by Thayer to develop northern communities in the slaveholding South.

Thayer had previously gained national attention in the mid-1850s for encouraging abolitionists to migrate to the Kansas Territory during the Bleeding Kansas crisis. By the spring of 1857 he was promoting a new plan to populate the southern states with communities of New Englanders. The idea was for northerners to invest capital and build factories to spur the creation of manufacturing industries and promote economic growth. The new prosperity, it was hoped, would then encourage southerners to abandon slave-based agriculture and adopt industries that utilized wage labor. According to historian Otis K. Rice, "Thayer was confident that free labor and northern entrepreneurial zeal, when placed in immediate competition with slave labor, would quickly prove their superiority and quietly but effectively undermine slavery and promote the cause of freedom."²

² Otis K. Rice, "Eli Thayer and the Friendly Invasion of Virginia," *The Journal of Southern History* 37, no. 4 (Nov., 1971): 575-596

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Construction of Ceredo proceeded in the summer and fall of 1857, at a much slower pace than had been anticipated. This was due both to a nationwide economic recession (which hurt the finances of Thayer's company) and lack of sustained interest in the project. Gradually over the next few years a modest number of homes, factories, and businesses were established. During this time several dozen families migrated to Ceredo from New England; many came from states such as Massachusetts, Maine, and Connecticut. They built homes, opened businesses, and became active in the social activities of the budding community. By 1861 the population of Ceredo was estimated to have reached no more than 500.³ Thayer's original intention was for Ceredo to be merely the first in a series of New England settlements in the South. However, the town's slow development, financial issues, concern over potential hostilities from southerners, and a general lack of sustained interest limited the number of settlers and prevented his project from expanding further.

As the Civil War approached in 1861 tensions grew between the new residents of Ceredo, who mostly supported the Union, and the native residents in the rest of Wayne County, who mainly supported secession. The New England emigrants were regarded with suspicion and hostility due to a widespread perception that they were abolitionists. When the war began, local residents – supplemented by volunteers from Ohio – assembled in Ceredo and organized the 5th Virginia Volunteer Infantry regiment (later renamed the 5th West Virginia Volunteer Infantry). They occupied a series of barracks along and around B Street, in close proximity to the Ramsdell House. The 5th West Virginia participated in various engagements across West Virginia and Virginia, their most notable battle being Second Bull Run.

The Civil War took its toll on Ceredo. The 5th West Virginia's occupation of the town center gradually inflicted damage on its infrastructure. Towards the end of the war, when the regiment was deployed far away and no other Union forces were present, Ceredo was repeatedly raided by Confederate guerilla fighters. Most of its factories were destroyed, many homes damaged, and much of the population departed. The town gradually rebuilt over the following years, although only a handful of the original New England settler families remained. Among these holdouts were the Ramsdell family.⁴

Zophar Ramsdell

Zophar Deane Ramsdell is perhaps the most well-known of Ceredo's New England settlers. He was born in Leeds, Maine on November 21, 1816. At some point he moved to Abington, Massachusetts where he apprenticed to be a shoemaker. In 1842 he married Almeda Alden and the couple eventually had four children; Helen Marr (Nellie), Florence May (Flossie), Carrie Lee, and William Augustus (Willie). In 1858, Ramsdell moved his family to Ceredo, where he partnered with another settler, Ira Floyd, to open a shoe and boot factory. Almost immediately he pursued construction of a permanent residence on a lot at the eastern side of B Street. It was the

³ Ibid.; Mose Napier, *Ceredo: It's Founders & Families*, (Ceredo, WV: The Phoenix Systems, Ltd., 1989).

⁴ Rice, "Eli Thayer and the Friendly Invasion of Virginia."; Jack Dickinson, *Wayne County, West Virginia In The Civil War*, (Salem: Higginson Book Company, 2003).

