

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

1. Name of Property

historic name: Algoma Coal and Coke Company Store

other name/site number: Tug River Health Clinic

2. Location

street & number: county route 17

not for publication: n/a

city/town: Algoma

vicinity: n/a

state: WV county: McDowell

code: 047

zip code: 24868

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>      </u>	buildings
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	sites
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	structures
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related property listing: Coal Company Stores in McDowell County

=====  
4. 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.  See continuation sheet.

William D. ... 2/10/92  
Signature of Certifying Official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  
 meets  
 does not meet  
the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau Date

=====  
5. 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 Keeper Date of Action

=====  
6. Function or Use  
=====

Historic: commerce/trade Sub: department store  
commerce/trade business  
government post office  
health care clinic  
Current : health care Sub: clinic  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

=====  
7. Description  
=====

Architectural Classification:  
Modern Movement/Moderne  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other Description: n/a

Materials: foundation concrete roof asphalt  
walls brick other metal  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance. x See continuation sheet.

=====  
8. Statement of Significance  
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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: statewide.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A,C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : n/a

Areas of Significance: architecture  
commerce  
industry  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period(s) of Significance: ca. 1933-1941

Significant Dates : n/a

Significant Person(s): n/a  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation: n/a

Architect/Builder: unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. x See continuation sheet.

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9. Major Bibliographical References  
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See continuation sheet.   x  

Previous documentation on file (NPS):   n/a  

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

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:   Eastern Regional Coal Archives    
  Bluefield, WV

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10. Geographical Data  
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Acreage of Property:   less than one acre  

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing    Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>  17  </u>	<u>  462260  </u>	<u>  4141280  </u>	B	<u>  _____  </u>	<u>  _____  </u>
C	<u>  _____  </u>	<u>  _____  </u>	<u>  _____  </u>	D	<u>  _____  </u>	<u>  _____  </u>

Verbal Boundary Description:   \_\_\_   See continuation sheet.

From the intersection of Buzzard Branch and North Fork, proceed 220' southwest to the store which sits in the center of a square 150' on each side.

Boundary Justification:   \_\_\_   See continuation sheet.

The boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Algoma Coal and Coke Company store.

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11. Form Prepared By  
=====

Name/Title:   Stacy Sone  

Organization:   WV SHPO   Date:   12/16/91  

Street & Number:   Cultural Center   Telephone:   304-348-0240  

City or Town:   Charleston   State:   WV   ZIP:   25305

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 1 Algoma Coal & Coke Company

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The coal company store and office building in Algoma is McDowell County's newest extant company store. It was built by the Algoma Coal and Coke Company in the 1930's and replaced an early wooden frame store. Although the building is newer than the others, it includes the most important characteristics that define the company store property type. This store's outstanding qualities are its size and modern design. It has changed little so that it retains its integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location, and association.

Algoma's company store is located just north of Northfork on county route 27. The modern building stands two stories high under a flat roof. Its plan is a rectangle with most of the facade recessed between two end bays. The exterior walls are a glazed yellow tile but with horizontal bands of red brick evenly spaced from top to bottom. This distinguished pattern of alternating color is the building's only decoration.

The store's perfectly symmetrical facade is made up of six bays at the second level. A group of three windows sits on both levels in each of the projecting end bays. The center bays contain paired windows on the second floor and large multipaned display windows on the first. The display windows surround the double door entrance and cover nearly all of the center bays. An overhang extends between the end bays over the first level.

The company store's delivery entrance is located on the southwest side near the railroad tracks that run in front of the building. One of the company store's two elevators is located near this door. A short two story wing also stands on the side.

The building is still in use and now serves as a medical clinic. It has been well-maintained and has changed some on the interior to accommodate medical offices. The only noticeable exterior alteration is the absence of the company's name on the overhang.