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first brick home built in Ceredo. In 1859, Ira Floyd left Ceredo and gave Ramsdell his share of the shoe business.⁵

Zophar Ramsdell enlisted with the 5th West Virginia in July 1861; a month later, he was promoted to regimental quartermaster. This position made him responsible for keeping the entire regiment supplied with food, clothing, tools, and other necessary supplies. It required a significant amount of organizational skill, travel, and letter-writing on Ramsdell's part. Because the 5th West Virginia often procured supplies from Union supply depots in nearby southern Ohio and Catlettsburg, Kentucky, Ramsdell was able to visit his house on a frequent basis, even when the regiment wasn't stationed in Ceredo. Ramsdell mustered out of the military in June 1865 with the rank of Captain; at the time, he was a quartermaster for the 1st Brigade, 2nd Division, 25th Corps in the Army of the James.⁶

Ramsdell became heavily involved in community and state affairs after the Civil War. In addition to being a postmaster, he also served in the West Virginia State Senate from 1868 to 1869. A strong advocate for education, he served as the first president of the Ceredo Independent School District commission upon its establishment in 1872. He was appointed a delegate to the Republican National Conventions that nominated Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes, and James Garfield for President. He was also a representative for West Virginia on the Board of Trustees for the Virginia Central Railroad (which later merged to form the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad).

The Ramsdell House 1886-1983

Ramsdell died in his home on December 9, 1886. His wife Almeda passed in 1904. Each (as well as their daughter Carrie, who died in 1885) were buried in the backyard, but the graves have since been lost. Ramsdell's son Willie and his family lived in the house for the next several decades. The house was reportedly the only structure in Ceredo not touched by flooding during the Flood of 1937, thanks to its high elevation.⁷

In the late 1970s, descendants of the Ramsdell family sold the house and property to two local businessmen, who then donated the house to the Ceredo municipal government in 1978. It was around this time that the house began to receive attention for its historical value. In May 1976, a historian from the West Virginia Antiquities Commission conducted a site visit and encouraged the community to nominate the Ramsdell House to the National Register of Historic Places. In 1983, the town chartered the Ceredo Historic Landmark Commission and tasked it with preserving, rehabilitating, and interpreting the Ramsdell House. The commission quickly succeeded in nominating the house to the National Register in August that same year.⁸

⁵ Thompson, *Ramsdell: A Southern Yankee*.

⁶ Thompson, *Ramsdell: A Southern Yankee*.

⁷ Thompson, *Ramsdell: A Southern Yankee*.

⁸ *Ibid.*; Dave Peyton, "Worth Saving: Ramsdell home in Ceredo put on inventory of historic places," *Herald-Dispatch*, May 2, 1976.

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The Ramsdell House after 1983

After National Register designation, the Ceredo Historic Landmark Commission spent two years and \$40,000 working to stabilize the house and convert it into a museum. During the course of renovations, many materials were discovered to be severely deteriorated, including heavy termite damage. This forced many elements, such as floor sills, joists, window and door lintels, and plaster walls to be replaced. The Commission installed heating and air conditioning; rewired the electricity; replaced the upstairs bathroom; and refinished the original wood floors. An old set of post office boxes from the Ceredo Post Office were installed in one room in a nod to Zophar's role as the postmaster. The northern back porch was reconstructed, and a pantry converted into a kitchenette and bathroom. The brick exterior was sealed with silicone spray and coated with a layer of red masonry paint. Large metal tie bars were inserted into the walls to stabilize them and keep the front side from collapsing; this is why a metal "S" can be seen on the front east and west sides of the house's exterior.⁹

The Commission finished its renovations in 1985 and for the next several years operated the Ramsdell House as a local history museum, cultural center, and event space. It hosted many tours and school field trips as well as private events. By the 2000s the Ceredo Historic Landmark Commission had sputtered out of existence and the Ramsdell House was only open sporadically. Between 2017-2019 the house underwent further renovations to address destabilized brick walls and an inefficient HVAC system. As of 2024, it is still owned by the Town of Ceredo and functions as a historic house museum.

Underground Railroad Connections

For many years, it has been speculated that the Ramsdell House may have been part of the Underground Railroad, hiding escaped enslaved persons before they crossed the Ohio River into free state territory. The 1983 National Register nomination mentions these beliefs:

From his abolitionist leanings Ramsdell also took an active part in the "Underground Railroad" system. It is a tradition which has persisted down through the years that Ceredo was a jumping off place for slaves fleeing to free states. A secret or concealed basement in the Ramsdell House was claimed to be a secret hiding place for slaves before being smuggled at night across the Ohio River into Lawrence County, Ohio, which was a free state.¹⁰

Despite these claims, no definitive physical or documentary evidence has been found verifying that the Ramsdell House was associated with the Underground Railroad. No secret basement or tunnel has been found in or around the house. None of the Ramsdell family's surviving letters or diaries give any indication they were assisting escaped enslaved persons.

⁹ Tim R. Massey, "Refurbishing the 'charm' of an old relic," *Herald-Dispatch*, May 8, 1984; Chris Spencer, "The Z.D. Ramsdell House," *50 Plus*, November 1997.

¹⁰ "The Z. D. Ramsdell House," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form.

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Several local historians have researched the matter with inconclusive results. “The tradition that the colony [Ceredo] had something to do with the underground railway persists till this day – utterly false to anyone who knows of Eli Thayer’s ideas, but plausible enough to those who did not,” wrote researcher Elizabeth McClintic in the 1930s.¹¹ “I have researched that era from every source available and I have been unable to find any factual basis for the story. I know Ramsdell was an abolitionist and he would have been sympathetic to slaves. But, as far as I know he never made any claims about being part of the underground railroad,” said history columnist Byron Morris in the 1980s.¹² “Despite the legends of Ceredo’s participation in the Underground Railroad, there is little if any documented evidence that anyone in the town helped slaves escape to freedom across the Ohio River,” determined Ramsdell biographer Robert Thompson in 2018.¹³

Despite the lack of proof for an Underground Railroad connection, there is evidence that Zophar Ramsdell held abolitionist leanings. Chief among these was his decision to join Eli Thayer’s free labor settlement project in Ceredo. A strong abolitionist movement existed in Ramsdell’s previous home of Abington, Massachusetts at the time he lived there. The family were also subscribers to *The Atlantic Monthly* as early as 1858. Established in Boston in 1857, the magazine espoused abolitionist views.¹⁴

Criterion A: Exploration/Settlement

The Ramsdell House is eligible for the National Register under *Criterion A: Exploration/Settlement* for its association with Ceredo’s founding period. Eli Thayer established Ceredo in the summer of 1857 for the express purpose of encouraging New England residents to relocate to Virginia. Development continued for four years until 1861, when the Civil War forced an end to Thayer’s northern settlement project. The Ramsdell House was constructed in 1858 by one of Ceredo’s most prominent New England settler families, and one of the few families to stay permanently. It is believed to have been the first brick house built in town. Remarkably, it is the only surviving pre-Civil War building in Ceredo. As such, the Ramsdell House provides a critical tangible link to the community’s genesis.

Criterion B: Commerce

The Ramsdell House is eligible for the National Register under *Criterion B: Commerce* for its association with Zophar Ramsdell, who was very involved in the economic development of Ceredo in the years before and after the Civil War. Ramsdell had some entrepreneurial motives for moving to Ceredo in 1858. Upon his arrival, he (and partner Ira Floyd, who left after one year) quickly established a shop to produce and sell boots, shoes, and other leather goods. It was one of several manufacturing businesses established in Ceredo during its 1857-1861 founding

¹¹ Letter to Jack Jordan from Pitt Stark, August 23, 1983, Ramsdell House Collection, Ceredo, WV; Elizabeth McClintic, “Ceredo: An Experiment in Colonization and a Dream of Empire.” *The West Virginia Review* (Spring 1938).

¹² Massey, “Refurbishing the ‘charm’ of an old relic.”

¹³ Thompson, *Ramsdell: A Southern Yankee*, 19.

¹⁴ Thompson, *Ramsdell: A Southern Yankee*; Ramsdell House Collection, Ceredo, WV.

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period. Others included a carriage factory, match factory and a glass factory. Commercial developments such as these were key to Eli Thayer's ambition of growing Ceredo into a regional manufacturing hub, although the Civil War put an end to those aspirations.

It is not clear if Ramsdell resumed his shoe business once the war ended, but he had sundry other commercial interests. From 1859 until its destruction by fire in 1886, Ramsdell co-owned a building called Crescent Hall. Constructed in the 1850s during Eli Thayer's settlement project, the building was a multi-purposes facility, hosting offices and store space for rent, as well as space for church services, classes, and other community activities. Ramsdell engaged in some land speculation as well, buying large parcels of land in and around Ceredo. Some of this he farmed.

Ramsdell also invested in various startup ventures, mainly involving local transportation. In 1868, he and several other residents founded the Twelve Pole Bridge Company, which operated a toll bridge across Twelve Pole Creek on the east side of Ceredo; he served as its president for a number of years. In 1872 he was one of the co-founders of the Big Sandy Highway Bridge Company. It sought to construct a toll bridge linking Wayne County with Boyd County, Kentucky, but the project soon failed.¹⁵ The potential of railroads also caught Ramsdell's attention. He was a co-founder of the short-lived Wayne County Coal and Iron Railway Company in 1866 and president of the short-lived Ohio and Guyandotte Railway Company in 1881.