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The Algoma Coal and Coke Company store is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A for its historical association with southern West Virginia's coal mining industry and under criterion C for its architectural significance. The building served as Algoma's most important community building for three coal companies and it continues to serve area residents as a health clinic (for detailed historical information about the Pocahontas Coalfield and the significance of company stores, see sections E and F in "Coal Company Stores in McDowell County", multiple property listing). The building is McDowell County's newest surviving store and it shows the company's preference for a contemporary monumental design. Although it is newer, it displays the typical characteristics of company store construction with its size, large porch, and location.

Before the coal industry boomed in southern West Virginia at the end of the nineteenth century, the area consisted of scattered, self-sufficient farms and communities. Because of the absence of railroads and good roads, the southern counties had little interaction with the rest of the nation. After the Civil War, however, the nation's industrial market expanded and outsiders began to turn their attention to West Virginia's vast coal reserve to meet growing demands.

The major railroads extended their lines into southern West Virginia allowing the area to be developed. Without a sufficient labor force, however, coal mining could not be productive. Companies recruited thousands of workers first from the older coalfields in Pennsylvania, and then from Eastern Europe and the American South. To accommodate these new arrivals, coal companies built self-sufficient communities to house and provide for their workers. The construction of company towns was absolutely necessary in southern West Virginia. Unlike the northern coalfields of Pennsylvania, where mining operations began in regions that were already settled, southern mines opened in sparsely settled areas with few organized communities. The company town was the most logical solution because it provided efficient and inexpensive housing for a large labor force.

Central to each of these communities was the company store. The store was usually the town's most prominent building and was typically placed in an easily accessible location. The buildings often housed not only a store but also the company's business office, a post office, and sometimes, a doctor's office. Because of its location and multiple functions, the store provided each community with a center for social gathering.

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The Algoma store served the all-important function of community center first for the Algoma Coal and Coke Company which began shipping coal from the Pocahontas #3 seam in 1891. The company would have immediately constructed miners' houses and a simple wooden store. In 1894, it built a more substantial wooden store that proved adequate during the company's first decades. Like so many other successful coal companies, the Algoma Coal and Coke Company replaced its early store with a monumental building.

The store was conveniently located in a priority space near the mine and the residential area. It was the bustling center of business, commercial, and social activity in the industrial community. The store offered a wide range of merchandise in urban department store fashion making it a very appealing place to shop. William Beury, company Vice President in 1934, claimed that stores in nearby Northfork added competition that made the Algoma store more modern than stores found in small cities. Even with its proximity to Northfork, an active service town with a business district, the Algoma store still offered the typical variety of merchandise found in the most isolated communities. Residents were free to shop where they wanted but it is likely that they chose their own modern store.

The building was principally a store but the company's business offices, a post office, and a medical facility also occupied a substantial part of the space. The store continued to house offices after the Island Creek Coal Company took over in the 1950's and then the United Pocahontas Coal Company in the 1960's. The building now serves residents as a health clinic.

The Algoma Coal and Coke Company store is architecturally significant for its sleek modern design. Revival styles continued to be popular in the United States but some architects were searching for new designs that were not based upon earlier styles. The resulting buildings were pure, geometric, and functional without ties to the past. The style would have been very appealing to an industry that was becoming more technologically advanced and efficient all the time. The company store at Algoma is modern, functional looking, and impressive even without applied decoration.

The store is an innovative departure from the county's earlier company store designs but it still includes the typical company store characteristics of those in neighboring coal communities. Like other

(NPS Form 10-900)

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stores, it housed multiple functions, it was located near the railroad and easily accessible from the mine and residential community, and it has the typical porch for gathering. The building has changed little since its construction date and it stands as a unique addition to the collection of company stores in McDowell County.