Zophar Ramsdell lived in the Ramsdell House during the entire Period of Significance, and no other resources associated with any of his businesses are known to be extant.

Criterion B: Politics/Government

The Ramsdell House is eligible for the National Register under *Criterion B: Politics/Government* for its association with Zophar Ramsdell during his civic and political career. Starting in 1861 and continuing until at least the early 1880s, Ramsdell served in a variety of state and local offices. From working for the U.S. Postal Service, to serving in the state legislature, to his involvement with several county level institutions, Ramsdell provided a considerable amount of civic service to West Virginia and the Wayne County community.

Ramsdell was first appointed Postmaster for Ceredo in June 1861. Account records found in the Ramsdell House indicate that he continued to perform at least some of his duties even during the Civil War and his military service. Around 1868, at the recommendation of Congressman K. V. Whaley, Ramsdell was appointed a Special Agent of the Post Office Department. Details of this assignment are sketchy, but he is believed to have been tasked with establishing or re-establishing functional post offices in southern West Virginia. He served in this role at least as

¹⁵ Thompson, *Ramsdell: A Southern Yankee*; Toll Bridge Passes from Z. D. Ramsdell, 1879-1880, Ramsdell House Collection, Ceredo, WV.

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late as 1874. He was also said to have been a postal detective at some point, investigating cases in southern and central states.¹⁶

Ramsdell became very active in local and state Republican Party politics after the war. He was a local delegate to the Republican National Conventions that nominated Presidents Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes, and James Garfield. In 1868, Ramsdell was elected to a single term in the West Virginia State Senate, representing the 8th District. During his two years in office, Ramsdell was Chairman of the Committee on Executive Expenditures and a member of the committees for Finance & Claims and Internal Improvements & Navigation. He supported passage of the Flick Amendment, which restored voting rights to Confederate supporters as well as enfranchised African American men in West Virginia. He also supported efforts to relocate the state capital from Wheeling. During discussion of a bill to relocate the capital in February 1870, Ramsdell proposed a failed amendment that would have designated Parkersburg the new capital.

Outside partisan politics, he also served in multiple state and local civic roles. In 1867, the West Virginia State Legislature appointed him as one of five government commissioners to facilitate the development of what became the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad. In 1869, he served on Wayne County's Board of Registration, working to register voters. In 1872, Ramsdell was elected the first president of the newly established Ceredo Independent School District, which oversaw public education in northern Wayne County. One of their first endeavors was to create a school on the south end of Main Street; it remained in operation on the same site (through different buildings) until 2017. In 1876 he served on a Wayne County board coordinating celebrations for the United States Centennial. In 1881, he co-founded the Ceredo Cemetery Association to develop a public cemetery for the town.

Criterion C: Architecture

The Ramsdell House is also eligible for the National Register under *Criterion C: Architecture* as an important representation of Greek Revival architecture in Wayne County. It is the only Greek Revival residence in Ceredo and, as the last surviving pre-Civil War structure, serves as a representation of building styles that were used during the town's founding period.

Greek Revival was a popular architectural style employed in the construction of domestic residences between the 1820s and 1860s. Greek Revival houses are characteristically defined by low pitched roofs; columned front porches; elaborate cornice lines with wide bands of trim; entry doors with narrow, rectangular transom and sidelights; six-paned glazed windows; and frieze-band windows beneath the cornice. The Ramsdell House is a more modest execution of the style, lacking an entry porch and columns, for instance. However, it does boast essential features such as cornice lines divided with bands of trim; narrow, four-paned transom and sidelights surrounding the front door; six-over-six windows; and a low-pitched, front gable roof.

¹⁶ Thompson, *Ramsdell: A Southern Yankee; An Illustrated History of Klickitat, Yakima, and Kittitas Counties* (Interstate Publishing Company, 1904), 797; List of Authorized Special Postal Agents, Post Office Department, February 1, 1874, Ramsdell House Collection, Ceredo, WV.

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
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Despite some exterior alterations – namely the replacement of the shingled roof with a metal roof, loss of the chimneys, and the application of paint onto the brick walls – the house is still fully able to convey its historic association with Greek Revival architecture.

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86092392/1886-12-16/ed-1/seq-2/#date1=1886&index=4&rows=20&words=Ramsdell&searchType=basic&sequence=0&state=West+Virginia&date2=1886&proxtext=ramsdell&y=0&x=0&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>.
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Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)

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Z. D. Ramsdell Diaries. Ceredo Historical Society Museum. Ceredo, WV.

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne, WV
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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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository: Ceredo Historical Society Museum

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than one acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
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Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 17N | Easting: 364276 | Northing: 4251020 |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The original nomination describes the boundary as “iron pipe; thence S. 10-30’ W. 150.00 ft. to the place of beginning. (Deed Book 446, Page 459 Wayne County Court).” It is also described as a 46 x 150 foot lot in Wayne County Deed Book 488, Page 478.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary is unchanged from the original nomination.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Steven Cody Straley, National Register and Architectural Survey Coordinator
organization: West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office
street & number: 1900 Kanawha Boulevard East
city or town: Charleston state: West Virginia zip code: 25305
e-mail Cody.Straley@wv.gov
telephone: 304-558-0240
date: July 9, 2024

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Figure Log

1 of 8: Earliest known photograph of Ramsdell House, possibly during Flood of 1913

2 of 8: Ramsdell House during Flood of 1937

3 of 8: Ramsdell House in 1985 after renovations

4 of 8: Satellite Map with Boundary Highlighted

5 of 8: USGS Map

6 of 8: Exterior Photo Key

7 of 8: Interior First Floor Photo Key

8 of 8: Interior Second Floor Photo Key

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Figure 1 Earliest known photo of the Ramsdell House, possibly during the Flood of 1913



Figure 2 Ramsdell House during the Flood of 1937

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Figure 3 Ramsdell House in 1985 after renovations



Figure 4 Satellite View

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne, WV
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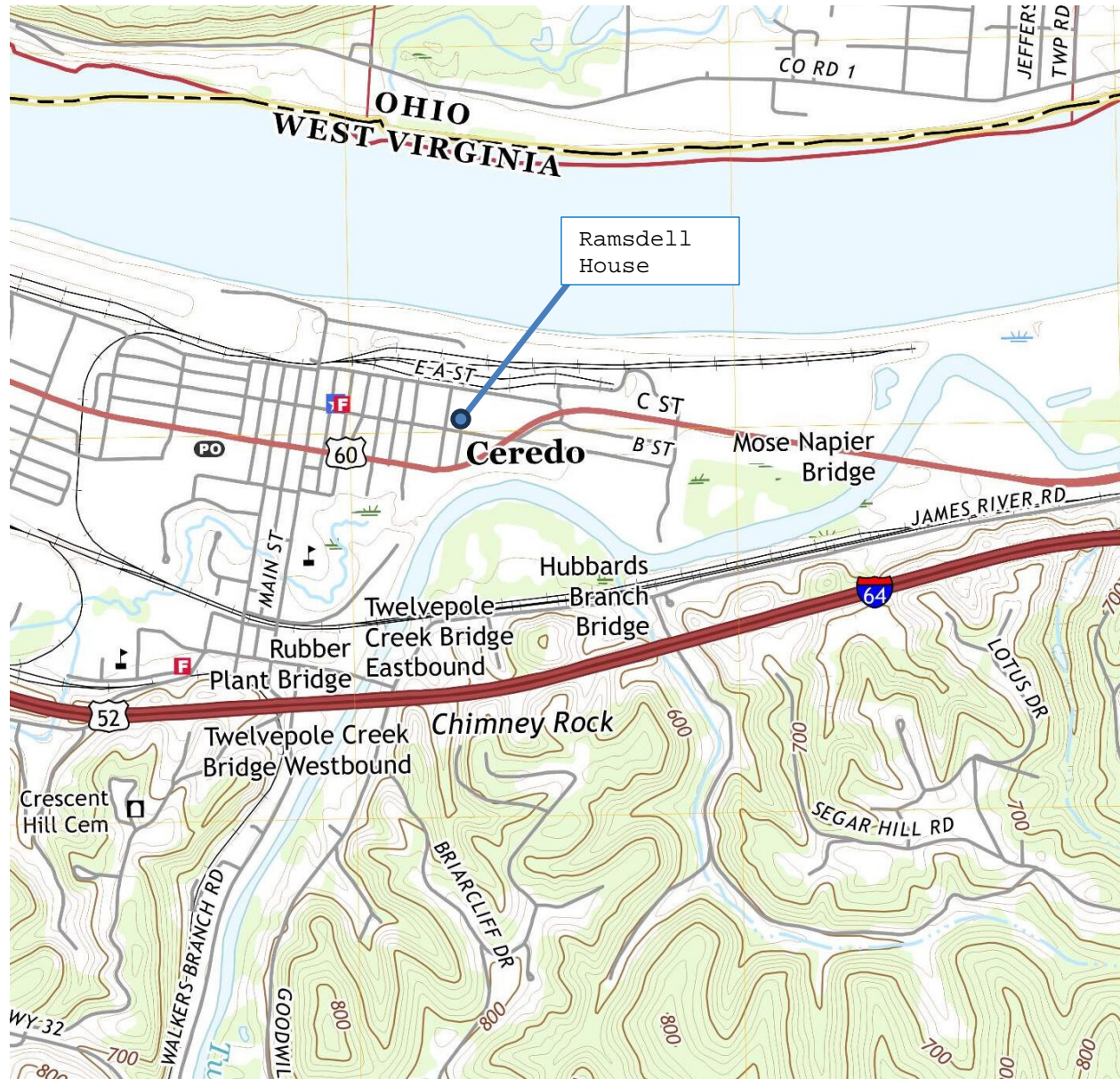