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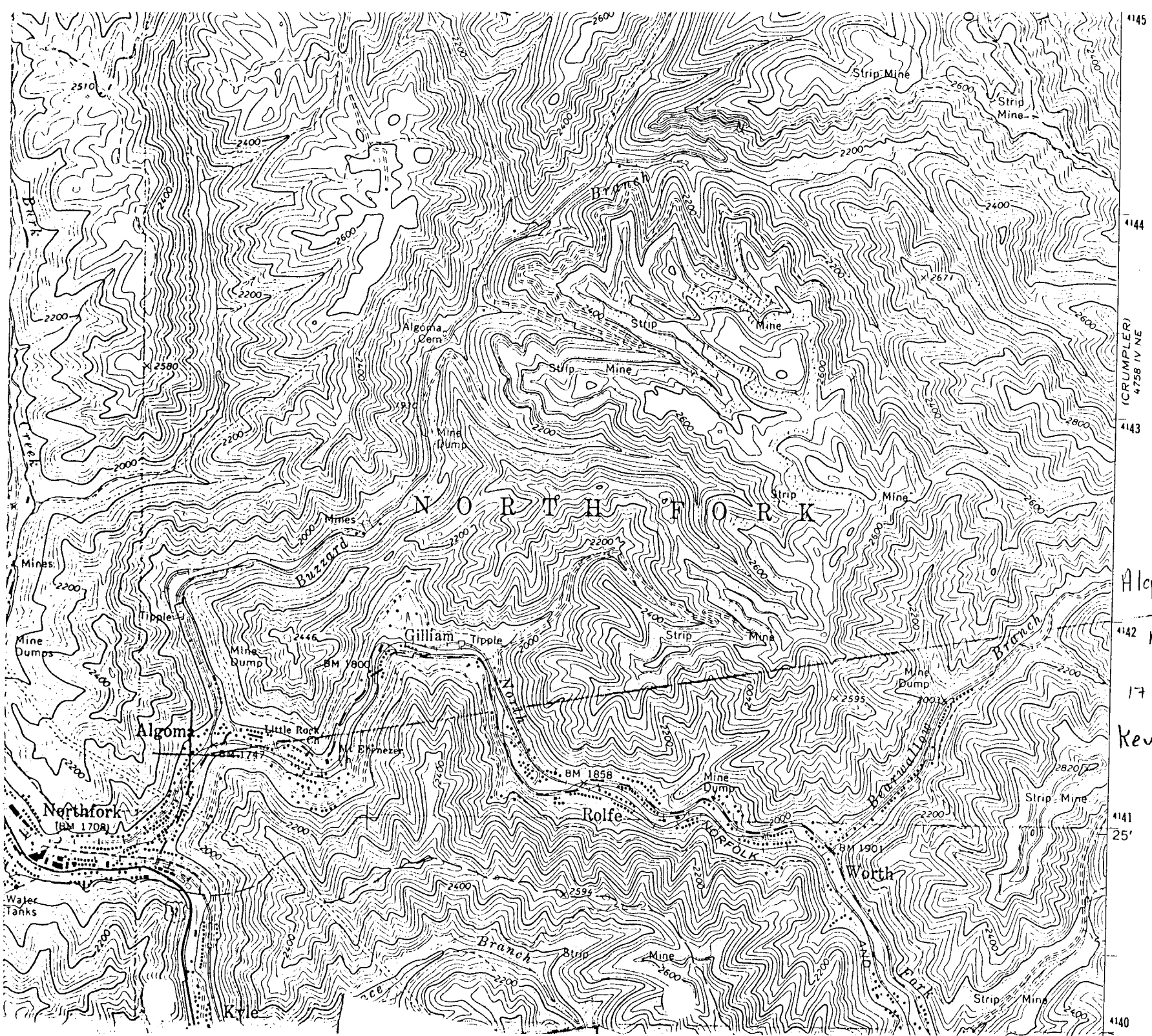
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Mathews, Garret. "Fundless". Bluefield Daily Telegraph, March 28, 1987.



Algoma Coal & Co  
 Company  
 W. Va.  
 17/4112260/41412  
 Keystone Quad.



TUG RIVER  
HEALTH CENTER

ENTRANCE  
MEDICAL DEPT  
BLACK LUNG