Figure 5 USGS Map

Catlettsburg Quadrangle
Kentucky - Ohio - West Virginia
7.5-Minute Series
2019

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
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Figure 6 Exterior Photo Key

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

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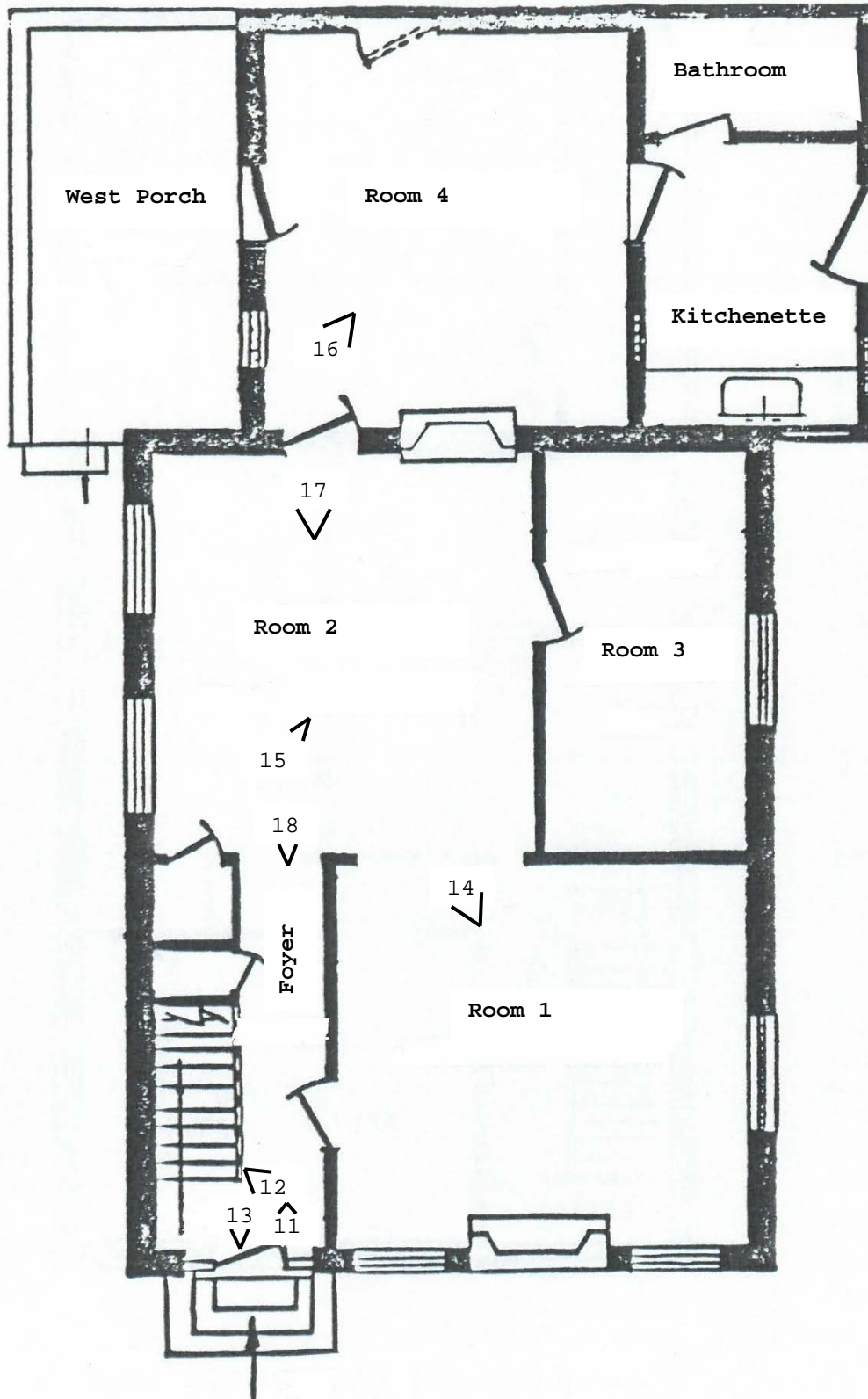


Figure 7 Interior Photo Key First Floor

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

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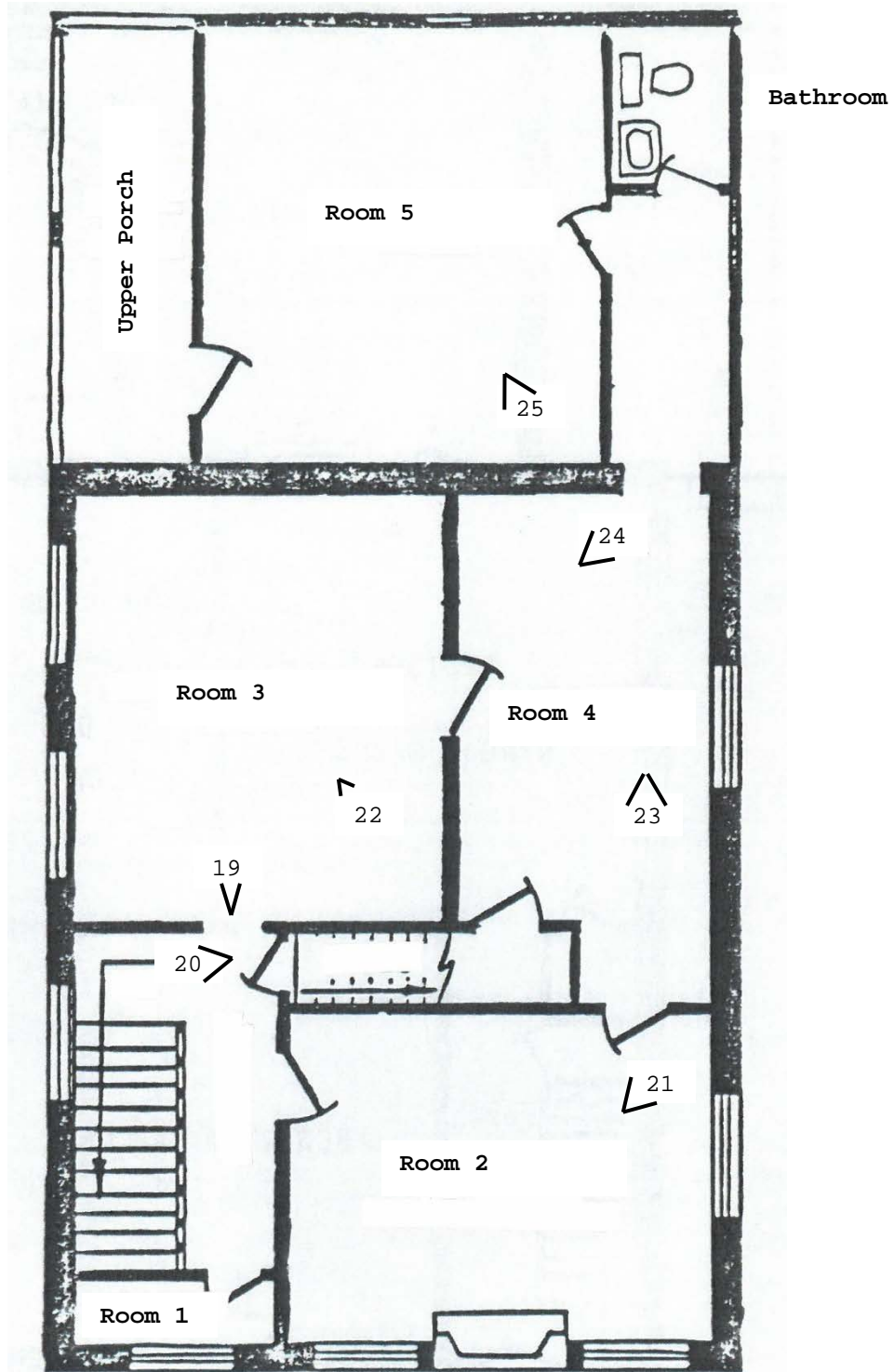


Figure 8 Interior Photo Key Second Floor

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne, WV
County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Z. D. Ramsdell House

City or Vicinity: Ceredo

County: Wayne

State: West Virginia

Photographer: Steven Cody Straley

Date Photographed: July 1, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0001
Front of house, southwest elevation
- 2 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0002
Side angle of house, southwest elevation
- 3 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0003
Ramsdell Ceredo Settlers Memorial, south elevation
- 4 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0004
West porch, southwest elevation
- 5 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0005
Rear of house, north elevation
- 6 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0006
Cellar door beneath rear porch, north elevation
- 7 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0007
James C. Summers Former Grave Marker, south elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

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- 8 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0008
East side of house with kitchenette exterior, northeast elevation
- 9 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0009
East side of house, northeast elevation
- 10 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0010
Sandstone foundation, east elevation
- 11 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0011
Interior, first floor front foyer, south elevation
- 12 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0012
Interior, first floor staircase, southeast elevation
- 13 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0013
Interior, front door, north elevation
- 14 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0014
Interior, first floor, Room 1, north elevation
- 15 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0015
Interior, first floor, Room 2, south elevation
- 16 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0016
Interior, first floor, Room 4, southwest elevation
- 17 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0017
Interior, first floor, Room 3, north elevation
- 18 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0018
Interior, first floor, wood flooring between Foyer and Room 3, north elevation
- 19 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0019
Interior, second floor hallway, north elevation
- 20 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0020
Interior, second floor, stairs to attic, west elevation
- 21 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0021
Interior, second floor, Room 2, northwest elevation
- 22 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0022
Interior, second floor, Room 3, southeast elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
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- 23 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0023
Interior, second floor, Room 4, south elevation
- 24 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0024
Interior, second floor, Room 4, northeast elevation
- 25 of 25: WV_WayneCo_RamsdellHouseAD_0025
Interior, second floor, Room 5, southeast elevation

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations 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.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
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Photo 1 Front of house, southwest elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

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Photo 2 Side angle of house, southwest elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

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Photo 3 Ramsdell Ceredo Settlers Memorial, south elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

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Photo 4 West porch, southwest elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

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Photo 5 Rear of house, north elevation



Photo 6 Cellar door beneath rear porch, north elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

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Photo 7 James C. Summers Former Grave Marker, south elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

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Photo 8 East side of house with kitchenette exterior, northeast elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne, WV
County and State



Photo 9 East side of house, northeast elevation



Photo 10 Sandstone foundation, east elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
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Photo 11 Interior, first floor front foyer, south elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

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Photo 12 Interior, first floor staircase, southeast elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

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Photo 13 Interior, front door, north elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
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Photo 14 Interior, first floor, Room 1, north elevation



Photo 15 Interior, first floor, Room 2, south elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

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Photo 16 Interior, first floor, Room 4, southwest elevation



Photo 17 Interior, first floor, Room 3, north elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

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Photo 18 Interior, first floor, wood flooring between Foyer and Room 3, north elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne, WV
County and State



Photo 19 Interior, second floor hallway, north elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne, WV
County and State



Photo 20 Interior, second floor, stairs to attic, west elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne, WV
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Photo 21 Interior, second floor, Room 2, northwest elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne, WV
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Photo 22 Interior, second floor, Room 3, southeast elevation



Photo 23 Interior, second floor, Room 4, south elevation

Ramsdell, Z. D., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne, WV
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Photo 24 Interior, second floor, Room 4, northeast elevation



Photo 25 Interior, second floor, Room 4, northeast elevation